

Evaluation of Good Home Lincs

Interim report

September 2025



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Background

The Lincolnshire Good Home Alliance (GHA), a partnership between Lincolnshire County and District Councils, launched Good Home Lincs, a new approach to supporting clients to improve the quality of their homes.

This report is based on an evaluation commissioned by the Centre for Ageing Better to understand the impact the pilot project 'Good Home Lincs' is having in Lincolnshire on improving the quality of homes and supporting people to live well at home for longer.

LSE London – a research group from the London School of Economics – was commissioned by Ageing Better to conduct the two-year evaluation (September 2024-26) of Good Home Lincs. This report presents findings from the first six months of delivery, focusing on the initial setup and emerging themes.



Introduction

Millions of older people are living in homes that are a serious risk to their health and wellbeing. For many people, especially those in poor health, the combination of poverty, rising energy prices and living in unsafe and unsuitable homes creates significant health and mental wellbeing impacts.

Everyone wants to live in a good-quality home. But for many, whether homeowners or not, the key barrier is money – having the income or savings to pay for repairs or adaptations. For others, the main obstacles are practical: finding a trusted trader, getting an independent assessment of work needed, or moving furniture around. Furthermore, some people are simply not aware of the connection between housing and health and the urgency of repairs.

To improve the quality of homes across England, Ageing Better believes that everyone should have access to a local one-stop-shop service that provides support on all aspects of home repairs and adaptations. This would include advice and signposting on everything from finding a trusted tradesperson and identifying what work needs to be done to financing repairs and improving energy efficiency.

We call this a ‘Good Home Hub’ model. A comprehensive home improvement service that would help older and Disabled people – and the wider population – access the support they need in a timely and straightforward way, reducing the physical and mental health risks associated with living in an unsuitable and unsafe home.

Embarking on the project

Ageing Better set out to test the concept of a ‘Good Home Hub’ in practice and to share insights so that local areas could undertake the same process. We partnered with Lincolnshire County Council to develop a Good Home Hub – importantly, this was aligned with Lincolnshire’s ambition to support people to live independently in their own homes for as long as possible.

As part of this development, a service design agency was commissioned to map the local context and to identify key challenges and opportunities across the county – this formed the blueprint of Good Home Lincs. Once these initial ideas were tested and refined with potential beneficiaries and stakeholders, Good Home Lincs began its journey from an idea to a pilot.

Good Home Lincs

Good Home Lincs brings together various services to trial a new approach aimed at improving the quality of homes across Lincolnshire.

Core components of the model

An online information and signposting service

Lincolnshire has developed a set of **Good Home Lincs** web pages on its 'Connect to Support' website. The pages offer residents comprehensive advice on maintaining and improving their homes such as support with adaptations and dealing with heating and energy.

A central feature of this resource is the Healthy Homes Assessment (HHA) tool. Web visitors fill in a questionnaire with details of their property and the kind of support they need before they are directed to relevant information and services. The tool is also designed to be used by local authority officers and other professionals who visit clients in their homes and can complete the questionnaire on clients' behalf.

Individual advice and casework service

Good Home Lincs is piloting a casework service to support residents in improving their homes through tailored advice, signposting and support. Caseworkers conduct home visits where needed, assist with HHA's, and help residents find and implement practical solutions to address housing

issues. Clients are referred to the casework service by public sector partners who identify poor housing conditions during their work. Referral partners include local authority teams, Wellbeing Lincs, the fire service, asthma practitioners and NHS discharge coordinators.

Lessons learned so far

In September 2024, following years of work behind the scenes, Good Home Lincs was launched. In the first six months we have learnt that:

There is a significant need for the service

By mid-March 2025, caseworkers had already handled 115 cases, and a fourth caseworker was recruited to help meet demand. The service is open to everyone but about half of the clients (47%) were aged 56 and over, with the largest group being aged 56-66 years (22%), closely followed by clients aged 67-80 years (18%).

The service is reaching older homeowners

More than half (56%) of the clients the service has reached so far are owner-occupiers, 23% are social housing tenants and 20% are private rental tenants. Of those who own their home, 22% are aged 41-55 years, 30% are aged 56-66 years and 27% are aged 67-80 years.

There is a poor-quality housing crisis in Lincolnshire

The most frequently cited reason for referral to the casework service was damp and mould, accounting for almost a third (30%) of referrals. This was followed by heating problems (23%) and general disrepair (16%), which together highlight the prevalence of poor housing conditions in the region.

People are eager to uncover what work they need and, more importantly, how to pay for them

In addition to the casework service, there is a comprehensive web resource with home improvement information for residents to use. Over a 7-month period, the website attracted 2,352 active users and generated 3,696 views, with most people spending time on the HHA tool and the pages dedicated to financial assistance.

Critical insights

Poor housing stock

Some of the homes the casework team has encountered are in an extremely poor state – in some cases, bordering on derelict. This reflects a wider challenge across Lincolnshire, where much of the housing stock is older and located in remote, rural areas. These isolated settings make repairs and improvements particularly complex and costly – often far beyond what residents can afford on their own.



Intensive support

The casework team brings real dedication and heart to every client they support. While the level of support required has been greater than expected – with many clients needing reassurance, encouragement and guidance every step of the way – it has also shown just how valuable the service is.

Some clients have been highly anxious, and in rare cases, this has led to challenging situations. But through it all, the casework team has remained focused, compassionate and committed. It is a powerful reminder that this work is not just about improving homes – it is about helping people feel heard and safe.



Lack of funds

Money matters – and for many, it is the biggest hurdle standing between them and a better home. Good Home Lincs was built with everyone in mind, including those who could afford to fund improvements themselves and needed only practical support. So far, most GHIL clients have low incomes and limited assets. This likely reflects the focus of referral partners, who primarily serve lower income households. Even with grants, many clients cannot afford the necessary repairs and upgrades.



Housing is not the only issue

These emerging insights highlight a deeper truth: many clients are not just facing housing issues – they are navigating a web of complex, overlapping challenges. Mental health concerns, hoarding, long-term health conditions and care needs often come bundled together, making each case as unique as the person behind it.

Improving housing conditions is a vital step, but it is just one piece of a bigger puzzle. For many people, safe and suitable homes are the foundation from which other support can begin to take root. Because a good home is only truly good when it supports the full picture of someone's wellbeing.



What comes next?

By Autumn 2025, Good Home Lincs will mark its first full year in action, and we are excited to share key insights, real-life impact and the lessons learnt from this crucial first year of delivery.

Let's take action today for all our tomorrows.
Let's make ageing better.

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The Centre for Ageing Better is pioneering ways to make ageing better a reality for everyone, including challenging ageism and building an Age-friendly Movement, creating Age-friendly Employment and Age-friendly Homes. It is a charitable foundation funded by The National Lottery Community Fund and part of the government's What Works Network.