



**Corporate Policy &
Resource Committee**

Thursday 8th February 2024

Subject: Lincolnshire Good Homes Alliance

Report by:	Director of Planning, Regeneration & Communities
Contact Officer:	Sarah Elvin Homes, Health & Wellbeing Team Manager sarah.elvin@west-lindsey.gov.uk
Purpose / Summary:	To inform all Members of the work undertaken on the Good Homes Alliance through the Housing, Health and Care Delivery Group and agree funding for the pilot project Good Homes Lincs.

RECOMMENDATION(S):

- 1. Members support the delivery of the Good Homes Alliance across Lincolnshire.**
- 2. Members allocate £43,933 of funding from the Health and Wellbeing reserve to fund the Good Homes Lincs pilot project.**

IMPLICATIONS

Legal: None

(N.B.) Where there are legal implications the report MUST be seen by the MO

Financial : FIN/89/24/SSt

Approval required to apply £43.9k from the Health & Wellbeing reserve to support this county wide pilot project. This will be a one-off revenue contribution payment to Lincolnshire County Council in 2023/2024.

No other cost implications to WLDC.

The forecast remaining balance on the Health & Wellbeing reserve is £201.1k

(N.B.) All committee reports MUST have a Fin Ref

Staffing :

Posts would not be hosted by West Lindsey

(N.B.) Where there are staffing implications the report MUST have a HR Ref

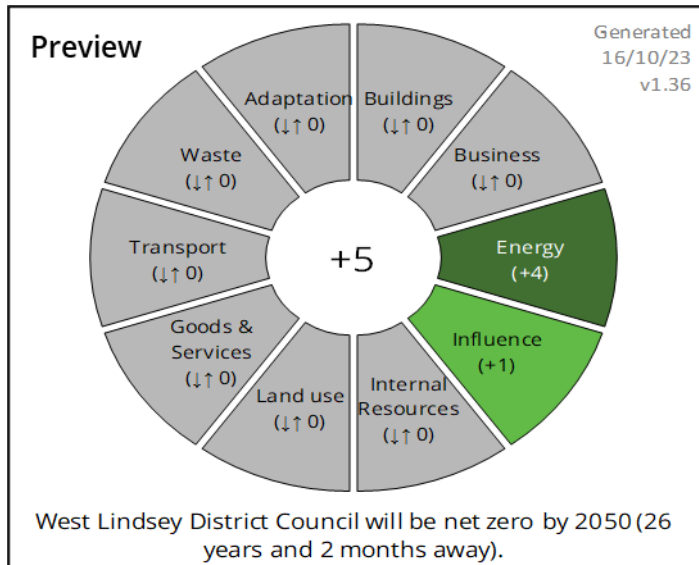
Equality and Diversity including Human Rights :

The Good Homes Alliance will offer a range of services to all groups with no requirement for eligibility for certain aspects of the project ensuring all people can equally access the services.

Data Protection Implications :

The holding of clients data and data sharing agreements will be in place as part of an alliance agreement

Climate Related Risks and Opportunities :



The Good Homes Alliance will assist residents in the area with all things related to their homes, this includes signposting to energy efficiency measures and opportunities to retrofit energy efficiency measures in their homes along with improvements for insulation.

In homes that are off-gas and so fuelled by with oil, the scheme will signpost where there are opportunities to upgrade to more energy efficient heating systems.

The good Homes Alliance will work closely with the new Local Energy Advice Demonstrators which will be based at West Lindsey to ensure anyone who requires energy improvements to their homes are supported.

Section 17 Crime and Disorder Considerations :

None

Health Implications:

Health and Wellbeing is a focus for West Lindsey within the Corporate Plan 2023-2027, including a strategic aim to reduce health inequalities and promote wellbeing across the district through the promotion of healthy lifestyles.

Collectively, Lincolnshire district councils are committed to a strategic, long-term approach to improving health outcomes through district collaboration and by taking a holistic view to the wider determinants of health with housing being a priority across a number of strategies and plans.

The Good Homes Alliance will assist meeting the objectives of a number of strategies and plans including the West Lindsey Corporate Plan, the West Lindsey Housing Strategy, the Lincolnshire Districts Health and Wellbeing Strategy and the Lincolnshire Homes for Independence Blueprint.

Title and Location of any Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:

Centre for Ageing better Good Home Inquiry The Good Home Inquiry | Centre for Ageing Better (ageing-better.org.uk)

Risk Assessment :

A risk assessment and SWOT analysis has been carried out and is attached at appendix 1

Call in and Urgency:

Is the decision one which Rule 14.7 of the Scrutiny Procedure Rules apply?

i.e. is the report exempt from being called in due to urgency (in consultation with C&I chairman)

Yes

No

x

Key Decision:

A matter which affects two or more wards, or has significant financial implications

Yes

x

No

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 This project has seen Lincolnshire District Councils work with Lincolnshire County Council and the Centre For Ageing better to understand how they can bring together Lincolnshire's ambitions around independent living and the Centre for Ageing Better's work on the [Good Home Inquiry](#).
- 1.2 The project has been evidencing the gaps and developing solutions to address the nation's poor-quality homes and devising opportunities to assist more people to improve the condition of their homes and in turn, improve health and wellbeing.
- 1.3 This report details the background work undertaken and then goes on to recommend how those findings can be put into practice across Lincolnshire to create a Good Homes Alliance.
- 1.4 The Lincolnshire Good Homes Alliance will support households through working with other services and organisations across Lincolnshire to form a coordinated service.
- 1.5 The proposal is to deliver the project in two phases:
 - Phase 1: Information and signposting (in progress)
 - Phase 2: Advice and Support (proposed in this report)
- 1.6 The advice and support model would see the addition of four officers, three to provide advice and casework to residents, and one to support the work of the Healthy and Accessible Homes officer (existing post) in delivering the Good Homes Alliance.
- 1.7 Significant work has been progressed by partners in Lincolnshire to engage with the public and other organisations across the county. The findings from this consultation and research has been used to produce and inform the themes a Good Homes Alliance would need to address to assist our residents who are older and vulnerable, to maintain their homes and stay living independently in their homes.
- 1.8 This holistic approach will see up to 1500 residents across Lincolnshire assisted to remain independent within their own homes through a pilot of the Lincolnshire Good Homes Alliance named Good Homes Lincs. The pilot will do the following:
 - Provide advice and support to residents to help them to maintain and improve their homes.
 - Liaise with relevant organisations to resolve housing condition issues for residents.
 - Provide triage for those completing the healthy home assessment.
 - Help residents to access any available funding; and
 - Co-ordinate a holistic response to issues facing residents, helping them to access a range of other services.
- 1.9 It is proposed the West Lindsey contribution for the pilot of £43,933 is funded through Health and Wellbeing reserves held to improve the health and wellbeing of our residents and deliver on the Our People theme of the corporate plan.

2. Background

- 2.1 The Centre for Ageing Better, Lincolnshire County Council and all Lincolnshire district councils have been working together to look at how to support more people to improve the condition of their homes to improve their health and wellbeing.
- 2.2 This project brings together Lincolnshire's ambition to support people to live independently, stay connected and have greater choice in where and how they live and the Centre for Ageing Better's work on the [Good Home Inquiry](#) developing solutions to address the nation's poor-quality homes.
- 2.3 This work has focused on the development of a Good Home Alliance in Lincolnshire to prove the concept as a high-profile example for the rest of the country in line with one of the recommendations from the inquiry –

“– placing a duty on local authorities to ensure every authority has a local ‘Good Home Agency’, a public-facing hub providing access to information and advice, finance schemes, and a range of home improvement services including maintenance and repair, accessibility adaptations and energy retrofit”.

Resident engagement and consultation

- 2.4 Between May 2022 and April 2023, ARK Consultancy were employed by the Centre for Ageing Better to work with a project team alongside Lincolnshire County Council and District Council officers to engage with residents and organisations across the county to understand how more residents could be supported to live in a home that meets their needs and is well maintained.
- 2.5 The project has mainly focussed on older households who are homeowners as households in private rented housing and social housing have established routes of support and enforcement to address property issues. However, they have still been considered and information and advice provided as appropriate.
- 2.6 This process involved:
 - Reviewing existing evidence, nationally and in Lincolnshire – for example, the project estimated there are 29,000 owner-occupied homes, 14,600 private rented homes and 4,400 social rented homes in Lincolnshire which do not meet the decent homes standard.
 - Engaging with individuals, groups and stakeholders to understand issues and barriers.
 - Developing, designing and testing out new solutions.
 - Producing a service framework for delivery in Lincolnshire and elsewhere.
- 2.7 The project engaged with stakeholders across Lincolnshire including:
 - 1093 responses to community survey
 - 68 responses to staff survey
 - Over 40 community groups
 - Over 250 individuals

2.8 Engagement with stakeholders across Lincolnshire resulted in the adoption of the following themes a Good Home Alliance should address:

- **Simplified access to information and services** – A dedicated website (information also available in other forms) would be the core repository for all the collated information, providing a one-stop source for all the relevant information for Lincolnshire, with signposting to other advice services where appropriate.
- **Advice on options** – If the customer needs more support, an advice service and a network of other services would help residents to access further advice and information to assist them to consider all options such as accessing additional casework support to undertake the work or moving to a different home that better meets their needs.
- **Healthy home assessment** – A web-based questionnaire would allow residents and other professional services visiting people in their homes to identify any housing related issues and understand their impact and potential causes. It would prioritise issues and signpost to further information and services.
- **Keeping warm / energy efficiency** – The website and advice service would provide information on energy efficiency measures and how to seek funding and assistance.
- **Trusted tradespeople** – The Trading Standards Buy with Confidence scheme would allow residents to find trusted tradespeople. Greater levels of information about finding and managing tradespeople would be available on the website and via the advice service.
- **Financial solutions** – A range of financial solutions would be offered. The Alliance would work with partners including housing authorities and ethical lending organisations to develop appropriate solutions for Lincolnshire. An initial focus would be on maximising the impact of the products already offered.
- **Support to commission work** – Depending on the level of the clients need and ability, caseworkers would visit people in their home to assess the work needed, and if necessary, produce a specification for the work, supporting residents to gain quotes, and helping them to supervise the works.
- **Practical support** – A network of local services would help residents to deal with the practical issues which may be barriers to them completing work to their homes or pursuing another option such as moving furniture, clearing rooms, and dealing with utilities etc.

2.9 The project also identified the following range of potential financial benefits of improving the condition of homes. It's important to understand where there could be financial cost savings when looking at a pilot project to understand, should the project be a success, where funding could be secured from going forward.

- **Reducing falls** – every hip fracture costs the NHS over £8,000.
- **Reducing hospital stays** – each day in hospital costs the NHS over £350.
- **Reducing the need for residential care** – the County Council pays at least £567 per week for residential care.
- **Reducing the need for care packages at home** – the County Council pays at least £19.65 per hour for non-residential care; and

- **Reducing cold, damp homes** – the Building Research Establishment estimates the cost to the NHS of a home with excess cold as over £750 per year.

3 Progressing the project themes

- 3.1 The project designed how a full Alliance would respond to all the themes which would contribute to many of the existing actions within the Housing, Health and Care Delivery Plan. Given current funding constraints, the Housing, Health and Care Delivery Group agreed to identify the next steps to progress the themes.
- 3.2 The Connect to Support team is building new **housing pages on the website** to provide wide ranging information on how to maintain and improve your home.
- 3.3 The **Healthy Home Assessment** form has been designed and tested by the community co-design group. The Healthy and Accessible Homes Group members are also testing the healthy home assessment.
- 3.4 **Energy efficiency** – bids have been successful for Energy Advice Demonstrators to provide advice to residents.
- 3.5 The County Council Trading Standards team continues to roll-out the **Buy with Confidence** scheme, attracting more trusted tradespeople. District councils have been asked to promote the scheme and to encourage tradespeople to register.

4 Options for progression of themes

- 4.1 The Healthy and Accessible Homes Group has indicated that the next steps outlined in this report cannot be delivered within existing capacity and resources. As a result, there are three options to support the further development of the Good Home Alliance themes:

	Pros	Cons
A. Set up a Lincolnshire Home Improvement Agency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will bring all relevant services under one roof for Lincolnshire. • Potential savings in the long-term as economies of scale are achieved. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time consuming. Will take considerable time to implement. • All districts may not agree. • Two previously unsuccessful examples in Lincolnshire.
B. Progress Good Homes Alliance themes and advice pilot with a core team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Possible to pilot in reasonable timeframe to start helping Lincolnshire residents. • Utilises existing services / teams and voluntary sector. • Will inform future service development. • Links well with Wellbeing Service 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commitment to funding although will seize opportunity of additional BCF funding.

C. Do nothing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No funding commitment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of website and potentially other themes will struggle without additional resources. • Failure to help those most in need as advice and casework support will not be available.
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4.2 The Housing Health and Care Delivery Group have explored all of the options in detail and made a decision to pursue option B.

5 Good Homes Alliance approach - advice and casework model (option B)

5.1 This option would be split into 2 phases:

Phase 1: Information and Signposting (in progress)

Key deliverables:

1. Healthy Home Assessment form
2. Connect to Support webpages.

Phase 2: Advice and Support (proposed)

Key deliverables:

1. Advice and casework pilot

5.2 Earlier phases of the project showed residents want a service to provide some initial information and advice but which they can come back to for further advice as they go through the process of completing work to their home or if they move home.

5.3 Completing works or moving can take significant periods of time so the advice / casework service will support a resident over an extended period. This is a key component of the Good Home Alliance to draw together all the elements and help residents to navigate their way.

5.4 The Housing, Health and Care Delivery Group agreed the pilot of an advice and casework service would establish the best method to provide this component of the Good Home Alliance.

5.5 This service will bring together all the different elements of the identified project themes and inform the potential operating model and scale of service to meet the need in Lincolnshire. The pilot will:

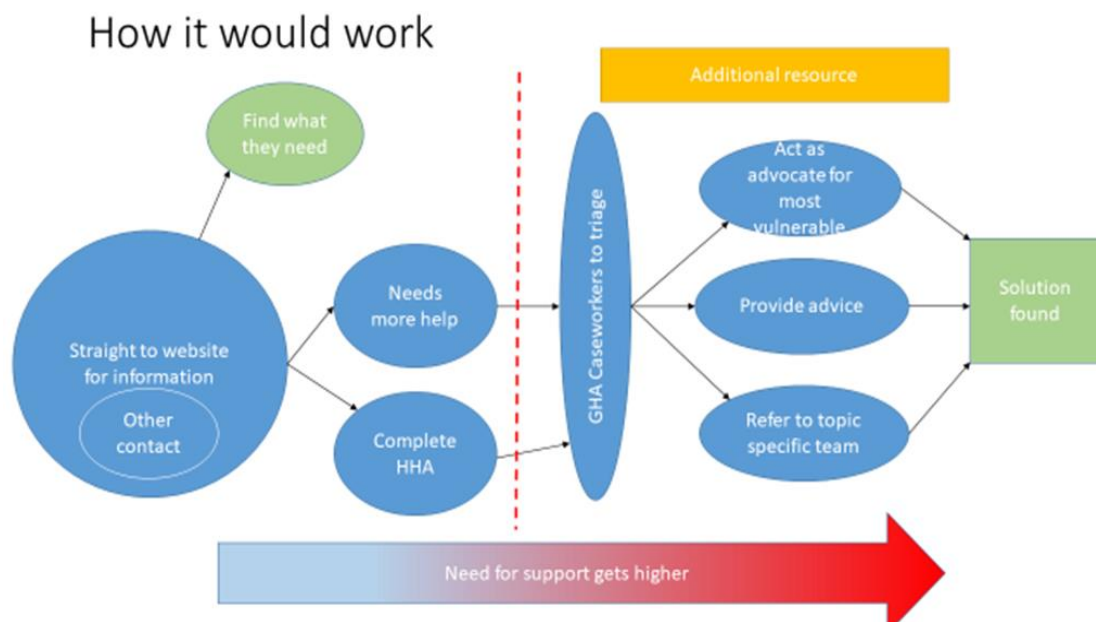
- Provide triage for those completing the healthy home assessment.
- Provide advice and support to residents to help them to maintain and improve their homes.
- Liaise with relevant organisations to resolve housing condition issues for residents.
- Help residents to access any available funding; and
- Co-ordinate a holistic response to issues facing residents, helping them to access a range of other services.

5.6 It is estimated a pilot with three caseworkers would provide advice to between 1,000 - 1,500 households a year. An evaluation on the health, social and economic impact of the service would be commissioned by the Centre for Ageing Better to support the

identification of the next steps to scale up the service in a sustainable way to meet the need.

- 5.7 The service would be based primarily on contact by telephone and email to limit costs with home visits completed when appropriate.

The diagrams below demonstrate how the Good Homes Alliance information, advice and casework approach is envisaged to work with the information allowing many households to resolve their need themselves, escalating to the provision of advice if required, and finally casework, for the more complex cases where the householder is likely to be elderly or vulnerable. The GHA will work with other statutory and voluntary organisations across the county to coordinate advice and casework depending on the range of need.



6. The Lincolnshire Model – Good Homes Lincs

- 6.1 To date, Lincolnshire has adopted the use of ‘Good Home Alliance’ to describe the local approach.
- 6.2 The local service in Lincolnshire is proposed to be named ‘Good Home Lincs’ – consistent with other local community facing services and establishing an identity to communicate and engage partners and the public.
- 6.3 Effectively, in Lincolnshire the advice and support hub will be named ‘Good Home Lincs’ and refer to the range of services, resources and offerings provided by the ‘Alliance’.

6.4 In its entirety, Good Home Lincs will seek to provide simplified access to information and services via a one-stop-shop website; self-help and professional resources (such as the Healthy Home Assessment form); through to advice and support to access Trusted Tradespeople, Financial Solutions, Commissioning Work and providing practical support.



Good Home Lincs

Lincolnshire Good Homes Alliance



7. Financial implications

7.1 The resource requirements to progress the Good Homes Alliance as outlined above are as follows:

- Continue the current Lincolnshire Healthy & Accessible Homes (Housing) Lead role for a further two years. This role will drive the development of all the elements of the Good Home Alliance, have editorial responsibility for the website content, help to deliver training and continue to develop stronger relationships with the range of key partners.
- Introduce an additional role, the Lincolnshire Healthy & Accessible Homes (Housing) Officer, to support the Lead role. This role will collate information from many organisations maintaining the directory of services on the website. The role will also liaise with many organisations to co-ordinate their activity as they contribute to the Alliance.
- Introduce 3 Good Home Lincs Advice and Casework Officers to run the casework and advice pilot. The method of delivering this pilot has not been finalised at this stage and discussions continue with partners.

7.2 The indicative additional cost of the Lincolnshire Healthy & Accessible Homes (Housing) Officer and the three Good Home and Alliance Advice Casework Officers is £486k over the next two years (£243k per annum).

7.3 This is based on average salaries at the South and East Lincolnshire Partnership. The existing Lincolnshire Healthy and Accessible Homes Lead is currently employed by Boston Borough Council, and it is proposed this project is hosted by East Lindsey although this is yet to be formally agreed by East Lindsey District Council.

8 Delivering in West Lindsey

8.1 As this is a Countywide project, it's important to understand how this will be delivered within West Lindsey.

- 8.2 The new Healthy Homes Assessment will be rolled out amongst partners who are already visiting people within their homes. This will allow access to the Good Homes Lincs project where it is identified, through that assessment that there may be issues within their homes. This is a way of accessing people who may not have identified they are having issues within their home that could be affecting their health. This will be done across all areas, and we can monitor how many healthy Homes Assessments are being submitted from West Lindsey, and target our partners where we think this could be increased.
- 8.3 Home Visits will take place for customers who are identified as needing additional support to improve their homes, these will be done across the whole district and how many of these are undertaken and then in turn what action has come out of those can be monitored and reported.
- 8.4 Events to raise awareness of the project will be held throughout the County including within West Lindsey, these will be run by the Good Homes Lincs project with engagement from West Lindsey staff. How many of these sessions are held can then be monitored and engagement with those sessions also captured
- 8.5 Key links will be formed with neighbourhood teams and partners across West Lindsey to ensure the message about this service can be articulated to anyone who comes into contact with residents who may need additional support with their home.
- 8.6 There are already existing good examples of how delivery on Countywide services can assist our residents have access to services that may not have been achievable as a district on our own. These include the Wellbeing Lincs service and Change for Lincs Rough Sleeper Initiative.

9 **West Lindsey Corporate alignment**

- 9.1 The Good Homes Alliance not only meets many of the outcomes detailed within the Housing Health and Care Delivery Group action plan, that West Lindsey have agreed to support, but there are many other strategic outcomes for this project which align to other strategies and plans that West Lindsey have adopted over the past 2 years, including:

West Lindsey Corporate Plan

- Our People

Health and Wellbeing – Reduce health inequalities, promote healthy lifestyles and improve wellbeing across the district.

- Our Place

Quality Housing – Facilitate quality, choice and diversity in the housing market, assist in meeting housing need and demand and deliver high quality housing related services.

West Lindsey Housing Strategy

Improving homes and transforming places

A partnership approach to support choice, wellbeing and independence.

Lincolnshire Districts Health and Wellbeing Strategy

Lever Area – Housing and Homelessness

Improve the supply, quality and coordination of services to meet housing needs and demands by improving the quality of existing accommodation to secure an overall improvement in the health and wellbeing of residents.

Lincolnshire Homes for Independence Blueprint

Vision – People to live independently, stay connected and have greater choice in where and how they live.

Helping people remain in their own homes - Delivery Objectives:

- Ensure services to support people to remain living in their current home compliment each other as a system ide approach*
- Develop a seamless, customer friendly ‘one stop shop’ to deliver cost effective services with the person at the centre.*
- Make the best use of new digital technologies to enable homes for life.*

10 Funding options

10.1 As set out above, an estimated £486k over the next two years (£243k per annum) is needed to progress the Good Homes Alliance model which will consist of of 1 x Lincolnshire Healthy & Accessible Homes (Housing) Officer and the 3 x Good Home and Alliance Advice Casework Officers.

10.2 LCC are proposing to contribute £100,000 to the project. The remainder has been split between the districts using the same proportions as the DFG funding is received through the Better Care Fund.

10.3 The reason behind this approach to funding split is other district council across Lincolnshire are considering utilising additional DFG funding received to pay for the pilot project. However, as the demand for DFG’s in West Lindsey is ever increasing, there is no opportunity to utilise that funding for anything other than mandatory DFG’s.

10.4 The funding requested from each district is detailed below:

	Contribution
Boston	£35,007
East Lindsey	£112,844
Lincoln	£47,140
North Kesteven	£50,379
South Holland	£42,735
South Kesteven	£53,962
West Lindsey	£43,933
Lincolnshire	£100,000
TOTAL	£486,000

10.5 A Health and Wellbeing reserve is in place with the purpose of supporting the delivery of projects aligned to the strategic aims set out in the “our people” theme within the Corporate Plan. It is proposed that this funding is utilised to deliver this project.

11. Project monitoring and updates

- 11.1 The project will be monitored through both the Lincolnshire Healthy and Accessible Homes group and the Housing, Health and Ageing Well Delivery group which includes a Member representative from the administration.
- 11.2 Alongside that, information will be provided to members of the progress of the pilot through six monthly updates within the member newsletters.
- 11.3 Once the two year pilot is completed, an update report will be provided to members to detail the outcomes of the project and possible opportunities for future delivery.
- 11.4 Within appendix 1 is an overview of how the outcomes of the project are going to be monitored and reported. This has been provided to give members assurance that there is not only going to be headline numbers on people who have accessed the service but also include what the actual outcomes and benefits of this service have been to West Lindsey residents.

12. Recommendations

- 12.1 Members support the delivery of the Good Homes Alliance pilot across Lincolnshire.**
- 12.2 £43,933 of funding is drawn down from the Health and Wellbeing reserve to fund this pilot project.**