

Estate Plan

Epworth

This plan covers the following areas and number of properties:

Location	No	Location	No	Location	No
Belton Gate Villas	1	Greengate Cresc.	1	Stanfield Road	2
Belton Road	1	Guisefield Road	8	Station Road	3
Burnham Road	5	Morfield Grove	1	Tottermire Lane	3
Chapel Street	1	Myers Villas Studcross	3	Townside Cottages	4
Coronation Cresc.	9	Queen Street	1	West End Road	4
Fieldside	46	Southfield Drive	8		

Estate Description

The area has 101 properties made up as follows:

Type	1 Bed	2 Bed	3 Bed	4 Bed	No of Properties (101)
Flats – Ground Floor	12	13	0	0	25
Flats – First Floor	0	24	0	0	24
Bungalows	4	0	0	0	4
Houses	0	19	19	3	41
Leaseholders					7

Epworth is situated between Doncaster and Scunthorpe within a few miles of the M180. It is the main service centre within the area known as the Isle of Axholme. A Rural Housing Needs Survey conducted in 1999 indicated that there is a need for accommodation for single people and the elderly, both to buy and for rent. The town is the birthplace of John Wesley, Founder of Methodism and is therefore popular with visitors. There are many amenities including hotels and pubs, churches, shops, a library and swimming pool as well as other leisure facilities. There is primary and secondary education provision in the area and regular bus services both to the Scunthorpe and Doncaster as well as the smaller villages nearby.

The area is very popular with commuters due to the proximity of the M180 and being a medium growth area, there has been a lot of development throughout the parish. These have been mainly large detached houses but there is also an element of affordable housing with 2 bedroom bungalows provided by ACIS for the elderly. House prices within the area are above average and at the end of 1999, 83% of residents were owner - occupiers. This figure may well have increased since the survey due to the amount of development in and around the town.

25% of the population has lived in the area for 40+ years and the average length of residency is 25 years. 30% of residents are elderly and there are 2 sheltered housing schemes in the area. (These are reported in a separate plan)

Stock in general is in need of updating. Parking in Coronation Crescent is inadequate and would benefit from hardstanding and dropped kerbs being provided to houses. At Fieldside, where properties are mainly flats, there is very little parking provision but there is an abundance of large grassed areas, some of which could be taken out to provide better parking. Insulation works were completed to the properties in Coronation Crescent under the 2005/6 Capital Works programme.

Performance Indicators

North Lincolnshire Homes has an Asset Management Plan that looks at various indicators. These tell us whether the area is a place where people want to live and remain, whether it is worth investing in the stock and how much it will cost to maintain the properties and bring them up to the Decent Homes Standard which the Government has set. Indicators for this area are as follows:
(Figures are for the year to 31/10/08)

Red:

Relets in year as % of tenancies	16.30%
Tenancies under 2 years in length	25.00%

Amber: There are no amber indicators

Green:

Tenancies of 5 years + in length	60.87%
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Other indicators:

Empty homes (as at 31/10/08)	2.13%
Transfer requests outwards	5.43%
Tenancies 2 – 5 years in length	14.13%
Average yearly repairs costs to 2010	£263567.46
Repairs expenditure per annum (07/08 actuals)	£32613.13
Repairs in voids per annum (07/08 actuals)	£13775.97
Costs above/below potential income	£217178.36
Tenants in receipt of housing benefit	48.91%

Comments on Performance Indicators

The high % of residents that have lived in the area for 5 years+ shows the area has some stability. However, as the red indicators show, there have been a considerable number of voids during the year for how many properties are in the leaf. New tenancies have now moved into the amber indicator as it has increased to 25% and the number of transfers at October 2008 represents 5 tenancies.

North Lincs Decent Homes Standard

The Government has instructed that all social housing must reach a minimum standard known as the Decent Homes Standard by 2012. However, the North Lincolnshire Standard has been devised by local tenants who want more than the minimum level of improvements to their homes and is the standard North Lincolnshire homes will achieve by 2012.

The standard includes:

- Heating boilers renewed every 15 years
- Heating systems (radiators) renewed every 30 years
- Properties rewired or upgraded where the wiring is over 30 years old – and to ensure that there are adequate power points
- Windows and doors renewed if they are 20 years old
- Properties insulated to maximise energy efficiency
- Bathrooms renewed every 30 years
- Kitchens renewed every 20 years and to have adequate space for storage and the preparation of food
- Renewal of roofing if it is over 50 years old
- Replacement of gutters and fascias that are over 20 years old
- Homes to be free from structural defects that affect the soundness and stability of a home
- Homes to be free from damp and water penetration
- Adequate lighting in communal areas
- Closure of some footpaths to reduce crime
- Controlled entry systems for communal entrances
- Improved access to communal entrances to comply with the Disability Discrimination Act
- Fencing to create secure spaces
- Modern alarm call systems for the elderly
- Improved car parking provision
- Improvements to the environment / landscape

Housing Management

The Housing Officer visits the area once a week.

Caretakers visit the area on fairly regular basis and liaise with the Housing Office on fly – tipping and tenancy enforcement issues. There have been reports of nuisance and anti social behaviour in the past but despite monitoring forms being issued to complainants, in most cases, these have not been returned, which makes the complaints difficult to pursue. Generally, with an average of 42 reported crimes per month for the whole of the Axholme Central ward, crime in the area is fairly low.

Nat Meetings

Neighbourhood Action Team meetings take place approximate every 4-6 weeks. They alternate between the villages in the Isle where members of local Police, North Lincolnshire Homes, Safer Neighbourhoods, Tenants Inspectors and Council members meet together to discuss cases of crime and anti-social behaviour to ensure that the sharing of information means that any problem cases can be tackled through multi-agency working.

The next planned meeting is yet to be confirmed.

Estate Inspection

Estate inspections have been revised into a traffic light Red, Amber & Green format. The new system is easier to understand and clearly shows to all concerned what the current status is and what needs doing in order to sign off the inspection to the green standard. Estate inspections are carried out by the Housing Officer who will note and act on any tenancy enforcement issues. Any graffiti or rubbish in communal entrance's will be noted and passed to the estate caretakers. The area is currently unrated until the next planned inspection which is scheduled to take place on 18th June @ 2pm meeting at School close.

Actions

In order to plan for the future we need to look at the sustainability of the area. This will depend not only on the properties continuing to be homes that our tenants want to live in but also the area being a safe and secure environment where people want to stay for years to come.

Works identified specifically for the Epworth area are as follows:

- Upgrade all properties as necessary
- Provide hard standing to houses on Coronation Gardens
- Remodel grassed areas at Fieldside to provide better parking
- Upgrade where needed to Digital Aerials.
- Increased lighting needed near the front doors that open onto communal areas.

We have already done the following:

- Looked at the 'make up' of residents in the area
- Gathered crime figures to check types and level of crime
- Checked reports of ASB and nuisance
- Gathered information from staff, stock surveys and other departments
- Worked together with tenant representatives to make decisions on standard fittings in empty homes and selection of contractors (ongoing)
- Negotiated a new agreement with Neighbourhood services for the upkeep of our estates, which clearly indicates standards and regularity of maintenance to the environment.
- Ensure Introductory tenancy visits are carried out as a priority

- Provide a regular caretaking presence on our estates
- Work with Rent Recovery to help prevent people losing their homes
- Provide debt advice / referral when necessary
- Support vulnerable tenants in order to sustain their tenancies
- Consider local letting policies where there is shown to be a need
- Enforce tenancy conditions to ensure clean, tidy and secure environments
- Continue to work with other agencies i.e. Police and Community Safety Partnerships to combat crime and anti – social behaviour
- Work proactively with Health and Adult Services to ensure that older peoples needs are catered for so they can remain in their homes with the correct level of support
- There is a new style estate inspection which rates the area Red, Amber or Green. The first inspection under this new process is scheduled for 18th June 2009 @ 2pm.

Consultation

To give us more detailed information on tenant's aspirations and what it is like to live in the Epworth area, we sent a questionnaire to each tenant

- The response rate was 51%.
- %'s below refer to the number of replies received to each question. Some people chose not to answer or ticked 'No comment'.

This is what you told us:

- 65% are happy with their homes
- 72% like the location
- 43% like the area as they are close to relatives or friends
- 35% consider there to be good local amenities
- 28% considered the area to have a low crime rate
- 26% dislike the lack of good transport services
- 16% dislike the lack of private space
- 76% are settled in the area and do not wish to move
- 31% would like the caretakers to visit when necessary
- 56% would like better parking facilities
- 26% would like a planned painting programme
- 30% would like speed ramps
- 26% would like better street lights
- 24% would like better security
- 57% are not happy with the police presence in the area (but 26% are)
- 50% are not aware of the opportunities for tenant involvement

Proposed Improvements

The stock condition survey has identified investment works needed to our properties. Epworth is timetabled for all improvement works to start in April 2010. Subsequent programmes in future years will pick up environmental and estate related issues. Some ad-hoc improvement works have already taken place but these are only scheduled in if there is an urgent need. To date the following has been replaced:

Epworth progress

Bathroom Fittings	1
Boiler Replacement	2
Central Heating Systems	6
External Doors	1
Fires	4
Kitchen	4
Windows	3
Wiring	4

The business plan budget allocated for improvement works in Epworth is **£1,588,660**. By October 2008 a total of **£39,322** has been expended on all improvement work.

The stock condition survey told us that in order for all our homes to meet the North Lincs Decent Homes Standard around £164 million needs to be spent over the next 10 years on repairs and improvements.

In order to meet the North Lincs standard the following work needs to be carried out before 2012.

<u>Element</u>	<u>Programme Numbers</u>
Bathroom Fittings	6,129
Boiler Replacement	1,193
Central Heating Systems	3,756
Chimney	3,793
External Doors	6,675
External Walls	3,275
Fires	3,092
Kitchen	5,056
Roof	4,608
Roof Line	4,386
Windows	5,721
Wiring	6,420

In Conclusion

This plan will continue to be reviewed and updated. Whilst environmental improvements may well be the priority for residents, initial spending will have to

focus on works to improve tenant's homes to ensure that the North Lincs Decent Homes Standard is met. However, it is also important that people feel safe and secure in their homes, and want to live and remain in them for many years to come – which is why estate improvements and environmental works have been identified. North Lincolnshire Homes want to meet the aspirations of tenants and although it does not have the resources to carry out all of the works that are needed it is important to identify the priorities for each estate.