

Estate Plan

Manor Farm, Scunthorpe

This plan covers the following areas and number of properties.

Location	No	Location	No	Location	No
Friars Road	1	Manor Farm Road	15	Oriole Road	3
Kestrel Road	11	Mavis Road	4	Partridge Close	3
Mallard Road	20	Merlin Road	101	Pheasant Close	9

Estate Description

The Manor Farm area has 167 properties, which are made up as follows:

Type	1 Bed	2 Bed	3 Bed	4 Bed	No of Properties (167)
Flats – Ground Floor	22	0	0	0	22
Flats – First Floor	24	0	0	0	24
Houses	0	0	118	3	121

All properties are of a non-traditional Wimpey construction. These homes were built between 1951 and 1968, are of a concrete construction and are structurally sound and well constructed. Although major investment is needed, this is not significantly higher than the traditional brick built properties. Houses on Merlin road have already benefited from replacement doors and windows.

The area is a mixture of family houses, which are fairly popular and flatted accommodation for single people, which has been fairly unpopular since the houses were converted in the 1980's. The problem of noise in the flats is an issue and residents have commented on the need for sound insulation. The estate as a whole is in need of painting and updating. There are very few trees to soften the appearance of the area and those that were planted in front gardens in previous years are now overgrown and in need of cutting back. Block walling to the front of properties is in a poor state of repair.

There is a lack of adequate car parking space and traffic can become congested. Existing car park areas, provided as a planning requirement when the houses were converted to flats, are not well used due to vandalism. There is some scope however for provision of designated parking areas and off road parking. The Closes have very little room for improvement however may benefit from hardstandings being provided where possible and redesign in order to provide better parking. Within the closes many houses are sold but those on Merlin Road where there are a mixture of flats and houses have remained within North Lincolnshire Homes stock.

Despite the fact there is a regular bus service along Manor Farm Road people on the estate feel isolated. There is however school provision for all ages within the area and new houses, for both rent and sale, are being built in the Priory Lane

area nearby which may encourage inclusion in the community. There is a small general store and Community Centre also close by but no childrens play area which residents would welcome. Although there is a school playing field this is closed to the public.

Crime within the area is fairly high with an average 110 reported incidents per month, however this figure is for the area as a whole.

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 as % of total	14.81%
Tenancies under 2 years in length	21.60%

Amber:

Empty properties at 31/10/08	3.09%
Transfer requests outwards	8.64%

Green: There are no green indicators

Other indicators:

Tenancies of 2 – 5 years in length	16.05%
Tenancies of 5 + years in length	62.35%
Potential income after empty property loss	£478239.35
Repairs expenditure per annum (07/08 actuals)	£59523.82
Repairs in voids per annum (07/08 actuals)	£55876.98
Costs above/below potential income	£362838.55
Tenants in receipt of housing benefit	67.28%

Comments on Performance Indicators

With 2 red and 2 amber indicators, there is some cause for concern. The number of empty properties has decreased over the past year but this is only very slight from 3.41% to 3.09%, as has the number of relets during the year, from 18.75% to 14.81%. However, the number of residents who have lived in the area for 5 years+ has stayed fairly stable and is still over 60%.

The Wimpey properties are generally popular and parts of the estate are settled with many houses sold through the Right to Buy. However, it may well be that consideration will have to be given to future sustainability of the flats, as these are where the main movement occurs. In the 1980's, 3 bedroom houses were converted into flats, as there was more demand for this type of accommodation and a surplus of houses. Unfortunately, residents in flats have rarely looked after

communal gardens and areas and these tend to have management problems and need a high level of maintenance. With a growing need for houses and to help increase the sustainability of the area, consideration needs to be given to returning the flats to family sized accommodation.

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 on a regular basis and will deal with any tenancy enforcement issues. The majority of the estate is made up of houses, a few of which have been sold. Some houses have poor fencing, which can inflame neighbour disputes due to lack of personal space or mean a lack of security to private gardens. The gardens to the flats are often not well kept which can make the area appear unkempt. Youths gather at certain places within the area, which can make residents feel intimidated at times; provision of fencing to the walled areas where they congregate could help prevent this.

The waiting list for flats in the area is generally high, both for ground and first floor properties. Whilst houses are also popular, these do not become available on such a regular basis due to the stock dwindling through the Right to Buy.

There is currently no residents association in the area but actions have begun in order to see if there is an interest in setting one up. Residents have mixed feelings towards the North Lincolnshire Homes and the police. Friction is caused by drugs, vandalism, unlicensed cars and loud music.

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 to sign off the inspection to the green standard.

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.

Other works identified specifically for the area are as follows:

- Provision of hard standings to properties where possible
- Provision of parking bays to Partridge Close and Pheasant Close
- Renewal/refurbishment of boundary walls
- Kerbs to be lowered for access to front gardens where possible
- Programme for cutting back and maintenance of trees
- Consideration / consultation on returning flats back to family houses or upgrading and establishing a 'local lettings' policy with age restrictions
- Upgrading of lighting
- Provision of play facilities for children
- Upgrade where needed to Digital Aerials.
- Provision of fencing for communal gardens in order to give tenants a sense of ownership.
- The facades of the rendered properties to be painted.

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

Estate Inspection

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. 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 30th July 2009. Those involved are meeting at the top car park near flats at 2pm.

Consultation

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

- The response rate was 21%.
- %'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:

- 53% are happy with their homes
- 45% like the size of their properties
- 32% like the area as it is away from the town centre
- 47% like the area as they are close to relatives / friends
- 45% consider the area to be noisy / bad
- 26% dislike the lack of facilities
- 24% consider there is no community spirit
- 26% dislike the area due to the high crime rate
- 40% consider the area is unkempt – this is felt to be the worst aspect of the area
- 63% are settled and do not wish to move
- 37% would like to move away – of these, 43% want a larger property, 36% want to move due to problems with neighbours, anti social behaviour or personal reasons
- 42% would like better parking facilities

- 45% would like better play areas for children
- 40% would like speed ramps
- 26% would like garage provision
- 26% would like more secure parking
- 42% would like tidier roads and communal areas
- 32% would like better security – this was considered the most important improvement needed
- 47% have suffered damage to their home or vehicle
- 63% are not happy with the police presence in the area
- 71% are not aware of the opportunities for tenant involvement

Proposed Improvements

The stock condition survey has identified investment works needed to our properties. Manor Farm was timetabled for improvement works to start 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:

Manor Farm progress

Bathroom Fittings	84
Boiler Replacement	6
Central Heating Systems	93
Chimney	134
External Walls	6
Fires	39
Kitchen	60
Roof	139
Roof Line	139
Wiring	84

The business plan budget allocated for improvement works in Manor Farm is **£1,874,298**. By October 2008 a total of **£2,206,700** 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

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.