

## Estate Plan

### Market Hill, Scunthorpe

**This plan covers the following areas and number of properties:**

Location	No	Location	No	Location	No
Chapel Court		Kings Court		Sutton House	
Church Court		Park Court			
Crosby House Flats		Princess House			

### **Estate Description**

The area has 316 properties made up as follows:

Type	1 Bed	2 Bed	3 Bed	No of Properties (48)
Flats – Ground Floor	6	0	0	6
Flats – First Floor	6	0	0	6
Maisonettes – Ground Floor	0	0	38	38
Maisonettes – Second Floor	0	0	38	38
Flats – High Rise	76	152	0	228

Market Hill is located in the town centre within easy walking distance of shops, schools and facilities. The 3 tower blocks are generally popular due to the presence of Concierge staff who greet and screen visitors. This increases resident's security and privacy and helps prevent nuisance and anti social behaviour. The high rise blocks were decorated and totally refurbished both internally and externally in the early 1990's which has made them comfortable homes. Comments have been made recently however about the need for redecoration to the communal areas. Two of the blocks are occupied primarily by over 50's but Sutton House has seen more general needs use. CCTV is in use when the Concierge is not staffed and monitoring is done by the control centre located on site.

The maisonettes surrounding the towers are also quite popular, due to their location rather than type, and there are many applicants on the waiting list for all types of property in the area. External refurbishment has been done to some of the low-rise blocks but this has not been completed due to lack of funding.

Generally the area is pleasant with green space and paved communal areas although the area in front of 13 – 20 Chapel Court suffers from being a thoroughfare to the shops and litter is a constant problem. There is fencing in the area creating defensible space but this could do with updating to enhance visual appearance. Although there are quite a few garages, they are generally in a poor state of repair and derelict, and have tended to suffer from vandalism. The grassed area with sheds near the public house has also suffered badly and walls are constantly being damaged and sheds broken into. There is a children's area near the sheds but this is not well used due to

abuse by older children. Despite the presence of another playground behind the Concierge, there is no equipment or facilities on site to attract children.

Due to the town centre location, the crime rate within the area will be quite high; however numbers refer to the town centre as a whole and are not specifically for this particular section. Previous records recorded an average of 296 reported crimes per month, which is the highest for the county 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:**

Transfer requests outwards	10.16%
Tenancies under 2 years in length	21.27%

#### **Amber:**

Relets in year as % of total	12.38%
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#### **Green:**

Empty homes at 31/10/08	0.32%
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#### **Other indicators:**

Tenancies of 2 – 5 years in length	20.63%
Tenancies of 5 years + in length	58.10%
Potential income after void loss	£803147.71
Repairs expenditure per annum (07/08 actuals)	£163216.88
Repairs in voids per annum (07/08 actuals)	£29256.87
Costs above/below potential income	£610673.96
Tenants in receipt of housing benefit	66.03%

### **Comments on Performance Indicators**

The presence of 2 red and 1 amber indicators for this area is a cause for some concern. The number of transfer requests has increased and there has been more than 10% turnover in properties. Reasons for this outward movement are not fully known and will need to be investigated by various means (exit surveys, customer feedback etc) and procedures put in place to try and reverse the trend.

### **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

**North Lincs Decent Homes Standard**

The Government has instructed Local authorities that all their housing stock must reach the Decent Homes Standard by 2010. However, the North Lincolnshire Standard has been devised by local tenants who want more than the minimum level of improvements to their homes.

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### **Housing Management**

Concierge staff have come to know the residents well and act as a point of contact for all sorts of issues including reporting of repairs.

There is a high turnover of properties on the Estate and a high percentage of tenants that are 'vulnerable' or have support needs. The Housing Officer therefore visits the estate every day and holds a surgery there every Thursday afternoon.

There is a well-established Residents Association which has historically made several successful bids for monies from various sources such as the Estate Based Budget, which financed new Communal Doors and a community garden.

There have been a high number of arson attacks in Sutton House. This has currently ceased due to extensive partnership working with Housing Management staff, Anti-Social Behaviour Team, Humberside Fire and Rescue Service and the Police.

There is a problem with fly-tipping and Housing Management Staff and the Concierge have liaised with Technical Services and the Council and Fire Service to trial a 'designated area' where tenants can leave 'Bulky Items' to be collected by the Council. This is to be reviewed.

Lack of car parking spaces is a problem on the estate, especially on a weekend and over busy periods in Town such as Christmas. Housing Management staff have held site visits with several companies in a view to enforcing their parking permit scheme and have requested quotes from each company.

The riding of motorbikes and mini motos is a has been a problem on the estate. North Lincolnshire Homes in conjunction with Humberside Police have taken action against offenders. However this continues to be a seasonal problem with more complaints in the spring/summer periods, and it consists of mainly youths riding bikes on footpaths, roads and grassed areas without helmets and due care and attention.

## **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 Market Hill area, we sent a questionnaire to each tenant

- The response rate was 28%.
- %'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:

- 51% are happy with their homes and the location
- 41% consider their homes to be of good size
- 61% like the area as it is close to the town centre
- 22% consider the area to be noisy / bad
- 29% commented that the area is unkempt
- Only 17% considered the area to have a high crime rate
- 48% would like caretakers to visit 1 or 2 times a week
- 65% are settled in the area and have no wish to move
- 30% would like more play areas for children
- 18% would like more secure or better parking
- 40% would like tidier roads and communal areas
- 28% think the area would benefit from a planned painting programme
- 60% are not happy with the police presence in the area but 31% are
- 40% are not aware of the opportunities for tenant involvement

### **Proposed Improvements**

The stock condition survey has identified investment works needed to our properties. Market Hill is timetabled for improvement works to start in April 2011. 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:

#### **Market Hill progress**

Central Heating Systems	1
External Doors	2
Kitchen	5
Windows	3
Wiring	4

The business plan budget allocated for improvement works in Market Hill is **£3,027,770**. By October 2008 a total of **£20,802** 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.

<b><u>Element</u></b>	<b><u>Programme Numbers</u></b>
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 Market Hill area are as follows:

- Completion of external refurbishment to maisonettes
- Extend gardens to Chapel Court and provide fencing to create defensible space from cut –through to shops
- Remove sheds and raised grass bed near Chapel Court
- Repair/ paint and refurbish garages, install CCTV and security lighting
- Repairs / relaying of uneven slabs to walkways

### **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