**Present**: John Littlemore, acting chair and Maidstone; Sylvia Roberts, Amanda Gill, Ashford; Rachel Westlake, Max Guest, Iona Hunter-Whitehouse, Serine Annan-Veitch, KCC; Graham Urquhart, KCC; Rav Kensrey, Sevenoaks; Toni Carter, Dartford; Stuart Clifton, TWBC; Chris Bishop, Riverside; Helen Miller, KHG; Kylie Gillham, Canterbury; Ian Long, MHS; Claire Keeling, TMBC; Robin Cahill, Hazel South, KCC; Natalia Merritt, Maidstone; Claire Williams, Porchlight; Yvette Haselden, Steve Claringbold, Lookahead; Vicky Hodson, HomeChoice; Mark Damiral, Folkestone and Hythe; Alex Clarke DLUHC; Ray Easdown, Medway; Ashley Jackson, Rachel May, Thanet; Graham Urquhart, KCC; Zoe Callaway, Swale; Guests; Julie Argent, KCC;

**Apologies:** Gay Larter, speaker on Dad’s Unlimited; Christy Holden, KCC; Nicola Bowen, Choice Support; Elly Toye, Dover; Vicky May, Gravesham; Manpreet Bhupal, Vice Chair and Gravesham; Pam Millington, Dover; Cynthia Allen, Interventions Alliance; Sarah Huntley, JCP; Mike Barrett, Porchlight; Mel Anthony, KCC;

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Reference | Notes/Outcome | Who  | Action/Decision |
| Matters Arising | COMF updates, HM contacted KCC and was informed that LHAs can request more than the £175K but then must use it all by 31st March 2022. KCC also confirmed that Sevenoaks and Dover must spend all by 31st March 2022. **Done**Toni C and John L will co-chair for 6 months and then review. Manpreet will continue as vice chair.Lisa C and Rachel W to touch base on DA and any information needed to inform the DA reciprocal agreement being drafted. **Done**Lisa C and Ray E to touch base to ensure the homelessness Duty to Refer is included in the DA reciprocal agreement being drafted. **Done**SC to send DLUHC letter to Lisa C. **Done**TC, RK and NM to touch base with MG to see what help can be given form the IH protocol. **Pick up in protocols section.**TC to touch base with JL to gain any support needed to make contact with right people to support IH protocol review **Pick up in protocols section.**RC to inform HM when OFSTED decision made so YP protocol work can be resumed. **RC has met with OFSTED but they have not determined their standards regarding 16-17s accommodation yet and may not announce that until April.** MA to liaise with AC to make contact with DLUHC. **Done**All, consider how to work with KCC on the Kent Homeless Connects contract matter. **To be picked up in commissioning updates.**HM circulate case law link and also and letters to LHAs on supporting DA survivors. **Done** |  |  |
| Update from DLUHC | Alex Clarke explained that the situation for those fleeing Ukraine is fast changing and further government announcements are anticipated. There are two route for those displaced; * As a family member of a person already living in the UK (which was available to immediate family only and is now extended to extended family members). They will have recourse to public funds and can stay for 36 months, initially.
* Via sponsorship from an individual, organisation or local authority. AC will send an update on this when he has it.

A resettlement programme is anticipated but there are no details yet.DLUHC has seen a lot of interest in RSAP across Kent and many have meet DLUHC and HE to discuss potential schemes. If you haven’t been in touch yet please contact AC as deadline if 13th April. He gave a reminder that the homelessness prevention grant top up moneys must be spent by end of March 2022. He thanked members for their work on RSI and AFEO bids and DLUHC will send decisions as soon as they can.JL asked when the homelessness prevention settlement grants will be announced. AC did not but will check. SC posted in chat function that this was announced on 21.12.21JL asked whether Ukraine sponsorship route is aimed at upper or lower tier authorities. AC did not know, but an announcement is expected next week.JL asked whether there be holding hotels. AC said this is not known.GU asked whether Homelessness Prevention Grant must be spent or allocated by 31st March 2022.AC said it must be spent by then.  |  |  |
| Dad’s Unlimited | Gay Larter – was unfortunately unable to attend and this item will be rescheduled |  |  |
| Local drug information service | Julie Argent, from KCC Public health, gave a presentation that will be circulated by email.The Local Drug Information Service (LDIS) and Profession Information Network (PIN) exists to ensure that drug information is accurate and locally relevant. The scheme has been running for a while but is being mentioned to ensure all know of it. The Profession Information Network (PIN) is made up of relevant professionals who are likely to encounter new, potent, or contaminated drugs and the people who use them. LDIS has a dedicated mailbox, the panel then validates information and decides what to do with it, and this can result in an alert for partners in the LDIS to give useful local information. Alerts can be targeted to certain groups, for example schools, those working with rough sleepers. It aims to get the right message to the right people at the right time.KHG are part of the PIN and so info will come to SW and HM and they will cascade to contacts. JL said that the community safety teams and RS outreach teams may wish to receive this information. JL asked that each organisation identify a single point of contact in their housing team, and perhaps RS service, to receive these alerts and use the drug alert email address kentdrugalerts@kent.gov.uk to request receipt of messages directly.JA confirmed that all community safety units are involved. | **All** | **Identify a point of contact in your housing team for drug alerts and contact the service to show your interest** |
| COMF update | TC gave the COMF update;We’ve spent the first £1m! This is great news and we need to keep going. Kent LHAs have until 30 June to spend £175000 each except Dover and Sevenoaks who have an additional £45k but only until 31st March to spend it. The funds are to prevent homelessness in households adversely financially affected by Covid.LAs can find promote the project by;* Printing and displaying the post emailed round by HM in January
* Sending the email for landlords provided by Maxim, circulated by HM, to their landlord lists
* Identifying their tenants rent arrears and checking which are related to financial hardship causes by Covid
* Asking their communications teams to follow Kent Housing Group on Facebook and Twitter and sharing posts related to this project.

At the end of the project HM will write a report to KCC. This will require at least one case study from each LA. This can be from the perspective of a social or private landlord, social or private tenant, or mortgagee. The gold standard is a case study that shows how the project has helped both the landlord and tenant but we know that won’t always happen. 100-200 words are great and please don’t include staff or client names. There is no need to wait until the end of the project to send a case study to HM. Maxim can use case studies to promote the project online. They will anonymise them and if a lot of detail is provided that would make it possible to identify the household some details will not be used for these promotions, but will be kept for the report to KCC. **Maxim’s update;**A press release has been drafted and issued to the local media on the extension of the COMF scheme. It was also added to the Support for Kent Landlords website and shared on Kent Housing Group’s social media channels. Copy was drafted on the extension and distributed to the Local Authorities for use on their own websites. Please can we urge you all to speak with your comms/web team to do this please?An advertising campaign with KM Media Group began on KMfm and KentOnline at the end of January and will run for eight weeks. Anonymous case studies from people who have benefited from COMF are currently being edited for the website. Graphics have also been created and shared on social media. Please ask your comms team to follow KHG on social media and share posts about this project. An animation is being planned using an amalgamation of the case studies to tell the stories of people who have been helped by COMF.A blog has been published on the dangers of loan sharks. It has been added to the Support for Kent Landlords website and shared on KHG’s social channels. This benefits the site in terms of Search Engine Optimisation. **Website**Once the project is over the [supportforkentlandlords.co.uk](https://gbr01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=http%3A%2F%2Fsupportforkentlandlords.co.uk%2F&data=04%7C01%7Cvicky.hodson%40dover.gov.uk%7Caf92d3a502114b3ff9ae08da01e91c7c%7C97d0cb53199d4c70a001375e8c953735%7C0%7C0%7C637824397960557350%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000&sdata=EtXfzZoZYvrG9Ajar%2BoLaG5EcmWL1Hgpa9zyJE4F8SM%3D&reserved=0) could be continued. It could be added to the existing KHG website and take the KHG website look, or remain a standalone website with its own look. The KHG website is updated at least once a week. To be a standalone website it would need updating *at least* 6 times a year. Websites must be updated regularly on content but also to ensure they are maintained properly and meet the standards needed. Please let HM know if you can update the website every two months let HM know by 18th March. | **All Kent LHAs****All Kent LHAs****All** | **Please ask your comms/website team to cover the extension of the scheme****Please ask your comms team to follow KHG on social media and share posts about this project****Please consider volunteering for reviewing and updating the website at least 6 times a year** |
| Commissioning updates | **Max Guest and Kent Homeless Connects.** They have met with all but one LA in Kent. The next meetings will be with them and providers. They are working on the EqIA for the proposed change and that will be attached to the public consultation. The public consultation is likely to start around 28th March and run for 6 weeks. They hope to have wide engagement, including with clients. They want to set up a county wide working group. They hope this will highlight the connected areas of work. Max will send out a list of dates to HM soon for circulation.JL asked about the process. MG explained that the proposed budget was approved at the full council meeting on 10th February, but as it is a change in policy it needs an EqIA and consultation before the final sign off. JL asked whether the budget would have to change if this is not signed off. MG, yes that is a possibility.JL asked when we will know transitional arrangements. MG said the timeline and amount will be set once they’ve drafted the transitional plans and that needs those conversations with LAs and providers. SC referred to the email from Porchlight refusing to accept further referrals and asked how KCC is responding. Max they will work with Porchlight on this.**Rachel Westlake showed a presentation which HM will circulate on Domestic Abuse services**DLUHC has announced the 2022-23 Safe Accommodation allocation and there is table on slide 2 of the presentation showing the amounts to each LHA and KCC. The Know, See, Speak Out Media and comms campaign across 16 days of action was useful and the work will continue for next 2 years. JL will MARAC is for high rise cases, will that continue. RW this will be reviewed but it is likely it will be high risk and on professional judgment. RW highlighted the two DLUHC consultations related to DA, urged members to respond and invited them to share perspectives with the DA Commissioner; please see slide 5.**DA Strategy Delivery Plan update presentation was given by IHW which will be circulated by email**Both the strategy and delivery plan are long so they allocated sections to teams and sub groups and they have a part of the plan to be delivered. The governance was set up in the presentation.Please comment on the Safe Accommodation on pages 31 and 32 of the strategy [Domestic-abuse-strategy-2020-2023.pdf (kent.gov.uk)](https://www.kent.gov.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0013/105502/Domestic-abuse-strategy-2020-2023.pdf)and on the fourth tab. KCC would particularly like feedback on;* Are the actions sensible?
* How is/should KHOG be involved?
* What would you like added to represent the work you do?

JL KHG and sub groups has been identified as a key partner and we would like to work with you on these?Responses are needed by the end of March, yet if ideas come after than they will always wish to here. TC said the Local Partnership Board raised a point around guarantors and the issue of people wishing to leave a refuge not have access to rent guarantees to go into private rented scheme. CK they are working on this issue moving forward.YH said people leaving refuge often do not have a guarantor and would welcome talking with CK, and others in West Kent, on this.JL send good ways to address lack of guarantors to HM to circulate.SAV will aim to provide an update from the Local Partnership on Kent wide DAHA membership accreditation. **Young People**RC they will start looking at extending contracts whilst they wait for OFSTED decision. | **HM****HM****All****All****West Kent based people****All****SAV** | **Circulate list of dates to members to join a working group on KHC****RW would like to give a further update on DA at May KHOG****See slide 5 for DLUHC consultations relating to joint tenancies and local connection****Please respond to KCCs consultation on DA****Liaise with YH on how to address the lack of a guarantor****Send ways to address lack of guarantor to HM to circulate****Provide an update on DAHA membership** |
| Protocols update | **Domestic Abuse Reciprocal Agreement** TC read Lisa Clarke’s written update;The newly formed project group met on the 8th March, to discuss the implementation of the project and how to address the potential challenges such as rent arrears, tenure type, joint tenants. One of the actions will be for LC to meet with Cambridgeshire council who already have a reciprocal scheme in place to identify how they have overcome these issues.We also discussed communication and the best method to present the scheme to the other social landlords and the appointment of a local coordinator to manage the scheme. These are issues that we hope to finalise at our next meeting. We are keen to get the project moving and so the group will be meeting again on the 25th March.Following LC attendance at the January KHOG meetings, her actions were as follows:1. Touch base with Rachel W to ensure that the support given to people using the proposed scheme get as much support as if they went other route (homelessness).
2. Touch base with Ray E to ensure the Duty to refer when a household is at risk of homelessness is included in the proposed protocol

These actions have all been completed.If you any question about the project, please email Lisa Clarke direct and her email address was posted in the chat function.JL Domestic Homicide Review asked KHG to respond to a review. JL and MB met with the [Tenancy Management sub group](https://www.kenthousinggroup.org.uk/subgroups/kent-neighbourhood-management-sub-group/) chair and vice chair to discuss the matter, draft a paper and is seeking agreement and then will circulate. This will not be a protocol but as guidance. **IH / families with complex needs**HM explained that there had been a working group who presented KHOG a final draft in 2021, but SC said it needed more work around early intervention and joint working. Members had had to drop out and then a new working group was created. Recently KCC contacted HM with a draft they had been working on. JL suggested that HM circulate the draft from KCC and to seek comments by 25th March.NM explained that she TC, RK, had been working on it. They felt the draft they had seen from 2021 needed more detail on the early intervention side and they were going to work on that but will read the draft when circulated and comment there first.**Young Peoples Joint Protocol**. HS and RC suggested we wait until OFSTED make the decision on regulation and return to this after then. It now seems likely that this will be April 2022.**Kent Agency Assessment Form** [Kent Agency Assessment Form - Kent Housing Group](https://www.kenthousinggroup.org.uk/protocols/kent-agency-assessment-form/)Initially raised as some forms were being sent to the email address for SAR and not the housing service. This then raised the question on whether the form is still being used for all adults or only adults requiring enhanced extra care (so over 55) or specialist mental health provision. KCC were not aware of any changes being made. Use of the form may not be uniform with some using it to inform a housing register, others homelessness application and some both. ZC they still get them from professionals for housing register from professionals but not OT cases, and similar for Dartford. JL thought this was used more in east of county than west. SC said there were two forms and these were amalgamated a couple of years ago to highlight a welfare need. RM thought it was removed as the OTs had said they shouldn’t be used as they do not make decisions on bandings. Thanet do not use it except for adults requiring enhanced extra care (so over 55) or specialist mental health provisionVH a group of OTs did look at the KAA for OTs but just for OTs not for the other professionals who use it. VH there is an operational group for HomeChoice and perhaps they could liaise with GU from KCC to review how the form is used at source and when received. Due to the amount of data provided it would be useful to consider how this is done securely.GU has taken over from Tim Berry at KCC. They sometimes use the KAA for care leavers. They would like to have up to date email addresses on the form to send it to housing. JL asked VH to set up a task and finish group on this? Please contact VH is you’d like to join the group.**Addressing tents on LAs own land**Initially this was raised by Canterbury’s legal service to Ashford about which legal powers are used. They flagged CPN, PSPO, ASBI and CBO.JL was contacted asking by legal at Canterbury CC asking how they dealt with tents on councils own land. HM to circulate CCCs list so people can respond direct to CCC. A working group can be set up if needed after that. KG the enquiry did start at CCC as they did have a complaint that possessions were taken and they would to grateful to hear how others deal with the issue. **KMPT and Homelessness on discharge from mental health in patient facility**KMPT contacted KHG asking that the paper from JPPB, which is not on our website, be updated. There was a productive meeting where the document was reviewed by KG, MB, HM and partners from KMPT which highlighted changes needed from a housing and KMPT perspective. MB volunteered to collate the housing related changed and then JL, TC, KG and MB will meet to review before they are sent to KMPT. KMPT will collate changes and then send a new draft that will be taken to KHOG for comments.  | **All****ALL****All** | **Read draft and send comments to HM by 25th March****Contact VH of HomeChoice to volunteer to join this working group****Read email from Canterbury CC on tents and respond to Canterbury CC** |
| Urgent National Policy or Case Law | JL will forward a piece on how to end fixed term tenancies. HM to circulate.  | **HM** | **Circulate legal update from JL** |
| Chair for KHOG | Toni C and John L will co-chair for 6 months and then review. Manpreet will be vice chair.  |  |  |
| AOB | Pam Millington has restarted the seniors meetings and advised they will be meeting quarterly in future. They meet for a couple of hours to share any challenges or best practice in their area. They compare their approaches to the work/legislation/appeals and share useful forms, process and support each other through the meetings. Sometimes speakers are invited to share at the meetings. If you are a senior and haven’t had an invitation from Pam please contact her and she will add you to her list. Also, if you would like to speak with the seniors, or have any topics for their agenda, please contact Pam. This is an informal support group, not a formal sub group of KHOG. Date of next meeting is 19th May.  | **HO seniors** | **You are welcome to contact PM at Dover to join HO seniors group** |