**Report to: Kent Housing Group**

**From: Homes & Communities Agency**

**Date: September 2016**

**Subject: HCA update**

**1) Housing and Planning Act**

The Housing and Planning Act 2016 received Royal Assent on 12 May. More detail on the provisions in practice will follow

**2) DCLG**

Sajid Javid – Secretary of State

Gavin Barwell – Minister of State for Housing, Planning and Minister for London

**3) New Chair of Homes and Communities Agency**

Sir Edward Lister has been appointed. For the last 5 years he has been London’s Deputy Mayor for policy and planning and chief of staff at the Greater London Authority (GLA**).**

**4) Current Programmes**

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**AHP 15 -18**

Bidding for the 2015 to 2018 Affordable Homes Programme closed on 25 November 2015.

For providers who have an existing AHP 15-18 delivery contract with the HCA, it will be possible to continue to put forward proposals for nil grant Affordable Rent schemes through IMS over this period. New AHO schemes need to go through the new programme

Some providers still have funding for AR as part of an indicative allocation or as substitute schemes – encouraged to make use of this funding rather than hand back

**SOAHP 16 -21**

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| The Shared Ownership and Affordable Homes Programme (SOAHP) 2016-21 prospectus was launched on 13 April and closed for bids on 2 September. The assessment process is now underway. The Programme aims to increase the supply of new shared ownership and affordable homes in England by March 2021.Full details of the Programme published in the prospectus.. Prospectus is available on [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/shared-ownership-and-affordable-homes-programme-2016-to-2021-guidance)The programme split is as follows - 88% Help to Buy Shared ownership, 7% Rent to Buy, 5% Supported housing for older, disabled and vulnerable. Funding of £4.7bn is shared with the GLA, the split is not yet known.  In addition to the SOAHP Prospectus we have also republished the [Capital Funding Guide](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/capital-funding-guide) which has been updated for the 2016-21 programme period  |

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**Starter Homes Unlocking the Land Fund**

The Starter Homes Unlocking the Land Fund was launched on 16 March. The aim of the Starter Home Land Fund is to support the acquisition, remediation and de-risking of suitable land for starter home developments that can then be built out by developers by 2020.

This prospectus specifically invites expressions of interest from local authorities outside of London to form partnerships with the Homes and Communities Agency to use the Fund.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/starter-homes-unlocking-the-land-fund>

Initial bidding closed 13th May but CME continues until December. Announcements on initial successful bidders will be made shortly. There are a number of funding and assistance opportunities from the HCA available for LAs that are successful in this bid round - from support and expertise , equity investment to remediate and de risk sites and acquiring private sites – all to promote delivery of starter homes.

**Locally Led Garden Villages, Towns and Cities**

This prospectus was published on 16 March sets out how we can support local areas who want to create new garden villages, towns and cities. It offers tailored government support to local areas with ambitious and innovative proposals to deliver 1,500 homes and above.

It is divided into 2 parts covering expressions of interest for different scales of development.

The first part of the prospectus invited expressions of interest by 31 July 2016 for new ‘garden villages’ of between 1,500 to 10,000 homes. There has been a good response, including 2 for Kent, and bids are currently being assessed.

The second part of the prospectus invites expressions of interest on a rolling basis in new garden towns and cities of more than 10,000 homes.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/locally-led-garden-villages-towns-and-cities>

**Recoverable Investment**

An announcement on the new format for HCA I Recoverable Investment funding is expected shortly. This will follow through on the CSR announcement below:

* Loan Finance - Short Term funding - £1bn (including existing £525m BFF) short term fund to 2020-21, with added flexibility to enable government to support emerging markets e.g. offsite manufacturing. Fund will provide loan finance for a term of up to five years in order to support the delivery of some 26,500 new homes to 2024-25.Fund will be launched in Spring 2016.
* Loan Finance - Long term funding **-** £2bn fund offering long term loan funding focussed on supporting the delivery of a strong future pipeline of housing supply. Fund will unlock development of up to 140,000 homes on brownfield land. Fund replaces and expands on the previously announced Large Sites Infrastructure Fund (£1bn launched in April 2014) and Housing Zones (up to £200m, announced in June 2014 in the Chancellor’s Mansion House speech) loan funding programme. The Fund will also support the commitment on Brownfield Regeneration Fund.

**5) HCA Restructure**

There is a staff consultation underway on a new structure that will strengthen HCA delivery of the Government’s housing programmes. We will provide further details to you and our other key partners following the conclusion of the process later this year

**6) General Information and Publications**

**CLG Committee launches inquiry into home building - 6th July 2016**

The Communities and Local Government Committee has launched an inquiry into the capacity of the housebuilding industry to meet the overwhelming demand for new homes.

The Committee is inviting chief executives of major housebuilders to give evidence to the inquiry, which will include the role of SME developers, the skills, size and sustainability of the workforce, development finance and the planning process.

As part of the inquiry, the Committee will also look at different ways of overcoming the constraints the industry faces, for example through offsite construction, self-build and direct commissioning by government.

It is also likely to invite ministers, industry body representatives, the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA), local authorities and housing associations to give evidence in public, as well as skills and training experts, representatives of the offsite and self-build sectors, and debt and equity financiers.

The industry has until September 12 to contribute written submissions on issues including: whether the numbers of builders and types of companies within housebuilding is enough to meet housing demand; housebuilders’ business models; and the extent to which approaches to planning delay new homes delivery.

if the economic and policy environment allows, enable the industry to continue to drive housing supply in the future."

**HAPPI 3**

[**'Housing our Ageing Population: Positive Ideas' (HAPPI 3)'**](http://www.housinglin.org.uk/_library/Resources/Housing/Support_materials/Other_reports_and_guidance/HAPPI3_Report_2016.pdf) report was launched in June

**HAPPI 3 REPORT: KEY RECOMMENDATIONS**

* Ministers to exempt older people from stamp duty when downsizing
* Help to Buy-style assistance for older people buying new properties
* Government to ensure policies for rent regulation and housing benefit control do not deter investment in specialist housing for older people
* The **Homes and Communities Agency** and Greater London Authority to boost investment in affordable retirement accommodation for rent
* Councils to ensure Local Plans give priority to older people’s housing needs
* Retirement housing should be exempt from Starter Homes obligations
* Developers recommended to offer 999 or 1,000-year leases
* Department for Work and Pensions to ensure benefit changes don’t deter investment in supported housing
* Chartered Institute of Housing and National Housing Federation to be ‘advocates’ for older people’s housing
* Housing associations to assist with co-housing custom building

**English Housing Survey**

The English housing survey is a continuous national survey commissioned by DCLG.. It collects information about people’s housing circumstances and the condition and energy efficiency of housing in England.

It has 2 component surveys:

* a household interview
* a physical inspection of a sub sample of the properties

Each year initial results are published in a headline report in the beginning of the year ( in February 2016). This is followed by a series of more detailed reports released in the summer and these are now available on the DCLG website.

The nine reports are on:

* [first time buyers and potential home owners](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/english-housing-survey-2014-to-2015-first-time-buyers-and-potential-home-owners-report)
* [the private rented sector](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/english-housing-survey-2014-to-2015-private-rented-sector-report)
* [the social rented sector](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/english-housing-survey-2014-to-2015-social-rented-sector-report)
* [housing for older people](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/english-housing-survey-2014-to-2015-housing-for-older-people-report)
* [adaptations and accessibility](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/english-housing-survey-2014-to-2015-adaptations-and-accessibility-of-homes-report)
* [housing stock](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/english-housing-survey-2014-to-2015-housing-stock-report)
* [housing and well-being](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/english-housing-survey-2014-housing-and-well-being-report)
* [energy](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/english-housing-survey-2014-energy-report)
* [smoke alarms in English homes](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/english-housing-survey-2014-to-2015-smoke-alarms-in-english-homes-report)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/english-housing-survey>

**House Building June Quarter**

DCLG published figures on new build housing starts and completions in England for the period April to June 16 on 26 August.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/547818/House_Building_Release_June_Qtr_2016.pdf>

**Regulator’s Quarterly Survey**

This report ( link below) highlights that the social housing sector remains in a strong financial position with access to sufficient finance.

The Quarterly Survey is one of the ways in which the regulator monitors and reports on the financial health of the sector as part of its robust approach to supporting the sector’s financial viability, helping to support providers’ contribution to new housing supply

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/quarterly-survey-for-q1-april-to-june-2016-to-2017>

**Consumer Regulation Review**

The HCA has just published its annual Consumer Regulation Review. The report helps the sector and stakeholders understand the social housing regulator’s approach to consumer regulation, by exploring case studies and lessons learned.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/consumer-regulation-review-2015-to-2016>