

Cabinet



SOUTH
KESTEVEN
DISTRICT
COUNCIL

Tuesday, 3 December 2024 at 2.00 pm
Council Chamber - South Kesteven House, St. Peter's
Hill, Grantham. NG31 6PZ

Cabinet Councillor Ashley Baxter, Leader of the Council (Chairman)
Members: Councillor Paul Stokes, Deputy Leader of the Council (Vice-Chairman)

Councillor Rhys Baker, Cabinet Member for Environment and Waste
Councillor Richard Cleaver, Cabinet Member for Property and Public Engagement
Councillor Phil Dilks, Cabinet Member for Planning
Councillor Philip Knowles, Cabinet Member for Corporate Governance and Licensing
Councillor Virginia Moran, Cabinet Member for Housing
Councillor Rhea Raside, Cabinet Member for People and Communities

Supplement

1. Public Open Forum

The Cabinet welcomes engagement from members of the public. To speak at this meeting please register no later than one working day prior to the date of the meeting via democracy@southkesteven.gov.uk

16. Grantham Town Centre Footfall Activity Report

(Pages 3 - 35)

To update Cabinet on progress made towards the production of an Action Plan for Grantham Town Centre.

18. Annual Complaint Performance and Service Improvement Report 2023/24

(Pages 37 - 57)

To present Cabinet with the 2023/24 Annual Complaint Performance and Service Improvement Report which the Council is required to submit to the Housing Ombudsman

22. Open Questions From Councillors

This page is intentionally left blank



Cabinet

Tuesday 3 December 2024

Report of Councillor Ashley Baxter, The Leader of the Council, Cabinet Member for Finance, HR and Economic Development.

Grantham Town Centre Footfall Report

Report Author

Melanie Brown, Grantham Engagement Manager

melanie.brown@southkesteven.gov.uk

Purpose of Report

To update Cabinet on the progress made towards the production of a Grantham Town Centre Action Plan and request that Cabinet agrees to the short-term actions within the Plan.

Recommendations

That Cabinet:

- 1. Notes the content of this report in respect to the Grantham Town Centre Action Plan.**
- 2. Approves the short-term actions within the Grantham Town Centre Action Plan.**
- 3. Agrees to receive a further report following further feedback from an extraordinary meeting of the Finance and Economic Overview and Scrutiny Committee.**

| | Decision Information |
|--|---|
| Is this a key decision? | No |
| Does the report contain any exempt or confidential information not for publication? | No |
| What are the relevant corporate priorities? | Connecting communities Sustainable South Kesteven Enabling economic opportunities |
| Which wards are impacted? | (All Wards); |

1. Implications

Taking into consideration implications relating to finance and procurement, legal and governance, risk and mitigation, health and safety, diversity and inclusion, safeguarding, staffing, community safety, mental health and wellbeing and the impact on the Council's declaration of a climate change emergency, the following implications have been identified:

Finance and Procurement

1.1 All activities identified in the draft Grantham Action Plan, contained within Appendix 2, can be delivered from existing budgets. The following table shows the allocation of the Council approved budget:

| Budget | Spend 2022- 2023 | Spend 2023- 2024 | Proposed Spend 2025 to deliver Action Plan |
|-------------|------------------|------------------|--|
| £379,092.00 | £64,000 | £105,000 | £210,000 |

Completed by: Richard Wyles, Deputy Chief Executive and s151 Officer.

Legal and Governance

1.2 There are no significant legal or governance implications arising from this report.

Completed by: Graham Watts, Monitoring Officer

2. Background to the Report

2.1 The Council's Corporate Plan commit to "*enable and support a dynamic, resilient and growing local economy*". The Grantham Future High Street Fund (FHSF) is one means by which the Council seeks to meet this ambition.

2.2 In 2021, Cabinet agreed a £5.6m programme of works funded by the Government's FHSF. The programme focuses on improvements to Grantham Town Centre, including public realm improvement schemes to the Market Place and Station Approach.

2.3 To support this programme of works, on 16 July 2020 the Council committed £379,000 of Revenue as match funding. This is ring-fenced for activities including the employment of a Grantham Engagement Manager and the establishment of a 'Grantham Town Team' to act as a strategic advisory body of public, private and third sector partners. A principal task is to support the development of a Town Centre Action Plan and to seek external public and private and third sector partners to support the development of a Town Centre Action Plan. This team will consider: town centre improvements; the delivery of events and activities to

support and increase footfall in the town centre, and the promotion of Grantham as a destination.

2.4 When works commenced on the Market Place in May 2024, the Council received some negative feedback and concerns from businesses in the vicinity of the works, who felt their businesses were being adversely affected. At its Annual Meeting in May, the Council discussed possible measures to support local businesses.

2.5 The Council resolved to review the available budget to possibly add to the already identified mitigations and increase activities to promote footfall to the Market Place in the short and medium term. It was agreed that the Finance and Economic Overview and Scrutiny Committee (FEOSC) would consider this further at its June meeting.

2.6 Alongside a range of measures, the success of these activities will be evaluated against footfall data, which is one of the most reliable sources of information available to understand the health and vibrancy of the town centre and a reporting requirement of the Future High Street Funding.

2.7 Footfall data is not yet available yet for the period of the events, but **Appendix 1** shows the most recent available footfall data (for the period 01/08/24 – 30/09/24). The table below summarises this data. It can be seen that, while weekly visits within the period are volatile, overall footfall has increased by 22%, relative to the same period last year. These results have informed the approach to the Action Plan (**Appendix 2**).

| Week Commencing | Visits 2023 | Visits 2024 | |
|---------------------|----------------|----------------|------------|
| 05-Aug | 27942 | 24854 | -11% |
| 12-Aug | 32804 | 28340 | -14% |
| 19-Aug | 24421 | 27474 | 13% |
| 26-Aug | 14289 | 30851 | 116% |
| 02-Sep | 29463 | 37828 | 28% |
| 09 Sept | 17,070 | 34,150 | 100% |
| 15-Sep | 23549 | 37299 | 58% |
| 22-Sep | 29145 | 31549 | 8% |
| 29-Sep | 31818 | 27789 | -13% |
| Total visits | 230,501 | 280,134 | 22% |

2.8 The development of this plan to promote footfall in the Market Place has been discussed by FEOSC on several occasions. It was agreed to bring a draft 'Action Plan' to the November FEOSC meeting, which would be developed in conjunction with the Grantham Town Team. The Action Plan would include a fully costed feasibility study that had considered the following Interventions recommended by FEOSC at the June Meeting:

- 1 **Parking:** Free parking on market days/midweek to encourage shoppers.
- 2 **Marketing:** implement a grant scheme to enable better promotions.
- 3 **New Traders** – offer financial incentives to new market traders taking up stalls.
- 4 **Rent** – offer financial support rent costs for new town centre businesses.
- 5 **Transport** – provision of free buses to Grantham on market days.

2.9 A draft Grantham Town Centre Action Plan (**Appendix 2**) has been prepared that supports an overall strategy for Grantham Town Centre, both through the delivery of the scheme and the initial period up to December 2025. The draft Action Plan has been developed in collaboration with the Grantham Town Team and is fully funded from existing budgets.

2.10 In producing this draft Action Plan, the options identified in paragraph 2.8 above have been fully considered. **Appendix 3** to this report contains a summary of this feasibility work and identifies which options have been included within the action plan. For example, providing incentives to market traders has been included however it also identifies where further work is required to understand their viability, such as the provision of free buses on market days.

2.11 During the finalisation of the works, up to December 2024, the Action Plan concentrates on maintaining footfall to the town centre, supporting established businesses, and providing incentives to new market traders during the period of the disruptive Highway works. The data shows that footfall was not just maintained during this period it generally shows a year-on-year increase.

2.12 The second phase (between January and July 2025), will investigate

- Additional activity to promote the town to a wider regional audience,
- Providing incentives for the occupancy of void retail units,
- Developing a pipeline of potential future 'Regeneration projects', and
- Providing a comprehensive programme of events to further increase footfall.

2.13 A critical element of the Action Plan is to emerge at the end of the period with a longer-term strategy and a 5-year action plan that will sustain and grow footfall in Grantham Town Centre. This will continue to evolve with the support of a broad partnership of public, private and third sector stakeholders; in collaboration with the Grantham Town Team.

2.14 Since the start of the works in the Marketplace there has been continuous support to businesses affected by the roadworks. This is continuing throughout the Station Approach works. This has included regular engagement with businesses and the

hosting of two events on the newly completed Market Place. The most recent being the 'Grantham Community Event' on the 19th of October. This was well attended by a cross-section of the Grantham public and saw the culmination of weeks of community engagement that involved over 500 residents participating in workshop activity. All initial feedback has been positive.

2.15 One of the options that has been considered has been the introduction of a proposed voucher scheme for Grantham. This has, been amended. Prior to the scheme being launched, Grantham retailers have expressed a desire to do their incentive scheme using their own branding. As a result, Officers have offered support to this process and a small budget has been ringfenced on the Action Plan to respond to their needs.

2.16 The contents of this report were discussed by FEOSC Members at their meeting on the 26 November, where they were asked to:

- 1 **Consider the findings of the feasibility study into options proposed by FEOSC members at their June 2024 committee meeting.**
- 2 **Endorse the Action Plan for Grantham Town Centre (Appendix 2).**
- 3 **Agrees to receive an updated Action Plan after six months.**

After debating the Action Plan, the committee agreed to endorse the first part of the Action up – Short Term proposals up to the end of the calendar year. Additionally, they requested an Extraordinary General Meeting of the Committee to discuss the remaining medium-term actions to allow time for further consideration of the medium and longer term elements of the Action Plan.

3. Key Considerations

- 3.1 The adoption of an action plan for the medium to long term is vital to sustain the activities that have been started and to ensure Grantham continues to attract visitors and boost the economy of the Town.
- 3.2 Grantham Town Team expressed support for the draft Action Plan at a meeting on 4 November 2024.
- 3.3 FEOSC Members requested further scrutiny of the medium and long-term elements of the Action Plan.

4. Other Options Considered

- 4.1 Further work could be carried out to identify additional activities or actions for the Town Centre Action Plan however this would further delay its implementation.

4.2 The council could decide not to adopt an Action Plan, but this would fall short of the commitment that was part of the original FHSF bid.

5. Reasons for the Recommendations

5.1 Delivery of the Grantham Town Centre Action Plan will ensure a collaborative and coordinated approach to sustaining interest and activities in the town centre to ensure Grantham continues to grow and attract visitors. The development of the Action Plan will provide a strategic framework to ensure activities are targeted. Agreeing the short-term elements of the Action Plan will allow the Council to implement the proposed measures to January 2025.

6. Background papers

A –Report to Cabinet “Future High Street Fund” February 2021; Cabinet [Future High Street Fund.pdf](#)

B - Report to Full Council “Future High Street Fund”: [Full Council Report FHS July 2020.pdf](#)

C - Report to Council May 2024 “Grantham Market Place – Possible interventions to encourage footfall and support businesses”; [Grantham Market Place Final Report.pdf](#)

D - Report to Finance and Economic Overview and Scrutiny Committee May 2024 “Grantham Future High Streets Fund – May 224 update”; [FINAL FHSF FEOSC Report - 8th May 2024.pdf](#)

E - Report to Finance and Economic Overview and Scrutiny Committee 27 June 2024[Grantham Future High Streets Fund Market Place Footfall Activity.pdf](#)

F - Report to Finance and Economic Overview and Scrutiny Committee 17 September 2024; [Footfall Final Version.pdf](#)

G- Report to Finance and Economic Overview and Scrutiny Committee 26 November 2024

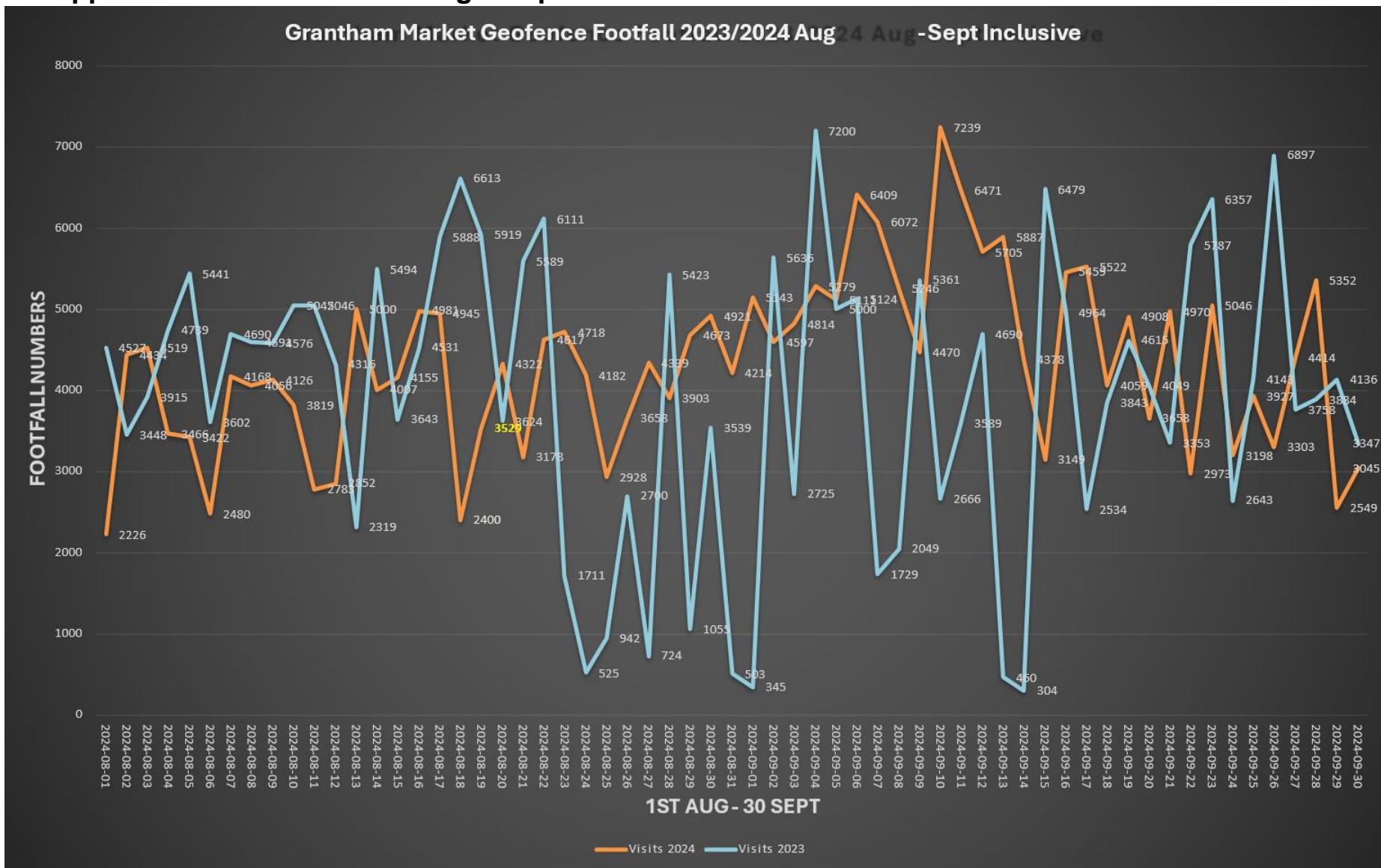
7. Appendices

| | |
|--------------|---|
| Appendix 1 | Footfall Data Aug – Sep 2024 |
| Appendix 2 | Grantham Town Centre Draft Action Plan |
| Appendix 3 | Feasibility Study Summary |
| Appendix 4 | Callconnect Aslackby – Grantham bus timetable |
| Appendix 4.1 | Callconnect Stamford – Grantham bus timetable |
| Appendix 5 | Centrebus Saturday timetable |
| Appendix 6 | Geofence Map Grantham Market Place |

This page is intentionally left blank

Appendix 1

Appendix 1 – Footfall Data Aug – Sep 2024



This page is intentionally left blank

Appendix 2 - Grantham Town Centre Draft Action Plan

| 1) Short term to Christmas 2024 | Project | Detail | Cost | Comments |
|---------------------------------|-------------------|--|-----------------------|---|
| Promotion | Events | To support planned December events. | £1,000 | 1 st December – Christmas Market – to assist with the Gingerbread trail throughout the town. Support businesses with Small Business Saturday 7 th December. |
| Grantham Market | Market Study | The high street retail market review has been received and we are already implementing some of the ideas. E.g. Additional markets/attractions | £10,000 £3,000 | Initiative to encourage new traders. Promotion and delivery of additional markets. e.g. Antiques, Youth Market, Makers Markets etc Street theatre/performers from December to March. With 2 weeks in December in the lead up to Christmas. |
| Engagement | Town Team | Bi-monthly meetings | £0 | To support the development, delivery and monitoring of an Action plan to be drawn up for calendar of events for 2025, delivery, feasibility, cost, etc. |
| | Town Relationship | Engagement has started and will continue. | £0 | Engagement Manager visiting local retailers and other business owners. Gives people a specific point of contact, etc. Primary focus to support the businesses in the direct vicinity of the FHSF works. |



| | | | | |
|--------------------------------------|--|---|--------|--|
| Marketing | Marketing Plan | Develop Marketing plan | £7,000 | Working to develop with comms @visit Grantham. This will remind users of the town to keep visiting during the FHSF works. |
| | Wayfinding | A strategy being developed for all 4 towns in SK including Grantham. | £0 | Inform / review recommendations for Grantham and develop the strategy into a prioritised action plan. Funding being sought externally. |
| 2) Medium Term Jan- July 2025 | | | | |
| Marketing | Loyalty Card scheme | A loyalty card scheme for shoppers across Grantham Town Centre | £3,000 | Support the delivery by the Grantham Retail Group of the #shopgrantham loyalty card scheme they are implementing. |
| Product Development | Create a business case for a 5-year action plan. | Work with the town team to create a Strategy and longer-term Action Plan for the town, supported by a viable business case. | £0 | Conclusion of plan, supported by a business case which will articulate how this will be delivered. |
| Regeneration | | Support the economic development team in the development of a pipeline of Regeneration projects. | £0 | Pipeline of projects being developed. |
| | Pop-up Shops or Pop-up Market Stalls | Propose offering void retail units in the town as “pop up shop” for business startups. | £8,000 | Empty businesses premises are being identified by Economic Development team in the town centre. Landlords are being approached to ascertain interest in this scheme. |



SOUTH
KESTEVEN
DISTRICT
COUNCIL

| | | | | |
|-----------|---------------------------|---|----------|--|
| | Business Support | Identified in the High Street Experts review the recommendation to offer additional business support. | £0 | External funding being sourced through external funding to provide 'Trader Support Package' as recommended following High Street Experts review and subsequent market action plan development. |
| | Public Realm improvements | Looking at how this would enhance the town centre. Keeping the versatility of the spaces, inducing longer "dwell time" in the space and being more aesthetically attractive. | £0 | Officers in the process of obtaining a Stage 4 stage design – re the greening, seating and power for the Marketplace. External funding being sourced. |
| | Business in Bloom | An annual competition to encourage local businesses to improve "kerb appeal" To increase the pride in the town and the aesthetic. | £5000 | The council has spoken to some businesses in the marketplace, and they are keen to participate in this if we provide planters etc. They will maintain them (part of the greening initiative – include the cost of the planters for businesses in that area) |
| Promotion | Events | Preliminary programme of events costed. Monthly events to work in conjunction with the Markets. School holiday activities and events. Also, a community event for local talent. Lincolnshire Day – combined with Saturday market and school involvement. | £114,000 | A varied programme of events to involve people from the town and visitors. A regular event schedule to encourage people into the area and extend "dwell time" /interaction with local businesses. There is a proposed calendar of events together with anticipated costs (including the associated staff costs) This is a preliminary plan only at this stage. |



SOUTH
KESTEVEN
DISTRICT
COUNCIL

| | | | | |
|---|----------------------|--|---|--|
| Grantham Market | Market Resources | Purchase additional equipment as required as identified by Markets manager and in line with Marketplace study and continue developing market. | £0 | External funding being sought. |
| Marketing | Marketing Strategy | Deliver the marketing plan. | £5000 | Promote Grantham to a wider catchment area. |
| Engagement | Town Relationship | Continuation of building relationships with businesses and individuals | £0 | |
| | Town Team | Collaborate on long term plan for the town. Combining the skills and enthusiasm of this group of stakeholders to increase footfall to the town centre. | £0 | When/if necessary, co-opt individuals to deliver the town team action plan or plan further events. |
| 3) Long Term August 2025 – August 2030 | | | | |
| Delivery Phase | Deliver the strategy | Proposed projects above/projects agreed with Town Team, council and other partners | TBC | 5-year plan in partnership with private and third sectors. |
| | | Total Action Plan Cost Staff Costs Total Delivery Cost | £155,000 £55,000 £210,000 | Staff costs relate to Grantham Engagement Manager's existing contract to July 2025. |



SOUTH
KESTEVEN
DISTRICT
COUNCIL

Feasibility Study Summary – Appendix 3

| | |
|---|--|
| <p>Incentive schemes including:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Free parking on market days/mid-week to encourage shoppers | <p>Review at 6 months, £0</p> <p>Cabinet at their meeting on 24.09.24 agreed a new set of car parking tariffs for the Grantham Pay and display car parks to be implemented at the earliest opportunity. The new tariffs include free 1 hour parking at the Council car parks (except for Wharf Road which has 2 hours free parking)</p> <p>Cabinet also agreed to monitor the impact of the new charges 6 months after their implementation to assess whether the new tariffs have had a positive impact on usage, demand and any other behavioural changes.</p> <p>Given these positive changes to the carparking offer, Richard Wyles, Deputy Chief Executive and s151 Officer agreed with the Chair of FEOSC to defer any further recommended modifications until the 6 months review has taken place.</p> <p>The results of the review will be presented to FEOSC meeting, and the Committee can then consider whether any further suggested changes can be proposed.</p> <p>Recommend that the committee accept this recommendation, for the retailers to implement their own loyalty card scheme with our support and business support package. £3000</p> <p>The Grantham Retailers Group are planning to implement their own loyalty card scheme, and we propose to support their initiative #shopgrantham.</p> <p>Implement the High Street Retail Market Review recommended business support package to assist traders with enhancing their branding, presentation and promotion, along with digital marketing, promotional campaigns etc. This will help our traders thrive and contribute to the vitality of the market.</p> <p>There is a marketing support package we propose to implement under UKSPF to produce marketing materials in support of High Street Experts supports package, Marketing materials to promote markets to</p> |
| 21 | |

Feasibility Study Summary – Appendix 3

| | |
|----|---|
| 22 | <p>users, and to promote opportunities on the Market to current and new traders, and development of an SKDC Markets website</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">------ Financial incentives for new market traders taking up stalls- Financial incentives to support rent costs for new town centre businesses <p>Recommend that we implement this proposed scheme, £10,000.</p> <p>We propose to offer new traders a 4-week fee free period to encourage new traders to Grantham Market. And that this scheme runs for a period of a year and is actively promoted by the markets team, town team, councillors, etc. This would cost approximately £8000 (maximum 5 new stalls per 4-week period) The markets team will in conjunction with this work to offer free markets stalls to traders who recommend new stallholders.</p> <p>Recommend that we trial this scheme as soon as possible with the premises identified, £8,000.</p> <p>The Economic Development Team intend to set up a “Pop Up” shop programme. In designing this scheme we’ve identified a list of businesses who would participate in this scheme. We are currently exploring options for this with landlords within the town centre. The concept is to offer businesses a 10-week period to “try out” with a 2-week period to setup/launch a new retailer in that space.</p> <p>Support a project for local artists to display Art in vacant shop units within the town, with the consent of the landlords. This will improve the aesthetics until such times as the units are occupied.</p> <p>Further feasibility work is required to identify the most suitable premises. A long list of sites is being developed and a list of potential tenants is being formed.</p> |
|----|---|

Feasibility Study Summary – Appendix 3

| | |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">- The provision of free buses to Grantham from outlying regions/other towns for Market days. | <p>Recommend that we review this further– regular buses on rural routes on a Saturday already exist, £0.</p> <p>Officers have looked at the prospect of this and discounted this due to there being no requirement at the present time.</p> <p>Callconnect operate a bookable bus service into Grantham from all the outlying villages as well as the regular timetable offered by Callconnect (appendix 4) They offer a 6 day a week service Monday – Friday 7am- 7pm and Saturdays from 8am – 6pm. The Callconnect service allows people to book the service to suit their needs/appointments/timings. The fee is currently capped at £2 but will rise to £3 on 01.01.25.</p> <p>Centrebus also run a very regular service throughout the town and surrounding villages.</p> <p>Other bus companies also offer incentives to encourage visitors from out of town to visit at weekends and during the school holidays e.g. 2 adults 15% off and 2 children free of charge.</p> <p>For the Christmas market/light switch on 1st December 2024, Centrebus will be providing additional bus services from surrounding villages specifically for this event. Further work is planned after this event to see how we could work with Centrebus or other bus companies in offering “event” buses for future Marketplace/town centre events.</p> <p>This activity will be further reviewed as part of the development of the longer-term action plan.</p> <p>Appendices 4, 4.1 and 5 show and example of the frequency of buses on rural routes on a Saturday.</p> |
|--|--|

Feasibility Study Summary – Appendix 3

Callconnect

GRANTHAM - STAMFORD

Callconnect 4

Timetable effective from 02 January 2024

| Monday to Saturday | | | | | | | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|--|
| Days | Sch | SH | S | NS | NS | S | S | NS | NS | |
| Grantham, Bus Station | 0700 | 0700 | ... | ... | 1000 | 1015 | 1315 | 1330 | ... | |
| Grantham, Prince William Barracks | 0706 | 0706 | ... | ... | 1006 | 1021 | 1321 | 1336 | ... | |
| Old Somerby, Fox & Hounds | 0709 | 0709 | ... | ... | 1009 | 1024 | 1324 | 1339 | ... | |
| Boothby Pagnell, Letter Box | 0712 | 0712 | ... | ... | 1012 | 1027 | 1327 | 1342 | ... | |
| Bitchfield, The Crown | 0716 | 0716 | ... | ... | 1016 | 1031 | 1331 | 1346 | ... | |
| Corby Glen, Fighting Cocks Inn | 0722 | 0722 | 0752 | 0928 | 1022 | 1037 | 1337 | 1352 | 1603 | |
| Swinstead, Croake Hill | 0726 | 0726 | 0756 | 0932 | 1026 | 1041 | 1341 | 1356 | 1607 | |
| Creeton, Counthorpe Road | 0730 | 0730 | 0800 | 0936 | 1030 | 1045 | 1345 | 1400 | 1611 | |
| Little Bytham, The Mallard | 0733 | 0733 | 0803 | 0939 | 1033 | 1048 | 1348 | 1403 | 1614 | |
| Castle Bytham, Castle Inn | 0740 | 0740 | 0810 | 0946 | \ | 1055 | 1355 | 1410 | 1621 | |
| Holywell, Home Farm House | 0744 | 0744 | 0814 | 0950 | \ | 1059 | 1359 | 1414 | 1625 | |
| Careby, Station Road | 0747 | 0747 | 0817 | 0953 | 1036 | 1102 | 1402 | 1417 | 1628 | |
| Carlby, Village Hall | 0755 | \ | \ | \ | \ | \ | \ | \ | \ | |
| Essendine, Village Hall | 0757 | \ | \ | \ | \ | \ | \ | \ | \ | |
| Ryhall, Coppice Road | 0800 | 0754 | 0824 | 1000 | 1043 | 1109 | 1409 | 1424 | 1635 | |
| Stamford, Peterhouse Close | 0810 | \ | \ | \ | \ | \ | \ | \ | \ | |
| Stamford, Rutland Road | 0814 | 0759 | 0829 | 1005 | 1048 | 1114 | 1414 | 1429 | 1640 | |
| Stamford, Morrisons Car Park | \ | 0802 | 0832 | 1008 | 1051 | 1117 | 1417 | 1432 | 1643 | |
| Stamford, Bus Station [1] | 0825 | 0809 | 0839 | 1015 | 1058 | 1124 | 1424 | 1439 | 1650 | |

STAMFORD - GRANTHAM

Callconnect 4

Timetable effective from 02 January 2024

| Monday to Saturday | | | | | | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|--|
| Days | NS | S | S | NS | NS | SH | Sch | NS | |
| Stamford, Bus Station [1] | 0835 | 0905 | 1205 | 1135 | 1305 | 1505 | 1505 | 1725 | |
| Stamford, Morrisons Car Park | 0842 | 0912 | 1212 | 1142 | 1312 | 1512 | \ | 1732 | |
| Stamford, Rutland Road | 0845 | 0915 | 1215 | 1145 | 1315 | 1515 | \ | 1735 | |
| Stamford, Churchill Road | \ | \ | \ | \ | \ | \ | 1510 | \ | |
| Ryhall, Coppice Road | 0850 | 0920 | 1220 | 1150 | 1320 | 1520 | 1518 | 1740 | |
| Essendine, Village Hall | \ | \ | \ | \ | \ | \ | 1521 | \ | |
| Carlby, Village Hall | \ | \ | \ | \ | \ | \ | 1523 | \ | |
| Careby, Station Road | 0857 | 0927 | 1227 | 1157 | 1327 | 1527 | 1531 | 1747 | |
| Holywell, Home Farm House | 0900 | 0930 | 1230 | 1200 | 1330 | 1530 | 1534 | 1750 | |
| Castle Bytham, Castle Inn | 0907 | 0937 | 1237 | 1207 | 1337 | 1537 | 1541 | 1757 | |
| Little Bytham, The Mallard | 0911 | 0941 | 1241 | 1211 | 1341 | 1541 | 1545 | 1801 | |
| Creeton, Counthorpe Road | 0914 | 0944 | 1244 | 1214 | 1344 | 1544 | 1548 | 1804 | |
| Swinstead, Croake Hill | 0918 | 0948 | 1248 | 1218 | 1348 | 1548 | 1552 | 1808 | |
| Corby Glen, Fighting Cocks Inn | 0922 | 0952 | 1252 | 1222 | 1352 | 1552 | 1556 | 1812 | |
| Bitchfield, The Crown | 0928 | 0958 | 1258 | 1228 | \ | \ | \ | 1818 | |
| Boothby Pagnell, Letter Box | 0931 | 1001 | 1301 | 1231 | \ | \ | \ | 1821 | |
| Old Somerby, Fox & Hounds | 0934 | 1004 | 1304 | 1234 | \ | \ | \ | 1824 | |
| Grantham, Prince William Barracks | 0938 | 1008 | 1308 | 1238 | \ | \ | \ | 1828 | |
| Grantham, Bus Station | 0944 | 1014 | 1314 | 1244 | \ | \ | \ | 1834 | |

Code

- SH - School Holidays
- Sch - Schooldays Only
- NS -Not Saturdays
- S -Saturday Only

Valid from 2 January 2024

If you wish to travel in your wheelchair on this service please call 0345 234 3344 for advice

This page is intentionally left blank

Callconnect

Billingborough - Grantham Aslackby - Grantham

Monday to Friday

CallConnect 26 Centrebus 26

CB CC

W

| | | |
|-------------------------------------|------|------|
| Aslackby, Robin Hood PH, adj | 0720 | -- |
| Rippingale, St Andrew's Church, adj | 0725 | -- |
| Dowsby, Fen Road, opp | 0728 | -- |
| Pointon, Village Hall, opp | 0732 | -- |
| Billingborough, High Street, adj | 0736 | 1030 |
| Folkingham, Market Place, adj | 0742 | 1035 |
| Pickworth, Village | -- | B |
| Pickworth, Pickworth Lodge, opp | 0747 | 1043 |
| Lenton, St Peter's Church, adj | 0752 | 1047 |
| Ingoldsby, Primary School, opp | 0755 | 1050 |
| Humby, Old Manor House, opp | 0800 | 1055 |
| Ropsley, The Green Man PH, opp | 0805 | 1100 |
| Old Somerby, Middle Path, opp | 0810 | 1105 |
| Grantham, Bus Station | 0822 | 1115 |

Grantham - Billingborough Grantham - Aslackby

Monday to Friday

CallConnect 26 Centrebus 26

CC CB

W

| | | |
|--|-------|------|
| Grantham, Bus Station, Stand 6 | 1315 | 1650 |
| Grantham, Prince William Barracks, o/s | 1320 | 1655 |
| Old Somerby, Middle Path, opp | 1325 | 1700 |
| Ropsley, Woodend, opp | 1330 | 1705 |
| Humby, Old Manor House, adj | 1335 | 1710 |
| Ingoldsby, Primary School, adj | 1340 | 1715 |
| Lenton, St Peter's Church, opp | 1343 | 1718 |
| Pickworth, Pickworth Lodge, adj | 1347 | 1722 |
| Pickworth, Village | 1349s | -- |
| Folkingham, Market Place, opp | 1355 | 1727 |
| Billingborough, West Street, opp | 1400 | 1732 |
| Pointon, The Old Ship Inn, opp | -- | 1736 |
| Dowsby, Fen Road, adj | -- | 1740 |
| Rippingale, St Andrew's Church, opp | -- | 1745 |
| Aslackby, Robin Hood PH, opp | -- | 1750 |

Notes:

W - Wednesday only

s - Set down only

B - Requested stop must be booked more than 2 hours in advance: call 0345 234 3344

CC - Operated by CallConnect

CB - Operated by Centrebus

This page is intentionally left blank

Appendix 5
Centre Buses Saturday Timetable

| Bus Station | 07:15 | 08:45 | --- | 10:50 | --- | 12:50 | --- | --- | 15:50 | --- |
|------------------------|-------|-------|-----|-------|-----|-------|-----|-----|-------|-----|
| Grantham (Stand 4) | | | | | | | | | | |
| Ostler Close | --- | 08:54 | --- | 10:59 | --- | 12:59 | --- | --- | 15:59 | --- |
| Gonerby Hill Foot (NE) | | | | | | | | | | |
| Post Office | 07:24 | 09:00 | --- | 11:05 | --- | 13:05 | --- | --- | 16:05 | --- |
| Great Gonerby (N) | | | | | | | | | | |
| Downtown Superstore | 07:28 | 09:04 | --- | 11:09 | --- | 13:09 | --- | --- | 16:09 | --- |
| 29 Great Gonerby (SW) | | | | | | | | | | |
| Woods Close | 07:38 | 09:14 | --- | 11:19 | --- | 13:19 | --- | --- | 16:19 | --- |
| Long Bennington (NW) | | | | | | | | | | |
| Village Hall | 07:43 | 09:17 | --- | 11:22 | --- | 13:22 | --- | --- | 16:22 | |
| Long Bennington (N) | | | | | | | | | | |
| Council Houses | 07:48 | 09:22 | --- | 11:27 | --- | 13:27 | --- | --- | 16:27 | |

Appendix 5

Centre Buses Saturday Timetable

Westborough (E)

Claypole Lane

Dry Doddington (E)

| | | | | | | | | | |
|-------|-------|-----|-------|-----|-------|-----|-----|-------|-----|
| 07:51 | 09:25 | --- | 11:30 | --- | 13:30 | --- | --- | 16:30 | --- |
|-------|-------|-----|-------|-----|-------|-----|-----|-------|-----|

Village Hall

Claypole (W)

| | | | | | | | | | |
|-------|-------|-----|-------|-----|-------|-----|-----|-------|-----|
| 07:55 | 09:29 | --- | 11:34 | --- | 13:34 | --- | --- | 16:34 | --- |
|-------|-------|-----|-------|-----|-------|-----|-----|-------|-----|

Collinson Lane

Fernwood (E)

| | | | | | | | | | |
|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| 08:01 | 09:35 | 10:40 | 11:40 | 12:40 | 13:40 | 14:40 | 15:40 | 16:40 | 17:40 |
|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|

Elton Close

Balderton (SW)

| | | | | | | | | | |
|-----|-------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| --- | 09:41 | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|-----|-------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|

Smith Street

Balderton (N)

| | | | | | | | | | |
|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| 08:11 | 09:47 | 10:50 | 11:50 | 12:50 | 13:50 | 14:50 | 15:50 | 16:50 | 17:50 |
|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|

Lombard Street

Newark (NW-bound)

| | | | | | | | | | |
|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| 08:20 | 09:54 | 10:57 | 11:57 | 12:57 | 13:57 | 14:57 | 15:57 | 16:57 | 17:57 |
|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|

Appendix 5

Centre Buses Saturday Timetable

North Gate Railway Station

Newark (W)

08:28 10:02 11:05 12:05 13:05 14:05 15:05 16:05 17:05 18:05

[Print Timetable](#) [Go to top](#) **Saturday - 24 - Newark - Grantham**

North Gate Railway Station

Newark (W)

--- 08:28 --- 10:06 11:06 12:06 13:06 14:06 15:06 16:06 17:06 18:06

Brunel Drive

Newark (NE-bound)

--- 08:34 --- 10:12 11:12 12:12 13:12 14:12 15:12 16:12 17:12 18:12

Lincoln Street

Newark (SW)

--- 08:40 --- 10:17 11:17 12:17 13:18 14:17 15:17 16:17 17:17 18:18

Bus Station

Newark (Bay A) Arrive

--- 08:50 --- 10:22 11:22 12:22 13:23 14:22 15:22 16:22 17:22 18:23

Appendix 5

Centre Buses Saturday Timetable

Bus Station

Newark (Bay A) **Depart**

--- --- 09:27 10:27 11:27 12:27 13:25 14:27 15:27 16:27 17:27 18:25

Smith Street

Balderton (S)

--- --- 09:34 10:33 11:34 12:33 13:32 14:33 15:33 16:34 17:33 18:31

Collinson Lane

Fernwood (E)

--- --- --- 10:40 --- 12:40 --- 14:40 15:40 --- 17:40 ---

Manners Road

32

--- --- --- --- --- --- 13:35 --- --- --- --- --- ---

Youngs Avenue

Fernwood (NW)

--- --- 09:42 --- 11:42 --- 13:42 --- --- 16:42 --- 18:36

Village Hall

Claypole (E)

--- --- 09:50 --- 11:50 --- 13:50 --- --- 16:50 --- ---

Claypole Lane

Dry Doddington (W)

--- --- 09:54 --- 11:54 --- 13:54 --- --- 16:54 --- ---

Appendix 5

Centre Buses Saturday Timetable

Council Houses

Westborough (S)

09:57

11:57

13:57

16:57

Village Hall

Long Bennington (S)

08:08

10:02

12:02

14:02

17:02

18:43

Woods Close

Long Bennington (SE)

08:10

10:04

12:04

14:04

17:04

18:45

Downtown Superstore

33 Great Gonerby (SW)

08:19

10:13

12:13

14:13

17:13

Post Office

Great Gonerby (S)

08:23

10:17

12:17

14:17

17:17

18:55

7 Cliffe Road

Gonerby Hill Foot (NE)

08:27

10:21

12:21

14:21

17:21

Bus Station

08:40

10:34

12:34

14:34

17:34

19:05

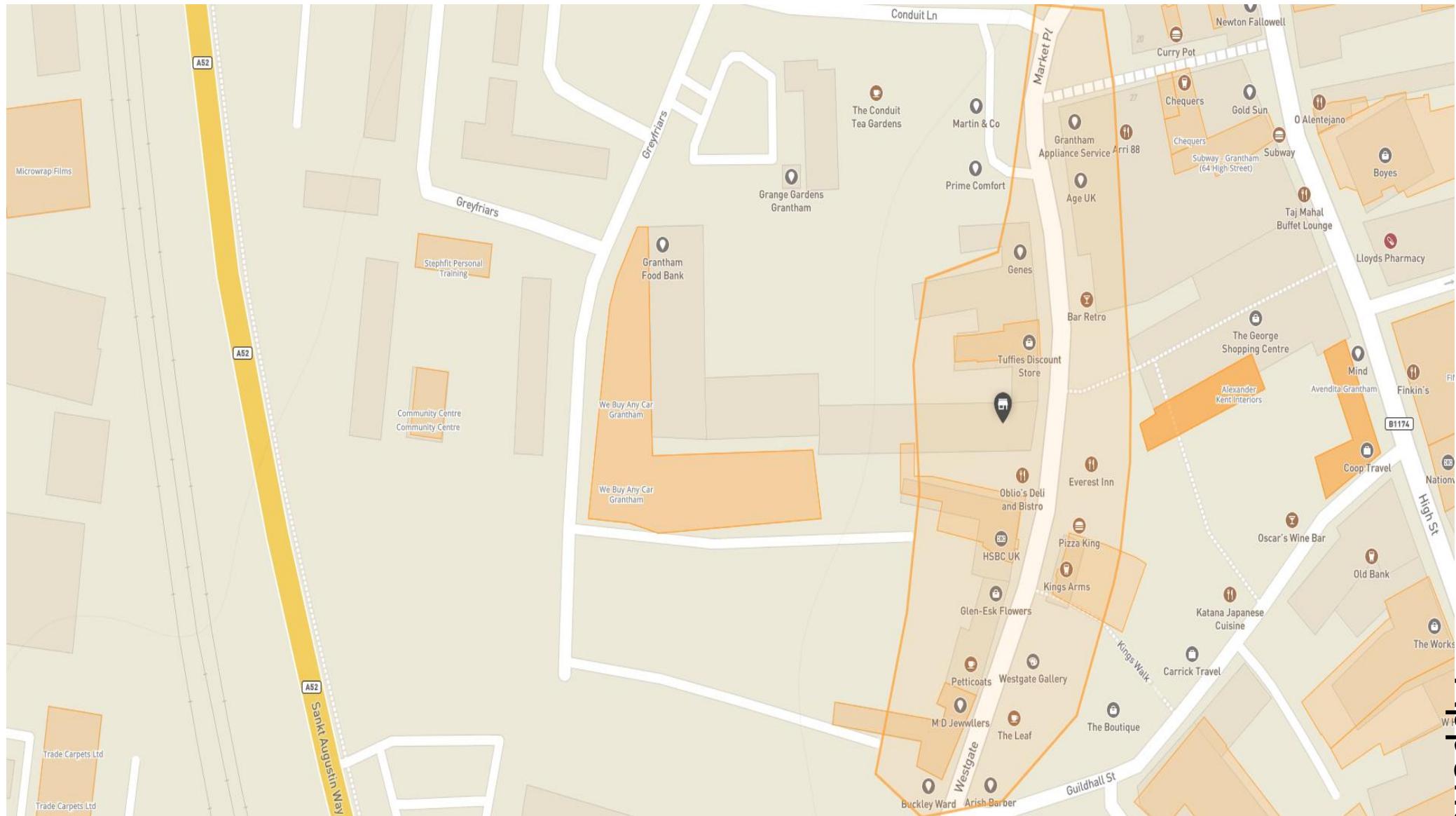
Appendix 5

Centre Buses Saturday Timetable

Grantham (Stand 4)



Generated on 01/09/2024 00:10



This page is intentionally left blank



Annual Complaint Performance and Service Improvement Report 2023/24

Report Author

Alison Hall-Wright, Director of Housing and Projects

 A.Hall-Wright@southkesteven.gov.uk

Purpose of Report

To present Cabinet with the 2023/24 Annual Complaint Performance and Service Improvement Report which the Council is required to publish and submit to the Housing Ombudsman

Recommendations

That Cabinet provide feedback on the 2023/24 Annual Complaint Performance and Service Improvement Report for submission to the Housing Ombudsman.

Decision Information

Is this a Key Decision? No

Does the report contain any exempt or confidential information not for publication? No

What are the relevant corporate priorities? Housing

Which wards are impacted? (All Wards);

1. Implications

Taking into consideration implications relating to finance and procurement, legal and governance, risk and mitigation, health and safety, diversity and inclusion, safeguarding, staffing, community safety, mental health and wellbeing and the impact on the Council's declaration of a climate change emergency, the following implications have been identified:

Finance and Procurement

1.1 There are no financial implications associated with this report.

Completed by: Richard Wyles, Deputy Chief Executive and s151 Officer

Legal and Governance

1.2 There is a requirement for this report to be presented to Cabinet so that the Housing Ombudsman can be assured that the report is a true reflection of the Council's complaints handling process.

Completed by: James Welbourn, Democratic Services Manager and Deputy Monitoring Officer

2. Background to the Report

- 2.1. The purpose of this report is to present Cabinet with the 2023/24 Annual Complaint Performance and Service Improvement Report which is a mandatory requirement of the updated Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code.
- 2.2. In 2023/24 the Housing Directorate received 284 Stage 1 complaints compared with 371 in 2022/23. The number of complaints escalated to Stage 2 in 2023/24 was 39 compared with 21 in 2022/23. There has been a positive reduction in the total number of complaints received which is reflective of the continuous service improvements Housing strives to achieve.
- 2.3. The first section of the annual report provides information regarding:
 - The Council's complaints process
 - The number of Stage 1 and Stage 2 complaints received
 - The average time taken to close complaints
 - Whether a complaint was upheld or not
 - The root cause for complaints
 - Summary information taken from the Housing Ombudsman Landlord Performance Report which is attached at Appendix 2

- 2.4. A key point to note is that the Council can only provide root cause information for 129 of the complaints received in 2023/24. The corporate complaints system, Meritec, is being updated to change the 'root cause' field for complaints to a mandatory field. This will ensure that going forwards all service areas within the Council will be able to analyse all complaints, identify trends and actions that need to be taken to avoid repeat complaints being received about the same issue.
- 2.5. Once the Meritec system has been updated the Housing team will receive all of the Housing complaints received during 2024/25 to ensure that the 'root cause' field is populated.
- 2.6. The second section of the report focuses on the learning the Council has taken from the complaints it has received and the service improvements that have been made as a result of customer feedback. This is essential to ensure the Council does not continue to receive complaints on recurring issues.

3. Key Considerations

- 3.1. Key areas for Cabinet to consider are the complaints data that has been provided reflects the complaints handling process which the Council has in place.
- 3.2. That Cabinet are assured that the service improvements being implemented will reduce the number of complaints received on recurring issues.

4. Other Options Considered

- 4.1 To not present the report to Cabinet for their feedback.

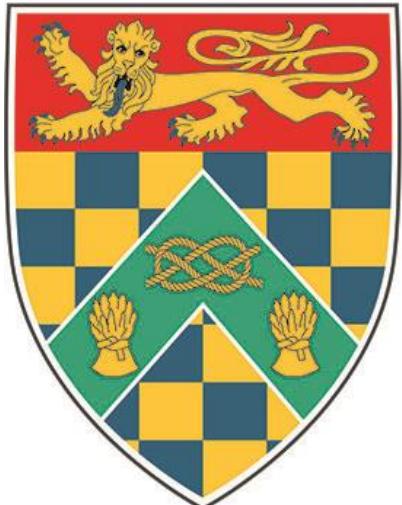
5. Reasons for the Recommendations

- 5.1 To provide Cabinet with the opportunity to provide feedback on the 2023/24 Annual Complaint Performance and Service Improvement Report prior to submission to the Housing Ombudsman

6. Appendices

- 6.1 Appendix 1 – Draft Annual Complaint Performance and Service Improvement Report 2023/24
- 6.2 Appendix 2 - Housing Ombudsman Landlord Performance Report

This page is intentionally left blank



**SOUTH
KESTEVEN
DISTRICT
COUNCIL**

**Annual Complaints
Performance and Service
Improvement Report**

2023/24

Executive Summary

South Kesteven District Council is responsible for the management and maintenance of nearly 6,000 houses so it is essential that we are committed to delivering an exemplary and high-quality housing service. Effective services are founded upon honesty and trust. Trust can only be earned if the organisation is outward looking and always open to honest scrutiny and challenge from our tenants.

Complaints are a key method of communication between us and our tenants. We have a positive approach – not shying away from challenge but recognising feedback as a crucial guide for where things need to be put right, and for where we can further improve.

As the Cabinet member responsible for Housing I ensure that Cabinet members and the member led scrutiny committees receive and consider information on complaints performance management arrangements, providing opportunity to ask questions, seek assurance and to hold ourselves and our teams to account with a focus on continuous improvement.

Over the past year, we have made key strides to improve. In 2021 the Council self-referred to the Regulator of Social Housing. Significant work was undertaken to transform the service via a comprehensive Housing Improvement Action Plan, including changes to our complaints handling processes and culture. The Regulatory Notice was lifted in October 2023.

Operationally, we established a new centralised approach with three officers acting as complaint handlers in Housing and Technical Services. This has led to a greater timeliness and consistency in responses. Strategically, monthly meetings are held between senior managers to review complaints, identify lessons learnt and to implement the required service improvements.

Tenant feedback has directly informed the review of our key policies and procedures. Including the Repairs and Maintenance Policy, the Tenancy Management Policy, Estate Management Policy and the Housing Services Anti -Social Behaviour Policy. We have also created a dedicated damp and mould team which will ensure a proactive response from the Council.

A dedicated Housing Strategy team has been established to ensure feedback from complaints, surveys and tenant meetings are collated along with performance information to ensure a continuous cycle of review and improvement becomes embedded into the service.

We will continue to use feedback to improve the housing service for all of our tenants.

Cllr Virginia Moran

Cabinet Member for Housing

Introduction

The purpose of this report is to provide information regarding how the Council responded to the Housing complaints received during 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024 and the actions we have taken in response to these complaints. During this period the Council received 284 complaints relating to Housing Services and Technical Services of which 39 (14%) were escalated to Stage 2.

Overview of complaints process

Council housing in South Kesteven is managed by the Housing and Projects Directorate. The directorate is divided into two Housing service areas who are responsible for service delivery:

- Housing Services - responsible for tenancy services, sheltered housing, estate management and lettings
- Technical Services - responsible for voids, repairs and improvements

Complaints about the Housing and Technical Services are addressed through the Housing Customer Feedback Policy. There are two main stages to this process:

- Stage 1 complaints – the Council will acknowledge a formal complaint within five working days and provide a full response within ten working days.
- Stage 2 complaints – If the complainant is not satisfied with the response, the complaint can be escalated with a request to review the Stage 1 response. Council will acknowledge the request within five working days and provide a full response within twenty working days.
- If the complainant remains dissatisfied by the Stage 2 review, the matter can be escalated to the Housing Ombudsman, who will conduct an independent investigation into allegations of maladministration.

A copy of the Housing Customer Feedback Policy is available at the following link on the Council's website <https://www.southkesteven.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2024-06/Housing%20Customer%20Feedback%20Policy%202024.pdf>.

All social landlords are members of the Housing Ombudsman, who regulate how complaints relating to social housing are dealt with. To ensure this is consistent across social landlords, the Ombudsman produces a Housing Complaints Code setting out the standards expected. Landlords are required to conduct a self-assessment of how they meet this code and publish it on their website. A copy of SKDC's self-assessment for 2023-24 can also be found on our website at the following link <https://www.southkesteven.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2024-06/Complaints%20Code%20Self-Assessment%202024.pdf>.

Definition of a complaint

As defined by the Housing Ombudsman a complaint is:

“An expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about the standard of service, actions or lack of action by the organisation, its own staff, or those acting on its behalf, affecting an individual resident or group of residents.”

Complaints can relate to:

- The quality of service offered, or work carried out
- The action or lack of action carried out while carrying out a service
- The attitude or behaviour of those providing a service or completing work
- Missed appointments
- Failure to comply with policies, procedures, or service standards
- Failure to provide information when requested that a complainant has a right to
- A decision we have made or delayed in making
- Failure to respond to a previous complaint
- Where it is feedback from a consultation or survey we have sent as part of a consultation or feedback

The Council also receive ‘complaints’ which are identified as ‘service requests’ as they relate to an initial request for a service rather than a complaint regarding something the Council has already done. Service requests are not recorded as complaints but assigned to the relevant service area to address as a request for action.

An example of a service request would be where a tenant ‘complains’ that their heating is not working but this has not previously reported to the Council as an issue. This would be recorded as a service request because it relates to a repair to their heating system.

An example of a complaint would be where a tenant complains about a repair we have carried out on their heating system which they are not satisfied with.

How we manage complaints

A centralised Complaints Team records Housing complaints on the Council’s Complaint Management System, Meritec, as either a Stage 1 or a Stage 2 complaint. Once recorded, the complaint is allocated to Housing Services or Technical Services. This ensures complaints are managed and monitored in a consistent manner across the Housing Service. Stage 1 complaints are allocated to a Service Manager, and Stage 2 complaints are allocated to a Head of Service to respond to.

Complaints Performance

Stage One Complaints

Customer feedback is initially recorded as a Stage 1 complaint. The following table details how the 284 complaints received by the Housing and Projects Directorate were allocated between Housing Services and Technical Services:

| Service Area | Stage 1 |
|---------------------|----------------|
| Housing Services | 69 (24%) |

| | |
|--------------------|-----------|
| Technical Services | 215 (76%) |
|--------------------|-----------|

A benchmark of the Council's volume of complaints when compared with neighbouring Social Landlords shows that the Council had a higher level of complaints per 1,000 homes as detailed in the following table:

| Council | South Kesteven | Melton | Lincoln City | North Kesteven |
|---|----------------|--------|--------------|----------------|
| Number of complaints per 1,000 homes | 49 | 46 | 47 | 24 |

Responding to Complaints

The Council aim to respond to all Stage 1 complaints within 10 working days of them being acknowledged. Where we are unable respond within 10 working days, which will ordinarily relate to the complexity of the complaint, the lead officer will contact the complainant to explain why and provide a date by which a response will be given. This will ensure that a comprehensive response can be provided.

The complaint response provides details regarding the escalation process of complaints to Stage 2 if the complainant is not satisfied with the Stage 1 response provided.

The following table below provides details of how the Council performed in terms of closing stage 1 complaints within the expected 10-day period. The average time to close a complaint was **12 days** across both Housing and Technical Services.

| Response Time | Within 10 days | Over 10 days |
|--------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Housing Services | 25 | 44 |
| Technical Services | 87 | 128 |
| Total | 112 (39%) | 172 (61%) |

The Council responded to 39% of stage 1 complaints on time compared with neighbouring social landlords who had the following rates for responding to stage 1 complaints on time: Melton 93%, North Kesteven 76% and Lincoln City 39%.

Upholding Complaints

Complaints may be categorised after investigation as either being upheld or not upheld as defined below:

- Upholding the complaint – where the Council are found to be at fault
- Partially upholding the complaint – where the Council are found to be partially at fault
- Not upheld – where the Council are found not to be at fault

The following table provides details of the outcome of Stage 1 complaints:

| Complaint Outcome | Upeld | Partially Upeld | Not Upeld |
|--------------------------|------------------|------------------------|------------------|
| Housing Services | 29 | 10 | 30 |
| Technical Services | 174 | 15 | 26 |
| Total | 203 (71%) | 25 (9%) | 56 (20%) |

Root Cause of Complaints

The Meritec system is in the process of being updated to change the 'root cause' field for complaints to a mandatory field. This will ensure that going forwards the Council will be able to analyse all complaints, identify trends and actions that need to be taken to avoid repeat complaints being received about the same issue.

Root causes are categorised into several categories of which the main ones are:

Service Delivery Failure – which include issues relating to taking too long to resolve an issue, not meeting the expected standard or not being kept informed of actions to the Council is intending to take.

Service Requests – relate to complaints where a request has been reported to the Council which has not been completed.

Other – includes issues relating to officer conduct or breach of policy.

Communication – includes poor communication between the Council and tenant, ability to contact the council, or unclear communication.

In 2023/24 a 'root cause' had been recorded for 126 of the 284 Housing complaints received. For 2024/25 a review is currently being undertaken to ensure that a 'root cause' is recorded for all complaints as the Council recognise the importance of having this information to implement service improvement.

The following tables provides details of how the 129 complaints were categorised.

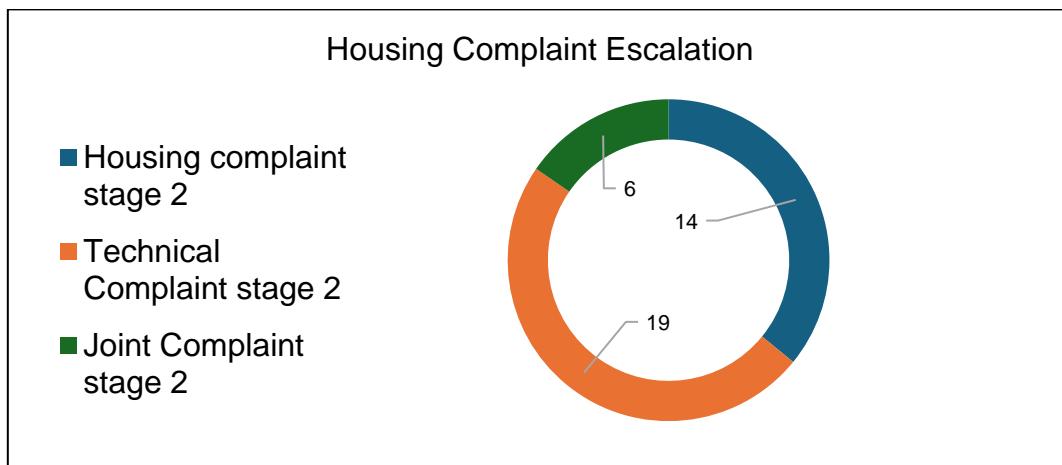
| Root Cause | Service Delivery Failure | Service Requests | Other | Communication |
|--------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------------|---------------|----------------------|
| Housing Services | 12 | 3 | 7 | 6 |
| Technical Services | 89 | 4 | 4 | 1 |
| Total | 101 (80%) | 7 (6%) | 11(8%) | 7(6%) |

Housing Complaint Escalation

If a complainant is not satisfied with a Stage 1 response they can escalate the complaint to Stage 2. Stage 2 complaints are allocated to a Head of Service who will review the Stage 1 response to check that it has been adequately investigated and all available information has been considered.

A response is expected within 20 working days of the Stage 2 complaint being acknowledged. If escalated complaints include issues which cover both Housing and Technical Services they will be dealt with as a joint complaint co-ordinated by the lead officer.

As shown in the following chart 39 stage 1 complaints were escalated to stage 2:



Time taken to respond to Stage 2 Complaints

| Time to respond | Within 20 days | Over 20 days |
|--------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Housing Services | 2 | 12 |
| Technical Services | 5 | 14 |
| Joint complaint | 3 | 3 |
| Total | 10 (26%) | 29 (74%) |

The average time response time for a stage 2 complaint was **21 days**.

Stage 2 Complaints Upheld

The following table details whether the complaint was upheld, partially upheld or not upheld following the review at Stage 2 of the complaints process.

| Complaint Outcome | Upheld/Partially Upheld | Not Upheld |
|--------------------|-------------------------|-----------------|
| Housing Services | 8 | 6 |
| Technical Services | 17 | 2 |
| Joint complaint | 2 | 4 |
| Total | 27 (69%) | 12 (31%) |

The Stage 2 complaint response provides details regarding referring complaints to the Housing Ombudsman if the complainant is not satisfied with the final response.

Ombudsman cases

If a complainant is not satisfied with a Stage 2 response, they have the right to refer their complaint to the Housing Ombudsman. The Housing Ombudsman will review the complaint in terms of how it was handled by the landlord and if all the factors have been taken into account. The Housing Ombudsman has a range of options to address

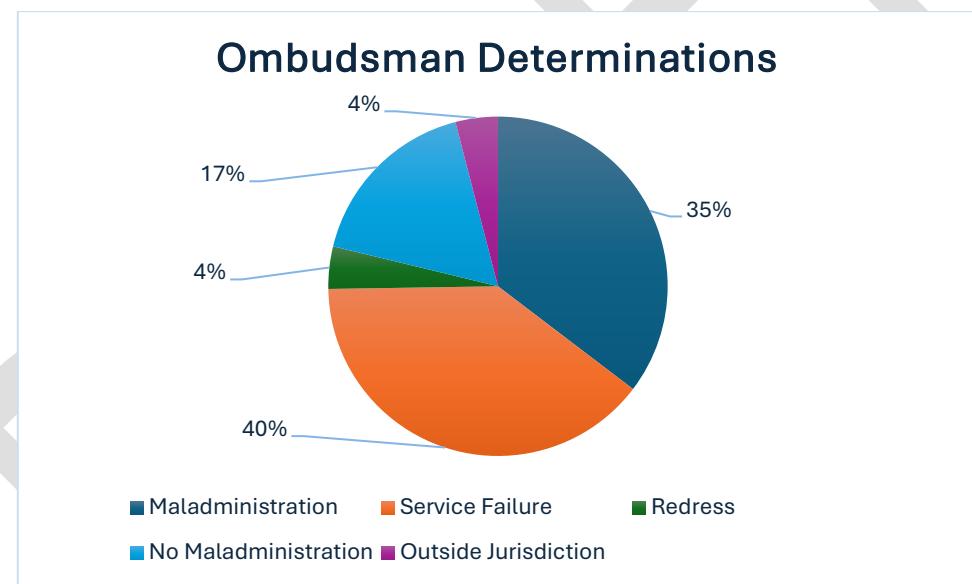
any issues it finds, from instructing the landlord to pay compensation, review or develop a policy, or reviewing how we currently do something and amending it.

The Housing Ombudsman publishes a 'Landlord Performance Report' each year detailing how a landlord has performed in complaints handling. The latest report can be found on the Council's website.

The Housing Ombudsman will inform the landlord of its determination of the complaint and their findings. The most frequent finding is 'Maladministration' which refers means the landlord has failed to do something, done something it should not have done or there has been unreasonable delay in completing an action.

The determinations contain recommendations outlining how the landlord should address any issues found as part of this case review. The Housing Ombudsman will usually instruct the landlord to explain how they will complete the identified recommendations. Recommendations can range from reviewing a policy to providing further training to staff.

During 2023/24 the Housing Ombudsman made determinations on 7 cases, resulting in 23 findings, 26 orders being made and 15 recommendations across all cases. The following chart summarises the 23 findings:



- 8 maladministration findings were identified – the most frequent reason for this being in how we communicated to the tenant.
- 9 service failures were found which related to the Council not completing agreed works.
- The 26 orders can be broken down as follows:
 - Compensation – 14
 - Repairs – 6
 - Take Specific Non-repair Action – 2
 - Apology – 2
 - Process Change – 1
 - Staff Training – 1
- The key issues raised related to property condition and handling of complaints

- £3,475 was paid out in compensation.
- 15 recommendations which included reviewing how we respond to complaints, reviewing policies and providing training on complaint handling.
- No major maladministration was found.

Learning from customer feedback

The Council reviews complaints to ensure that lessons are learnt, and service improvements are implemented. The following table details the recurring themes that have been identified and the actions the Council has taken.

| Theme | What did we learn | What did we change |
|--|--|--|
| The time taken to complete a reported issue took too long to resolve | We need to complete repairs and address tenancy management issues in a reasonable time to prevent the situation from getting worse | We are in the process of amending the timelines for reactive repairs and have implemented a repairs scheduler which will increase the efficiency when planning repairs jobs. In tenancy management initial contact is made with the reporting tenant to obtain further information about an issue so that a response plan can be developed. |
| Response times to reports of Damp and Mould | Response times need to be reviewed | The Council has developed a damp and mould team to ensure that a response can be provided within the proposed legislative timelines. |
| Outstanding repairs on void properties when relet | Our relet standard was not sufficient | The Council has a voids standard and ensures that all properties meet this before being relet. Tenants are also visited after 6 weeks of a new tenancy to review whether any issues have been identified. |
| Communication | Tenants want to be kept informed of progress on issues they have reported | The Council have improved how tenants are informed regarding repairs appointments. When dealing with tenancy issues, we arrange regular contact to keep them updated regarding the issue they have raised. |
| Being able to contact the Council to report an issue | Tenants should be offered a variety of contact options to ensure they are able to | The Council has improved the online reporting forms which sends an acknowledgement email to confirm the form has been received. |

| | | |
|---|--|--|
| | report issues to the Council | When contacting the Council by telephone, tenants are offered a call back or message options |
| Being passed between teams to identify who can help | The Council need to ensure the tenants are not transferred to multiple service areas | Tenants can report an issue at the point of contact and the officer taking the call will pass the information onto the relevant team. |
| Officer conduct is a regular theme, particularly on the tone of language used in verbal and written communication | Officers should be aware of how their tone and manner of response will be perceived by the tenant. | All staff are reminded of the importance of customer care and empathy towards the tenant. If reports are received regarding officer conduct, telephone calls will be reviewed by senior management any necessary action will be taken. |

Complaints and Service Improvements

A review of complaints and comments made as part of the Tenant Satisfaction Measures Survey has led to improvements in the both the complaints process and service delivery.

Improved complaints handling

The Council has a centralised approach to handling complaints. Three officers in the Housing and Projects Directorate are responsible for logging and assigning complaints in the Meritec system to officers for investigation and response. This has led to better response times and consistent responses being produced.

Regular meetings are held with the complaint handlers and management, to monitor progress and performance on complaints. This enables recurring issues to be identified, actions to be determined and improvements to be implemented.

Monthly meetings are held between the Director of Housing and Projects, the Head of Housing Services, the Head of Technical Services, the Tenancy Services Manager and the Repairs Manager and the Service Managers. These meetings review complaints and identify the lessons that can be learnt and identify and implement service improvements to address these.

All Housing and Technical Services staff are aware of the complaints process and their role in responding to complaints. Training has been provided to all officers who deal with complaints to ensure a consistent approach, and a more comprehensive response is provided. All Stage 1 and Stage 2 complaints are now reviewed prior to being sent to ensure they fully respond to the issues that have been raised.

Improved service delivery

The Council has reviewed its key housing policies in response to the feedback from complaints and surveys such as the Tenant Satisfaction Measures. This has included changes to the Repairs and Maintenance Policy, the Tenancy Management Policy and

Estate Management Policy. The Council has developed a Housing Services Anti - Social Behaviour Policy following a recommendation from the Housing Ombudsman.

Tenants were asked to review the amended policies in terms of how they met their expectations and made changes based on their feedback. Feedback was also reviewed from surveys, complaints and resident meetings to identify recurring issues that could lead to improvements.

An example of this has been the creation of a damp and mould team within the repairs service which will support the Council with meeting the proposed legislative timelines relating to reports of damp and mould. The team will also provide advice on how to prevent and manage damp and mould issues within the home.

Our Housing Officers have also established strong working partnerships with the police and other agencies to enable a partnership approach to addressing tenancy management issues and wider community issues that affect our neighbourhoods.

Improved communication with tenants

Following feedback from tenants the Council has made it easier for issues to be reported online, an automatic response is sent to acknowledge the online form has been received.

Target times have been set for responding to tenants regarding the issue they have raised. Responses are recorded on the tenancy management system and our complaints management system. The team ensure their responses are comprehensive and easy to understand.

What we will do to improve further

The Council are developing an 'information management framework' to ensure that data relating to how we perform, recurring issues, lessons learnt, and actions implemented can be collated and shared.

Tenant engagement will be increased so that the Council has a greater understanding of the improvements that could be implemented from a customer perspective, for example:

- The Council plans to implement tenant surveys and research regarding complaint handling to identify improvements that could be implemented from a 'customer' perspective.
- Tenants involvement in reviewing and challenging how we deliver the housing service will be increased
- A Housing Strategy Team has been established which will ensure feedback from complaints, surveys and tenant engagement is collated along with performance information. This will ensure that a continuous cycle of review and improvement becomes embedded into the Housing service.

This page is intentionally left blank

Housing Ombudsman Service

LANDLORD PERFORMANCE REPORT

2023/2024

South Kesteven District Council

South Kesteven District Council

Landlord: South Kesteven District Council

Landlord Homes: 6,071

Landlord Type: Local Authority / ALMO or TMO

PERFORMANCE AT A GLANCE



Determinations



Findings



Maladministration Findings



Orders Made



Recommendations



CHFOs



Compensation



Maladministration Rate

7

23

17

26

15

0

£3,475

77%

PERFORMANCE 2022-2023



Determinations



Orders Made



Compensation



Maladministration Rate

Not Applicable

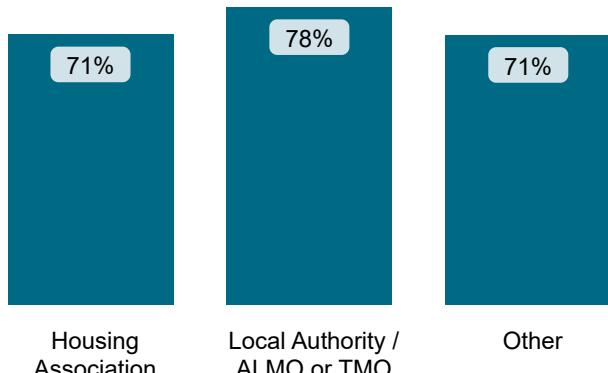
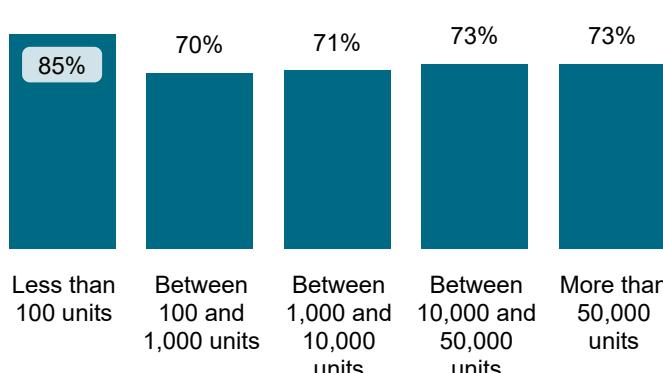
Maladministration Rate Comparison | Cases determined between April 2023 - March 2024

NATIONAL MALADMINISTRATION RATE: 73%

The landlord performed *similarly* when compared to similar landlords by size and type.

National Mal Rate by Landlord Size: Table 1.1

by Landlord Type: Table 1.2



Findings Comparison | Cases determined between April 2023 - March 2024

National Performance by Landlord Size: Table 2.1

| Outcome | Less than 100 units | Between 100 and 1,000 units | Between 1,000 and 10,000 units | Between 10,000 and 50,000 units | More than 50,000 units | Total |
|--------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|------------------------|-------|
| Severe Maladministration | 14% | 6% | 4% | 8% | 7% | 7% |
| Maladministration | 35% | 37% | 41% | 42% | 43% | 42% |
| Service failure | 18% | 19% | 20% | 18% | 19% | 19% |
| Mediation | 0% | 0% | 1% | 1% | 1% | 1% |
| Redress | 0% | 5% | 7% | 8% | 12% | 9% |
| No maladministration | 12% | 21% | 20% | 15% | 12% | 15% |
| Outside Jurisdiction | 22% | 11% | 8% | 7% | 5% | 7% |
| Withdrawn | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% |

South Kesteven District Council

| Outcome | % Findings |
|--------------------------|------------|
| Severe Maladministration | 0% |
| Maladministration | 35% |
| Service failure | 39% |
| Mediation | 0% |
| Redress | 4% |
| No maladministration | 17% |
| Outside Jurisdiction | 4% |
| Withdrawn | 0% |

National Performance by Landlord Type: Table 2.2

| Outcome | Housing Association | Local Authority / ALMO or TMO | Other | Total |
|--------------------------|---------------------|-------------------------------|-------|-------|
| Severe Maladministration | 6% | 9% | 6% | 7% |
| Maladministration | 41% | 45% | 36% | 42% |
| Service failure | 19% | 18% | 21% | 19% |
| Mediation | 1% | 1% | 0% | 1% |
| Redress | 12% | 4% | 5% | 9% |
| No maladministration | 15% | 15% | 21% | 15% |
| Outside Jurisdiction | 6% | 9% | 11% | 7% |
| Withdrawn | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% |

| Outcome | % Findings |
|--------------------------|------------|
| Severe Maladministration | 0% |
| Maladministration | 35% |
| Service failure | 39% |
| Mediation | 0% |
| Redress | 4% |
| No maladministration | 17% |
| Outside Jurisdiction | 4% |
| Withdrawn | 0% |

Landlord Findings by Category | Cases determined between April 2023 - March 2024

Table 2.3

| Category | Severe Maladministration | Maladministration | Service failure | Mediation | Redress | No maladministration | Outside Jurisdiction | Withdrawn | Total |
|--|--------------------------|-------------------|-----------------|-----------|----------|----------------------|----------------------|-----------|-----------|
| Property Condition | 0 | 6 | 3 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 12 |
| Complaints Handling | 0 | 2 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 6 |
| Anti-Social Behaviour | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 2 |
| Buying or selling a property | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| Health and Safety (inc. building safety) | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| Moving to a Property | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| Total | 0 | 8 | 9 | 0 | 1 | 4 | 1 | 0 | 23 |

Findings by Category Comparison | Cases determined between April 2023 - March 2024

Top Categories for South Kesteven District Council

Table 3.1

| Category | # Landlord Findings | % Landlord Maladministration | % National Maladministration |
|-----------------------|---------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Property Condition | 12 | 75% | 73% |
| Complaints Handling | 6 | 100% | 84% |
| Anti-Social Behaviour | 2 | 0% | 68% |

National Maladministration Rate by Landlord Size: Table 3.2

| Category | Less than 100 units | Between 100 and 1,000 units | Between 1,000 and 10,000 units | Between 10,000 and 50,000 units | More than 50,000 units | % Landlord Maladministration |
|-----------------------|---------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|------------------------|------------------------------|
| Anti-Social Behaviour | 71% | 61% | 60% | 67% | 75% | 0% |
| Complaints Handling | 100% | 87% | 87% | 86% | 81% | 100% |
| Property Condition | 75% | 63% | 72% | 74% | 74% | 75% |

National Maladministration Rate by Landlord Type: Table 3.3

| Category | Housing Association | Local Authority / ALMO or TMO | Other | % Landlord Maladministration |
|-----------------------|---------------------|-------------------------------|-------|------------------------------|
| Anti-Social Behaviour | 68% | 69% | 67% | 0% |
| Complaints Handling | 81% | 91% | 91% | 100% |
| Property Condition | 72% | 77% | 59% | 75% |

Findings by Sub-Category | Cases Determined between April 2023 - March 2024

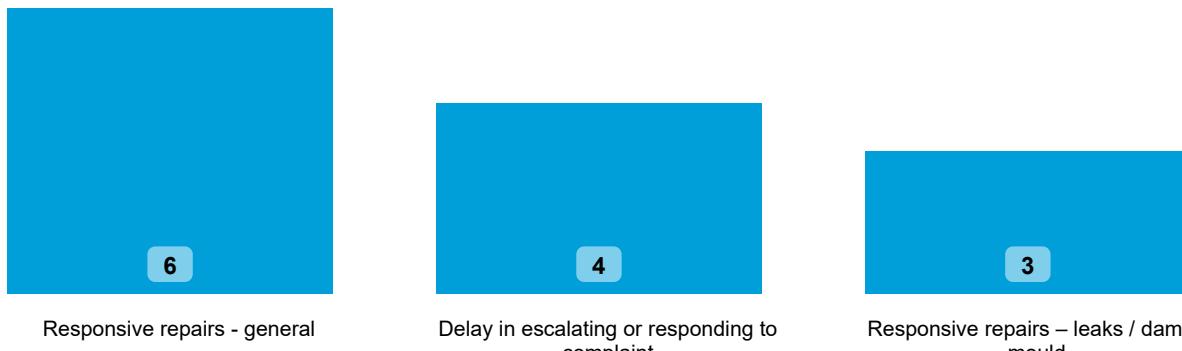
Table 3.4

Highlighted Service Delivery Sub-Categories only:

| Sub-Category | Severe Maladministration | Maladministration | Service failure | Mediation | Redress | No maladministration | Outside Jurisdiction | Withdrawn | Total |
|---|--------------------------|-------------------|-----------------|-----------|----------|----------------------|----------------------|-----------|-----------|
| Responsive repairs - general | 0 | 1 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 6 |
| Responsive repairs – leaks / damp / mould | 0 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3 |
| Asbestos | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| Total | 0 | 4 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 10 |

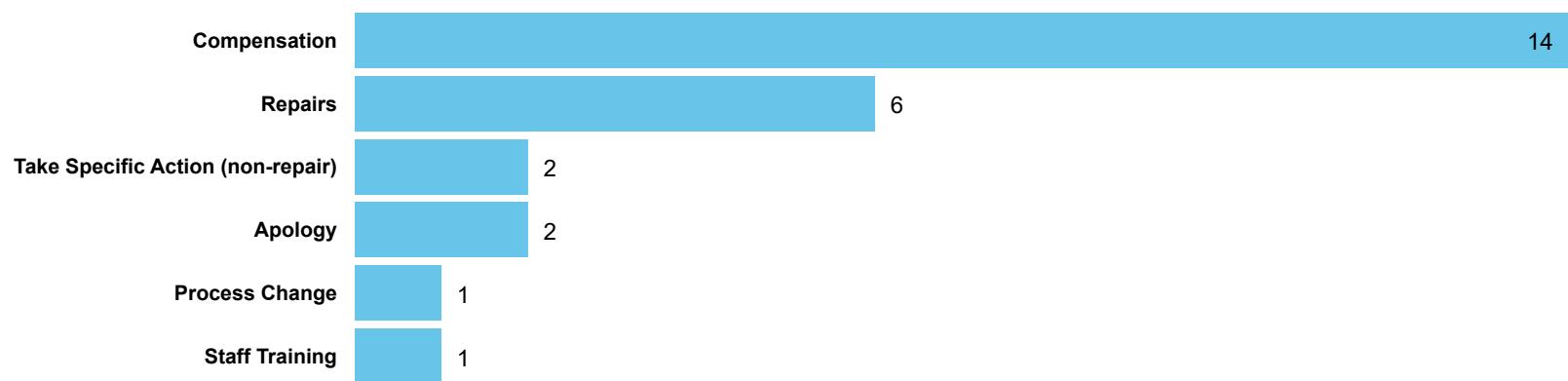
Top Sub-Categories | Cases determined between April 2023 - March 2024

Table 3.5



Orders Made by Type | Orders on cases determined between April 2023 - March 2024

Table 4.1



Order Compliance | Order target dates between April 2023 - March 2024

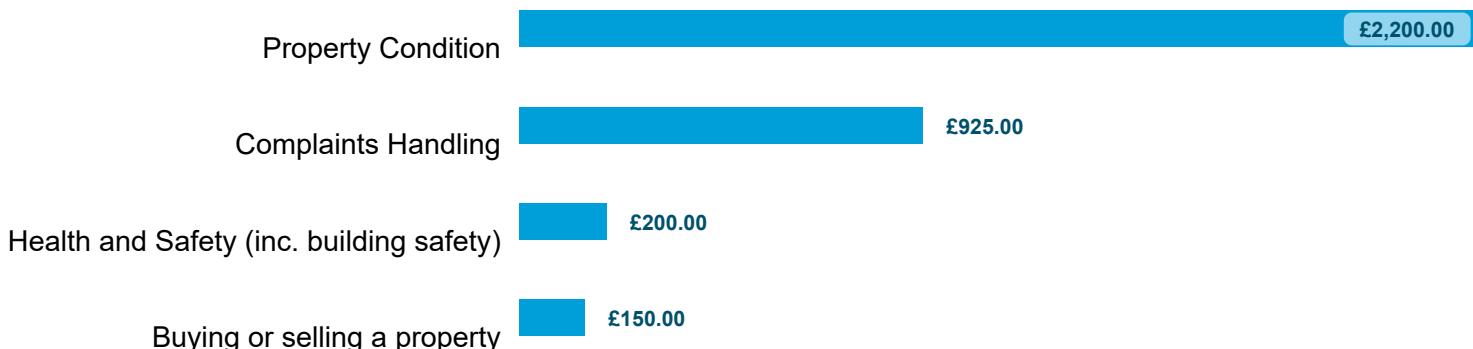
Table 4.2

| Order | Within 3 Months | |
|--------------|-----------------|-------------|
| Complete? | Count | % |
| Complied | 25 | 100% |
| Total | 25 | 100% |

Compensation Ordered | Cases Determined between April 2023 - March 2024

Table 5.1

● Ordered ● Recommended



This page is intentionally left blank