

# Middlefield

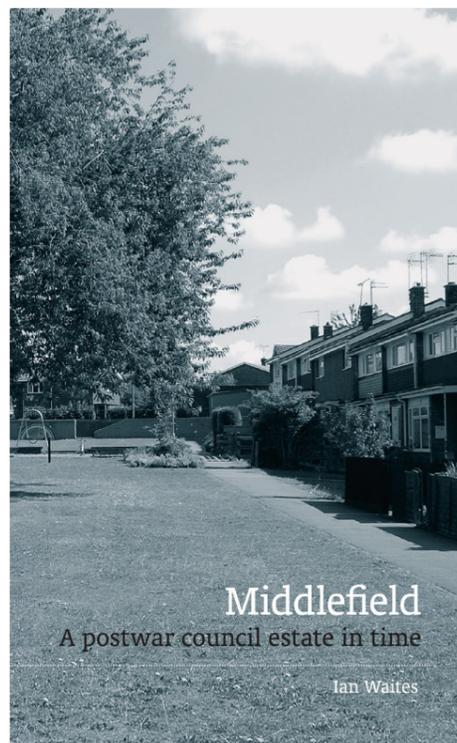
## A postwar council estate in time

Ian Waites

In May 1964, Ian Waites's family moved into a brand new, two-bedroomed council house on the just-completed Middlefield Lane estate in Gainsborough, Lincolnshire. The estate was a typical provincial example of a post-World War Two local authority housing scheme intended to provide new homes for working-class families. It was characterised by modernist ideas in architecture and planning: the houses had Formica kitchen 'tops', a TV aerial socket, and a 'picture-window', while the estate itself was almost wholly pedestrianised.

Ian Waites's photographs document this world, and his recollective descriptions of the estate during his childhood in the 1960s and '70s attempt to regain a sense of what it 'felt like' to live there back then. Today, these estates are commonly viewed as problematic and unattractive places but *Middlefield: A postwar council estate in time* presents a more nuanced perspective by demonstrating that they were carefully and thoughtfully planned, with rich and meaningful histories.

IAN WAITES is a senior lecturer in the history of art and design at the University of Lincoln. His current research explores the landscapes, histories, dreams and memories of postwar England. He is the author of *Common Land in English Painting, 1700–1850*, and can be found on Twitter: @iwaites60.



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