

# LGA SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP ON COASTAL ISSUES

MEETING DATE - 17 FEBRUARY 2004, LGA HOUSE, SMITH SQUARE, LONDON

## REPORT ON HOUSING ISSUES IN COASTAL AREAS

### **Homelessness in Skegness & Mablethorpe**

#### **1.0 Introduction**

Following the meeting of the SIG in September 2003, in which a number of issues were identified during a workshop, the District Council of East Lindsey offered to produce a discussion paper regarding Homelessness in coastal areas. The following is a case study relating to homelessness in Skegness and Mablethorpe.

East Lindsey District Council is one of the largest Local Authority districts with a geographical area of some 1760 sq. kilometres, with a population of 124,800 (Lincolnshire County Council 1998 estimate).

The coastal resorts of Skegness & Mablethorpe have for many years enjoyed a reputation as major tourist destinations providing many tourist attractions and facilities.

#### **1.1 Deprivation**

Despite the significant benefits generated by the tourist industry the coastal areas of Skegness & Mablethorpe suffer significant levels of deprivation and acute social needs. Eight of the ten most deprived wards in Lincolnshire are in or around the two resorts. An example of this is reflected in the health deprivation indices, with 9 of the 10 most deprived wards in Lincolnshire situated on the East Lindsey coast and falling within the top 10% of England's most deprived health wards.

<i>Ward</i>	<i>District</i>	<i>Rank in England</i>
Ingoldmells	East Lindsey	142
Sutton and Trusthorpe	East Lindsey	145
Chapel St. Leonards	East Lindsey	163
Mablethorpe	East Lindsey	193
Winthorpe	East Lindsey	226
St. Clements	East Lindsey	306
New Leake	East Lindsey	320
Scarbrough	East Lindsey	345
Gainsborough East	West Lindsey	688
Hogsthorpe	East Lindsey	728

Health Rank: Indices of Deprivation Index 2000 of 8414 wards.

Within the East Lincs PCT area, East Lindsey coastal area has the highest admission rate for strokes (over 10.00 per 1,000 population) based on pooled admissions per year 1999/2000 to 2001/2002 (**Annual Report of the Director of Public Health, East Lincs PCT**). One of the main problems with regards to deprivation is the dependence on seasonal employment. Claimant rates recorded by travel to work area illustrate the reliance on seasonal employment in the East Lindsey coastal area; Claimant counts for Skegness and Mablethorpe in January 2003 were 1346 falling to 520 in August 2003. (ONS/Nomis).

<i>Date</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Persons</i>
Oct-03	515	200	715
Sep-03	454	147	601
Aug-03	399	121	520
Jul-03	403	125	528
Jun-03	447	138	585
May-03	519	170	689
Apr-03	615	217	832
Mar-03	774	309	1083
Feb-03	852	353	1205
Jan-03	938	408	1346
Dec-02	759	317	1076
Nov-02	666	261	927

### **Claimant Count by travel to work area Skegness and Mablethorpe (ONS – Nomis)**

#### *Long-term unemployment*

The coastal areas of the district have a significantly lower proportion of those persons out of work for a year or over, than the county and regional average.

<u>Area</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>Skegness Wards</u>	
Lincolnshire	13	Scarborough	2.1
Great Britain	20	Seacroft	5.6
East Midlands	18	St Clement's	4.6
Ingoldmells	4.7	Winthorpe	5.3
Chapel St Leonard's	8.3		
Mablethorpe	10		

Number of people claiming unemployment benefit out of work for 1 yr+ per 1000 of 16-59 populations  
2001. (ONS/Nomis)

#### *Vacancies notified by industry*

51% of all employment vacancies notified to Skegness and Mablethorpe jobcentres from October 2002 to October 2003 were within the distribution, hotel and restaurant sector.

## 2.0 Homelessness statistics

Homelessness continues to be one of the key social problems for the coastal resorts. East Lindsey District Council has the highest incidence of homelessness of any authority in the Lincolnshire area, with 1406 applications in 2002-03

The number of households in East Lindsey accepted as homeless and in priority need since 1999/00.

Households	1999/00	2000/01	2001/02	2002/03
Accepted as homeless and in priority need	321	341	361	385
No of households placed in B&B accommodation	98	81	44	93
Average length of stay in B&B	22.9 days	21.27 days	30.75 days	32 days

### Numbers eligible as homeless and in priority need in 2001/02 per local authority.

LOCAL AUTHORITY	NUMBER OF HOUSEHOLDS ACCEPTED AS STATUTORILY HOMELESS IN 2001/02
East Lindsey District Council	361
Boston Borough Council	92
Lincoln City Council	92
North Kesteven District Council	111
South Holland District Council	118
West Lindsey District Council	48

Of the six authorities participating in the Lincolnshire County Homelessness Strategy, East Lindsey has a significantly higher number of households accepted as statutorily homeless.

The table below shows the number of homelessness acceptances and the reasons for their acceptance for Mablethorpe and Skegness over a 3-year period.

	MABLETHORPE			SKEGENESS		
	01/10/00	01/10/01	01/10/02	01/10/00	01/10/01	01/10/02
	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Non-violent breakdown of relationship with partner</b>	1	2	4	16	20	18
<b>Violent breakdown of relationship involving partner</b>	8	2	7	19	31	17
<b>Violent breakdown of relationship involving associated persons</b>	0	0	2	0	0	1
<b>Other forms of violence</b>	0	0	4	0	0	2
<b>Other forms of harassment</b>	0	1	3	0	0	4

<b>In institution or care</b>	0	0	0	3	3	6
<b>Mortgage arrears</b>	1	0	1	5	2	5
<b>Parents no longer willing to accommodate</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>Relatives or parents no longer willing to accommodate</b>	4	5	6	10	14	10
<b>Rent arrears private sector</b>	0	0	0	1	0	1
<b>Rent arrears housing association</b>	0	0	0	0	1	0
<b>Termination of assured shorthold tenancy</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>32</b>
<b>Reasons other than termination of assured shorthold tenancy</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>39</b>
<b>Other</b>	12	12	4	42	44	8
<b>Total</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>169</b>	<b>248</b>	<b>166</b>
<b>Percentage of all homeless acceptances during the year</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>16 %</b>	<b>53%</b>	<b>60%</b>	<b>51%</b>

Staff at the Skegness office dealt with over 50 % of cases in each of the 3 years.

In Skegness the main reasons for homelessness included:

- Termination of assured shorthold tenancies,
- Parents no longer willing to accommodate, and
- Loss of accommodation due to reasons other than termination of assured shorthold tenancy.

And the main reasons for homelessness in Mablethorpe were:

- Termination of assured shorthold tenancies.
- Parents no longer willing to accommodate, and

Violent breakdown of relationship involving partner.

The resorts of Skegness and Mablethorpe have a tremendous draw for the homeless. The perceived attractiveness of living by the sea and the accessibility of Skegness with its rail connection, attracts many who are homeless from outside the district. Young people seeking seasonal employment in the tourist industry are often accommodated in short term lets, tied to their employment, or in restricted occupancy holiday caravans. This means frequently that they are faced with homelessness and unemployment out of the holiday season and those in winter lets also face eviction at the start of the holiday season, as landlords look to more lucrative holiday lets.

### **3.0 Private Rented Accommodation**

Living in private rented accommodation in Skegness & Mablethorpe is becoming an increasingly costly business.

	RSL weekly rents		Private Rented weekly rents	
	Skegness	Mablethorpe	Skegness	Mablethorpe
1 Bedroom flat	49.27	NA	65.00	72.00
2 Bedroom flat	56.60	45.50	85.00	88.00
2 Bedroom semi-detached house	60.35	67.55	104.00	NA
3 Bedroom semi-detached house	68.71	60.11	115.00	NA

Even with the costs involved in maintaining owner occupation it is still cheaper to buy rather than rent in the private sector. However property prices throughout East Lindsey have risen by almost 54% in the last two years.

#### *House Prices- for July to September 2003*

Overall property prices in East Lindsey have risen by almost 54% in the last two years.

AREA	DETACHED	SEMI-DETACHED	TERRACED	FLAT/MAISONETTE	OVERALL
Skegness	127,040	87,965	89,007	56,349	106,943
Mablethorpe	119,108	83,148	73,188	47,490	96,663

(HM Land Registry 2003)

	<i>Mablethorpe</i>	<i>Skegness</i>
East Lindsey average yearly income	19,026.80	19,026.80
Average property price – Terraced	73,188	89,007
Overall average property price	98,663	106,943

Source: New Earnings Survey 2003

The average terraced property in Skegness in July to September 2003 cost 4.7 times the average income, and 3.8 times the average income for properties in Mablethorpe.

In relation to the overall average property price for the same period, in Skegness the cost overall was 5.6 times the average income and in Mablethorpe 5.1 times the average income.

This can be partly attributed to a significant increase in the numbers of people who are seeking to move from the South East of the country. With this rapid acceleration, the cost of owner occupation is rapidly catching up with the rest of the country.

Rents have gone up in most areas of East Lindsey District Council but particularly in Skegness & Mablethorpe. The rents are considerably more than local reference rents. This means that there is a constant shortfall between the Housing Benefits available and the rent payable. Central Governments initial assertion, that landlords will review their charges and that those seeking to rent accommodation will gravitate to what they can afford, has so far proved erroneous.

### **3.0 Conclusion**

As demonstrated, homelessness is caused by a number of factors, some of which relate to the wider economic situation and housing market while others are specific to individual cases. However, East Lindsey District Council together with other local housing authorities in Lincolnshire conducted a review of their current homelessness service and these were published at the end of February 2003.

Through these reviews, each local housing authority was able to identify key issues within their district. Obviously East Lindsey District Council have concentrated on the issues detailed in this report. The Lincolnshire Homelessness Strategy Group then focused on the 10 common issues within the county, which were:

- Access to Primary Health for Homeless People
- Housing Issues for Ex-Offenders
- Providing Emergency & Temporary Accommodation
- Rent Deposit Schemes
- Housing for Young People
- Relationship Breakdown
- Providing Housing Support
- Mental Health Issues and Substance Misuse
- Preventing Homelessness
- Joint Working

The group then consulted again with all relevant agencies, to further narrow down the priority areas for action. The key 5 priorities for the county are:

- Preventing Homelessness
- Providing emergency & temporary accommodation (and reducing the use of Bed & Breakfast)
- Joint Working
- Providing Housing Support
- Housing for young people

Achieving targets relating to the above issues will represent a step change in the way homelessness is tackled and if successful will have a significant effect in tackling the issues/problems facing homeless people in Skegness and Mablethorpe.

#### 4.0 **Recommendations**

##### 4.1 It is recommended that: -

- This report be received,
- That the SIG notes the issues referred to in the report and the actions being taken by East Lindsey District Council to address them,
- The SIG commends the approach being taken as a possible model for Members of the SIG to follow,
- East Lindsey District Council be thanked for producing the paper and be requested to allow it to be published on the SIG's website.

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East Lindsey District Council  
17 February 2004

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