**Present**: Brian Horton, SELEP; Emma Bartlett, Canterbury; Liz Crockford, Sevenoaks, Naomi Palmer, Thanet; Perry DeSouza, Dover; Sarah Holmes, chair and Tunbridge Wells; Sarah Williamson, Dartford; Lisa Webb, Medway; Kimba Layton, Folkestone and Hythe; Gillian Aylett, Tonbridge and Malling; James Young, Thanet; Helen Miller, KHG;

**Apologies:** Jodie Stringer, Home Buy Agent; Donna Michael & Mark James, Ashford; Nicola Bowen, Choice Support; Tessa O’Sullivan, Action with Communities Rural Kent;

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| Reference | Notes/Outcome | When | Who | Action/Decision |
| SELEP Update | BH is housing advisor to SELEP, working with developer groups in Kent, Essex and East Sussex. COVID-19 has resulted in MHCLG reaching out to developer groups across the three counties to understand what is happening in the housing markets. They have monthly meetings with MHCLG and also with Chris Pincher and Robert Jenrick and have become a trusted partner. They bring public and private sector issues to the Ministry and include both housing and planning colleagues. This enables BH to raise concerns and beginning to see action on some areas.  The key issues have been activity, access to labour and materials, cost inflations and how they make it difficult for productivity and for constructors to provide meaningful quotes. These issues may be from furlough, COVID, Brexit, Suez Canal blockage, timber fires, etc. The government’s view is that the market will come back into balance but the market are saying that as one aspect improves another changes. This presents a real risk to all types of building works, refurbishment and for asset management.  They discuss planning issues and build out rates. There appear to be delays getting responses from Planning teams and concerns have been raised over what remote working means for retention, recruitment and sharing of information within planning teams.  Phosphates and nitrates have been raised by Nick Fenton with the ministers as this is stalling developments and government is interested in this. Simon Thomas of Kent Planners has been flagging this issue too.  Ministers are very interested in First Homes. BH asked if people are seeing an appetite for First Homes; LC, Sevenoaks contacted the relevant developers and that has not been productive yet but that may be due to the values as they have an out of London rate but London prices. BH suggested we may need a tapered approach, not a cliff edge of in or out of London. No LHAs have been approached by developers for discussion or support. BH will also ask developer groups about whether they’ve contacted LHAs for discussions.  BH has been asking Homes England to supporting SMEs to do more and been co-developing workshops on this.  If colleagues want issues on this agenda please raise them with BH so the dialogue can be accurate and productive.  LC highlighted to attract the First Homes pilot funding you almost have to re-open the section 106 and that is not attractive to developers.  A letter will go from the three developer groups chairs to the minister to set out key issues to prep for a meeting after the party conference, so probably mid October. BH will share that letter. | 1 Oct | BH  All  BH | Feed the need for a tapered not cliff edge to funding to MHCLG  Let Brian know of issues to feedback to MHCLG and also any comments on whether developers are approaching them to discuss First Homes  Send copy of letter to HM to circulate to HSEG. |
| Home England | Becky Ashley – HM to ask BA if she would send written update.  SH invited comments relating to HE and funding;  TDC used Homes England funding for their first three phases for home building Affordable Homes Programme 2015-18 which delivered 50+ units and will be working with them again for future schemes. There are currently considering 1 for 1 monies and prudential borrowing. The challenges of working with HE included the logistics of milestones to meet and the evidence required is onerous and it was complicated to blend the funding pots. Collating the data for the audit process is time consuming. They hope to negotiate a higher percentage of the new build unit to make the process worthwhile. TDC was not successful for Next Steps and they are aiming to understand why, perhaps the level of match funding they proposed.  Tunbridge Wells, got funding for a conversion for 6 1-bed flats for rough sleepers on license agreements. The value of the funding they received was low compared to the evidence required to claim the grant. TW is now a landlord again and that will be useful in helping them provide specialised housing. The IMS system is difficult. They were also audited which time is consuming. They match funded Next Steps funding with S106 contributions and only needed money for refurbishment.  Folkestone & Hythe, got Next Steps Accommodation funding. The amount of money was low for what HE wanted them to purchase so only managed 4 leasehold homes as the time scales were short and funding levels low.  SH believes more funding is available and will circulate details if she can find them.  SH will flag these issues into the sub group update to KHG for the main meeting on 6th Oct.  TDC and F&H asked to send any figures to SH to help with this update. |  | HM  SH  JY & KL | Ask Becky Ashley if she would like to provide a written update.  Flag issues in sub group update due 29th Sept for KHG on 6th Oct  Send details of bids to SH to inform her group update. |
| Home Buy Update | Jodie Stringer from the Home Buy Agent was unable to attend but would be happy to send a representative to attend future meetings. She will provide a presentation to be posted on the website with the meeting notes. Regarding the presentation she advises;  The important update to note is that of the new model. The new model applies to new homes build after the 1st April, using the grant confirmation from Homes England. Please see the passage below, taken from the [Capital Funding Guide](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/capital-funding-guide/1-help-to-buy-shared-ownership);    12.2.1 The changes to the Shared Ownership model only apply to Shared Ownership homes to be delivered through the AHP 2021 to 2026, that is Shared Ownership homes that will delivered as part of a provider’s new 2021 to 2026 contract with Homes England (when finalised) and receiving grant confirmation from Homes England on or after 1 April 2021.  12.2.2 The changes do not apply to any Shared Ownership homes, including resales, delivered as part of any Homes England programme prior to the AHP 2021 to 2026. This is the case even where Shared Ownership homes in the Shared Ownership and Affordable Homes Programme (SOAHP) 2016 to 2021 are completed after 1 April 2021.    The new shared ownership model introduces a new 10-year period during which the costs of any maintenance or repairs will be met by the landlord rather than the shared owner. Only after 10 years will the shared owner take on full responsibility for any repairs and maintenance costs. This 10-year period is in addition to any repairs or maintenance covered by the new build warranty to cover any works required that the warranty does not cover.  LC raised the idea of how many Shared Ownership homes will be delivered once the First Homes programme begins and then what role the Home Buy Agent will have. |  | HM | HM to circulate presentation. |
| Rural Housing Update | Tessa O’Sullivan – will provide a written update to be sent with notes.  Sevenoaks are doing the Parish Needs Surveys and the parishes are being supportive. The level of resident participation is low, with 18-27% response rates. The second stage needs survey seems to garner more responses. LC is not sure what more Tessa and the Parish Council could do to promote this. The level of need identified in the initial survey is generally halved by planners, yet at the second stage level survey the level of need is generally accepted by planners. They will develop their Rural Exception Sites programme, supported by Alison Thompson. LC is concerned about how lucrative First Homes exception sites could be and how that will impact on rural homes.  In TW most of what would have been rural exception sites are now market homes sites.  DDC were asked for a progress report on the Shepherdswell community land trust. Perry will ask Rachel to send an update to include any lessons learned.  EB explained that community led housing, she and NP, for Canterbury and Thanet, will do virtual ‘what is community housing’ workshops in October, for councillors, parish councils, community leads. In Spring they will run a conference with Dover and Folkestone and Hythe councils.  NP explained that Thanet is running a community led housing Facebook page that will go live in late September, serving wider than Thanet. It will provide a safe space to ask questions, share information and signpost people and help them work together. NP intends to link to relevant local and national groups including the Kent Community Housing Hub.  LC asked has everyone spent their original community housing fund money? This could be held by the planning team. It can be used to promote community funding. Some LHA did not get any funding, for example Ashford. If money is unused then it could be useful to use it to fund the Kent Community Hub. EB said Dover, Canterbury, and Thanet still have funds from this and are using it to provide up to £10K for community start ups and for community conferences. LC asked other LHA to feed into HM how much money they have (funding provided in 2017) and how they intend to spend it. The Kent Community Hub is funded on a year by year basis and its useful to know where funding will come from in future. |  | HM  PD’S  NP  All but East Kent LAs | Circulate TO’S update when received.  Request an update on Shepherdswell CLT from Rachel.  Share the link to the Facebook page when available  Tell HM how much money you have and how you intend to spend it |
| KHG Update | HM, the updates from each sub group were provided at the KHG meeting on 14th July and can be found at [Kent Housing Group Full Membership Meeting (Virtual) - Kent Housing Group](https://www.kenthousinggroup.org.uk/events/kent-housing-group-full-membership-meeting-virtual-3/). The next update will be provided to KHG on 6th Oct and will be posted here [Kent Housing Group Full Membership Meeting (Virtual) - Kent Housing Group](https://www.kenthousinggroup.org.uk/events/kent-housing-group-full-membership-meeting-virtual-4/)  The events planned are;  16th Sept, the Housing Forum’s Development Partnership Forum at the Corn Exchange, Rochester.  22nd Sept Extra Care Housing virtual event with KCC.  13th Oct, Strategic Partnership virtual event with Homes England and the SPs active in Kent  9th Nov, White Paper event with speakers from the social housing regulator, Cipfa Cco and Housing 21  KHG’s bid for Contain Outbreak Management Funding was successful. The two work streams are;   * To develop a campaign for private sector landlords to encourage them to liaise with their local authority early with the aim of preventing evictions where possible. This stream will have a website, a marketing campaign and a video/animation. * To give money to each LHA under KCC to help tenants suffering financial hardship as a result of Covid-19. It is expected that it will mainly be used to tackle rent arrears but could also be used to help owner occupiers. |  |  |  |
| K&MHS and HSEG work programme | The Kent and Medway Housing Strategy is on the website [here](https://www.kenthousinggroup.org.uk/assets/uploads/large/FINAL-Kent-Medway-Housing-Strategy-2020-2025-29.7.2020.pdf). It will inform the backbone of joint working that we do at the group as a whole. HSEG identified workstreams from the K&M Housing Strategy to help deliver it and SH Shared the HSEG action plan from 2021-21 on her screen. SH questioned whether there are too many actions for the group. HM explained that other sub groups are considering which objectives under each theme are most relevant to their group. More actions in Infrastructure First theme, Affordability theme and Accelerating Housing delivery fit with HSEG. Some objectives fit with more than one sub group. HM to send the collate objectives under all the themes to SH. The objectives are set and now we’re looking for each sub group to identify the objectives they will lead or, or contribute towards.  LC Unattended consequence of First Homes could be we may start delivering more social rented homes. Socially rented homes are affordable and so helping us deliver under the affordability theme.  All LAs are asked to email HM with stating their affordable housing percentage tenure split and whether they are delivering in house. |  | **HM**  **SH**  **All**  **HM** | Send the collated objectives for each theme to SH  SH will revisit the HSEG action plan and send HM to circulate to the group for comments.  Send your tenure split for affordable housing and whether delivering housing inhouse to HM  Collate data from each LA and forward to SH |
| Volunteers for chair role | SH did chair jointly with Andrew Patterson from Canterbury. She is stepping down and changing roles. SH described it as an interesting role  The group found ToR from Feb 2019 and HM will circulate to the group. These will need to be reviewed.  GA There is a description of what the group does on the website at [Kent Housing Strategy and Enabling Sub Group (HSEG) - Kent Housing Group](https://www.kenthousinggroup.org.uk/subgroups/kent-housing-strategy-and-enabling-sub-group/) The chair is also asked to provide a short written update before the KHG meeting four times a year. |  | **ALL**  **HM** | Email HM if willing to stand as chair or vice chair  Circulate ToR |
| 2022 Meetings | Tue 8 February, 7th June, 18th October were agreed with the time of day to be 10-11.30.  Due to COVID uncertainties we’ll assume they will virtual and reassess if can be face to face later, perhaps when it becomes clearer whether venues will be happy to take external participants, perhaps for one meeting a year.  The agendas, and other papers are put on the events page on the website. As an example [Housing Strategy and Enabling Sub Group Meeting - Kent Housing Group](https://www.kenthousinggroup.org.uk/events/housing-strategy-and-enabling-sub-group-meeting-2/) for this meeting. |  | **HM** | Send calendar invitations for 2022 |
| AOB | Liz Crockford asked other LAs feedback on these questions;  Topic; how are other LAs intending to process applications (which team will be responsible)?  Answers; Sevenoaks are wondering if this will sit with central customer services, or housing. Dover thinks processing applications will go into housing development team, not building control or development, though it will require cross departmental discussions. TDC probably housing strategy and projects team – but not confirmed yet.  Topic; whether a processing charge for applicants is being considered?  Answers; This was flagged following the Chief Executives webinar that showed authorities can charge. Sevenoaks are considering charging. No other feedback given.  Topic; whether others are intending to implement a local First Homes policy – local connection, income cap, local percentage discount etc.?  Answers; Canterbury will probably add the local connection criteria, for 3 months, but probably not the income cap and local percentage discount, and will seek Member feedback. Liz said some explanation about when does clock start ticking. LC will provide guidance for HM to circulate.    Topic; how any local FH policy will be adopted?  Answers; Sevenoaks, Local Plan is from 2011 and new Plan will not able adopted for a while. Planners are considering updating their Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document to include First Homes. That document would need to go via Cabinet to be adopted. No other feedback given.  Topic; is there anything we can use on a Kent-wide basis?  Answers; LC said Developers work across Kent and asked would the group wish to act if a similar way? Sevenoaks have done housing needs work to inform the new Local Plan and emerging housing strategy and are looking to separate the percentage requirements for social and affordable rent as the First Homes guidance has shown is needed. If the LA is considering implementing the maximum discount of 50% this may affect viability of other tenures. Sevenoaks is exploring these issues.  TW asked housing associations for their views and apart from Alison who was worried about First Homes exceptions and its impacts, they had a poor response.  Canterbury also contacted local RPs and this flagged that viability could be an issue and will need to be considered at some point soon. The offer to the developer will be lower but that will be everywhere so it is possible it could be accepted. It seems uncertain.  Thanet flagged concern for sites for 10 homes or below and how to enable on-site affordable homes for small sites. JY anticipates a move to commuted sums and viability assessments.  LC highlighted that few RPs wish to take on a very small numbers of affordable homes on a site and so LAs may have to accept commuted sums.  Canterbury questioned whether a hybrid scheme could work, with shared ownership on site and affordable rented off site?  EB asked if the S106 guidance was available. LC has got hold of model clauses and will check whether she has permission to share them. If she does she will share with HM to circulate. LC will check with person who provided them and share if possible.  First Homes to go on agenda for next HSEG meeting in November. |  | **HM**  **LC** | **Circulate guidance provided by LC**  **Check permission to share model clauses** |