

SUBJECT:	ESTATE INSPECTIONS
DIRECTORATE:	HOUSING AND INVESTMENT
REPORT AUTHOR:	MARIANNE UPTON, TENANCY SERVICES MANAGER

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To provide feedback on the issues identified during the 2024 Estate Inspections.

2. Lincoln Tenants Panel Consultation

- 2.1 LTP have been involved in this area of work. Five members of LTP attended the Estate Inspections this year.
- 2.2 They now form a working group which is meeting early in November to review the issues raised and as needed, re-visit certain areas to check progress with particular issues.
- 2.3 The group will also be involved in looking at longer term work that was identified during the inspections.

3. Background

- 3.1 It is important to say that the number of issues raised for the whole of our estate areas in Lincoln is relatively low. This reflects better management on the estates by the Housing Officers and Caretakers, the improved repairs processes and ongoing investment in our stock over the past couple of years.

4. Key Themes Identified

- 4.1 The key themes from the estate inspections in 2024 have been: bins, enhancements, fly tipping, general maintenance, graffiti, grounds maintenance, parking, redundant fixtures and repairs.

Issue	Number	%
Bins	14	6.9%
Enhancements	7	3.4%
Fly tipping	40	19.6%
General maintenance	51	25%
Graffiti	6	2.9%
Grounds maintenance/trees/gardens	19	9.3%
Parking	15	7.4%
Redundant fixtures	11	5.4%
Repair	40	19.6%
Private issue	1	0.5%
Total	204	100%

4.2 Bins

The issues with bins are generally about the untidiness at blocks of flats where there are individual bins instead of communal bins and looking at whether these could be changed. Another issue was the siting of bins being too close to the buildings, or where they are not being clipped into their metal posts, so tenants are moving them to other locations that are closer to the buildings.

4.3 Enhancements

These changes are those that would generally improve the look and feel of the estates, not things that resolve repairs or general maintenance issues. Enhancements will change the way that spaces are used and provide more useful spaces for tenants. Examples of this would be where there are unused shed areas or bin stores that are no longer being used which could be repurposed. Any works in this category would need some consultation with local tenants.

4.4 Fly Tipping

This is likely to be a persistent and ongoing problem across the city. It is expensive to clear and hard to police. People who fly tip should be charged (or fined) for this, but it is often difficult to recharge as it is not always clear who has put it there. Given that many of the areas are open spaces, it may not be local residents or tenants leaving items.

4.5 General Maintenance

This category of issues is distinct from repairs because it does not indicate that something is damaged or broken and needs repair. It looks at the maintenance of buildings and communal areas and issues that would normally be done on a cyclical or planned schedule. Examples of this would be guttering needing regular cleaning on flat blocks.

Particular issues were identified in this category with the need to improve regular cleaning of communal windows, flat windows at height that tenants cannot clean and regular cleaning and maintenance of external lighting.

4.6 Graffiti

Much like fly tipping, graffiti is a reactive issue. It's not possible to predict where this will occur or how often it will occur. Depending on the content of the graffiti, the time scales for removal vary, for example, offensive graffiti is removed more quickly.

4.7 Grounds Maintenance/Gardens/Trees

There are various elements to this category. There is general grounds maintenance that is covered by the ground's maintenance contract, where the level of maintenance that has been carried out is not up to standard or areas have been missed. Another element to this is tree work on communal land which falls outside of the contract with Continental and is undertaken for us by the council's Arboricultural Officers. There are also issues with individual tenant gardens that are picked up under this. And finally, issues with gardens to flat blocks where they are

not well kept because each tenant has an individual area allocated to them, so the space is not communal and not covered by the ground's maintenance contract.

4.8 Parking

This is a common issue across the city relating to not enough parking spaces in areas to cater for the fact that people generally have more than one car per household. Discussions about this tend to be looking at ways of increasing the amount of parking and stopping damage to green areas where people are choosing to park their cars. It looks at enhancements to areas through the use of green space or unused land being converted to parking spaces. The schemes would help to manage parking nuisance and prevent the damage to pavements and green areas. Parking schemes can be costly, and they also need to take into consideration the replacement of any green spaces that are used.

4.9 Redundant Fixtures

This relates to fixtures that have been left behind when changes have been made on an estate, such as bins being moved away from blocks, leaving the brick wall in place where they used to be stored which becomes an empty space and can be common sites for fly tipping. Another example would be where blocks have had signs replaced, but the old sign has been left in place rather than removed.

4.10 Repairs

These are individual issues where something is damaged or broken and would be undertaken as a normal repair within the relevant timescales.

4.11 Of the 204 issues raised in the Estate Inspection reports, 20 of them fall outside the responsibility of either Housing or the council.

4.12 The information gathered during the Estate Inspections will now be reviewed by an Lincoln Tenant Panel (LTP) working group (consisting of the 5 members who attended the inspections), which will include re-inspecting particular issues.

4.13 In addition, Officers will follow up on when cyclical or planned maintenance is being scheduled.

4.14 For enhancements to estates, Tenancy Services will work with the Investment Team on plans & feasibility assessments for undertaking any work under the Estate Regeneration strand of the HRA Business Plan. This means that any work will be planned and scheduled over the next few years, rather than having short term targets.

5. **Strategic Priorities**

5.1 Let's deliver quality housing

The appearance and maintenance of our estates has an impact on whether tenants feel they live in a quality home in a well-cared for environment.

5.2 **Let's enhance our remarkable place**

Our estates cover large areas throughout the city and when they are well kept & maintained the enhance the experience of living in, working in and visiting Lincoln.

6. **Organisational Impacts**

6.1 **Finance (including whole life costs where applicable)**

This report is for information only and has no financial impacts.

6.2 **Legal Implications including Procurement Rules**

This report is for information only and has no legal impacts.

6.3 **Equality, Diversity and Human Rights**

The Public Sector Equality Duty means that the Council must consider all individuals when carrying out their day-to-day work, in shaping policy, delivering services and in relation to their own employees.

It requires that public bodies have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination
- Advance equality of opportunity
- Foster good relations between different people when carrying out their activities

This report is for information only and has no equality, diversity or human rights impacts.

7. **Risk Implications**

7.1 **(i) Options Explored**

This report has no risk implications.

7.2 **(ii) Key Risks Associated with the Preferred Approach**

N/A.

8. **Recommendation**

8.1 That the content of the report is noted.

8.2 That LTP has a working group to evaluate the issues raised in the inspections.

Is this a key decision? No

Do the exempt information categories apply? No

Does Rule 15 of the Scrutiny Procedure Rules (call-in and urgency) apply? No

How many appendices does the report contain? 1

List of Background Papers: None

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