

Estate Plan

Barton Town

This plan covers the following areas and number of properties:

Location	No	Location	No
Council Terrace Castledyke	6	Newport Street	13
Dam Road	5	Overton Court	76
Finkle Lane	4	Overton House Overton Court	4
High Street	1	Ravendale	1
Hungate House Hungate	8	Soutergate	6
Kingston View	1	Victoria Drive	31
Maltby Lane	2	Willow Drive	17

Estate Description

The Barton Town area has 175 properties, which are made up as follows:

Type	1 Bed	2 Bed	3 Bed	No of Properties (175)
Flats – Ground Floor	46	12	0	58
Flats – First Floor	6	12	0	18
Maisonettes – First Floor	0	0	28	28
Bungalows	10	14	0	24
Houses	0	15	32	47

All properties are of a traditional brick build. A recent stock survey has shown them to be well constructed and structurally sound. Almost half are situated in the Overton Court area, which is fairly central to the town centre. In the past, the elderly populated the ground floor flats at Overton Court, but these have become less popular due to the family sized maisonettes above and are now mainly occupied by young single people.

Overton Court has garages and some areas for parking but would benefit from grassed areas being remodelled to provide spaces nearer to properties. With its central location, the area can be prone to car crime and vandalism. There are 2 fenced off play areas for children but the hard surfaces are not well maintained and weeds have flourished. The blocks of flats and maisonettes have had new door entry systems, which has given greater security. Paths are in a bad state of repair with many potholes and cracks, which has allowed weeds to develop.

At Council Terrace, parking is very limited due to the school on the opposite side of the road and the presence of yellow lines. Pick up and drop of times are quite congested due to the narrow road. Due to the location however, further car parking provision is not possible.

The flats and houses on Finkle lane and Newport Street lack open space as they are situated directly next to the footpaths. Parking and access is tight but there is

little scope for extra provision. The houses are very small, not well sound proofed and only really suitable for single people. Although there is parking to the back of the houses, this is limited. Fencing to the flats regularly gets vandalised. Finkle Lane flats have generally been neglected and are in need of new windows although a new secure entry door has recently been fitted

Hungate House, which provides accommodation for the elderly, is in need of perimeter fencing to give some defensible space and privacy. This is situated on the busy high street and lacks parking facilities. If needed, the grassed area could be remodelled to provide some parking spaces but there might be difficulty in preventing non – residents from using them.

Soutergate properties have open front gardens and would benefit from fencing and gates to give privacy. Parking is also very limited on this narrow lane.

There is no parking provision near to bungalows and houses at Willow Drive although there is a block of garages nearby which are in need of painting. New windows and doors are needed and new fencing to rear gardens.

Barton is one of the principal growth settlements within the county. It has good local facilities, services and employment and is close to both the Humber Bridge and the A15 providing access to the M180 and other motorways.

The town centre provides a full range of facilities including schools. There are bus and rail links to the outlying villages, Scunthorpe and Grimsby. Crime within the town is fairly high with on average 129 reported incidents per month during 2004. Figures for the number of youths causing annoyance have interestingly regularly been higher in Barton than in some areas of Scunthorpe. The police have however been working closely with various agencies including NLH, Youth Offending Team, schools, voluntary sector and resident associations to share information and try to curb problems of anti social behaviour in the town centre.

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: There are no red indicators

Amber:

Relets in year as % of tenancies	9.71%
Tenancies of 2 – 5 years in length	17.14%
Tenancies under 2 years in length	22.29%

Green: there are no green indicators

Other indicators:

Empty properties at 31/10/08	0.57%
Transfer requests outwards	13.14%
Tenancies of 5+ years in length	60.00%
Potential income after empty property loss	£486885.05
Repairs expenditure per annum (07/08 actuals)	£54710.05
Repairs in voids per annum (07/08 actuals)	£10622.87
Costs above/below potential income	£421552.13
Tenants in receipt of housing benefit	67.43%

Comments on Performance Indicators

Properties in Barton town are generally medium demand due to the town centre location but there is lower demand for the properties in Overton Court which make up a good part of this area. Although the number of tenancies in the 2 to 5 year range has decrease, the number of long term residents has increased from to 67.43% showing stability in the area. This shows that the area, in general, is sustainable.

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 bulk of properties situated just off the main shopping areas are visited at least 3 times a week. Overton Court in particular is visited on almost a daily basis. The high visibility of Housing Officer presence and regular litter picks by the caretakers has improved the appearance of the estate. Regular visits to Starte (Assured Shorthold) tenants have ensured that anti – social behaviour is kept to a minimum and properties and gardens are generally well maintained. Other parts of the area do not need so much management input and therefore the Housing Officer will only visit once a month to pick up on any tenancy enforcement or estate management issues.

Support Officers also visit residents in elderly designated properties on a weekly basis. They will liaise with the housing office, repairs call centre and other agencies as necessary.

A Residents Association was in existence for a few years at Overton Court, which had a positive impact, but this folded. Whilst active, successful bids were made for estate based budget money which has funded new windows and fencing in recent years.

This area is regularly monitored by the police as well as housing. The Housing Officer works closely with the Local Policing Team and undertakes joint visits to where appropriate. Due to the mix of residents there can be problems between the young and the elderly. There are known drug issues and anti social behaviour on a fairly regular basis, which includes youths causing annoyance as well as vandalism and crime. Noise within the blocks can cause a nuisance to some residents. Although secure entry doors have been fitted, these are often abused and need constant repairs to keep them secure. Fly tipping is an ongoing problem.

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. 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 by attending Neighbourhood Action Team Meetings and Area Action Team Meetings.
- 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)

- Have an agreement with North Lincolnshire Council's Neighbourhood Services for the upkeep of our estates, which clearly indicates standards and regularity of maintenance to the environment.
- Introduced a new Caretaking Service in June 2008 to keep our estates clean and tidy, and to make them a pleasant place to live.

We also need to:

- Ensure Starter (Assured Shorthold) tenancy visits are carried out as a priority
- Work 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.

Consultation

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

- Unfortunately, only 1 response was received back therefore comments below are not representative of the area as a whole but are worth noting

This is what the respondent told us:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a good community spirit • The area is clean and well kept • There are good local amenities • The area would benefit from garage provision and better parking facilities • Walkways would benefit from being gated or close off • Better security was felt to be the most important improvement needed |
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Proposed Improvements

The stock condition survey has identified investment works needed to our properties. Barton Town was timetabled for windows and doors in April 2007 and for other improvement works in April 2008. Subsequent programmes in future years will pick up environmental and estate related issues. The table below shows the current progress to date:

Barton Town progress

Boiler Replacement	1
Central Heating Systems	32
External Doors	126
Fires	20
Kitchen	23
Roof Line	64
Windows	136
Wiring	94

The business plan budget allocated for improvement works in Barton Town is **£1,950,143**. By October 2008 a total of **£819,809** 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

Other works identified specifically for the Barton Town area are as follows:

- Upgrading of perimeter fencing to Dam Road
- Provision of perimeter fencing to Overton Court houses and Soutergate
- Remodel grassed area to Soutergate (near 22) to provide parking bays
- Provision of fencing to Hungate House to give privacy and defensible space
- Remodel grassed areas to Overton Court to provide parking closer to properties
- Repair / renewal of pathways to Overton Court
- Upgrade to lighting at Overton Court
- Remodel grassed areas to Willow Drive to provide access and parking closer to properties
- Provision of CCTV to Overton Court flats

All the above works have been identified as needing to be done but will be subject to funding becoming available to carry them out. Once these works have been carried out all homes in the area will be maintained to the North Lincs Decent Homes Standard and will provide substantial homes for years to come.

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.