**Draft KHG EXB Meeting Notes 16 November 2022, Microsoft Teams Call**

DRAFT

**Present**: Sharon Williams, Ashford and KHG chair; Brian Horton, SELEP (until 10am) ; Mark James, chair of Housing Strategy and Enabling and Ashford; Jeff Sims, Ashford Communications Service; John Littlemore, Maidstone BC; Steph Goad, Golding Homes; Peter Dosad, chair of Strategic Domestic Retrofit sub group and Dartford; Neil Diddams, chair of Asset Management sub group and WKHA; Vicky Hodson, Homechoice; Toni Carter, chair of Kent Housing Options sub Group (KHOG), and Dartford; Mary Gibbons, Moat; Tim Woolmer, KCC; Becs Wilcox, chair of Events Group and Medway; Vitra Cummins, chair of Tenancy Management sub group and T&CH; Cathy McCarthy, chair of housing, health and social care sub group, and WKHA; Lin Perkins, co-chair of Engagement Group and Golding Homes; Mark Breathwick, Medway (from 10.46); Helen Miller, KHG;

**Apologies:** Shona Johnstone, Homes England;Julie Terry, vice chair tenancy management group and WKHA**;** Kimba Layton, vice chair of Housing strategy and enabling group and Folkestone and Hythe;Tracey Kerly, CE of Ashford and rep from Kent Chiefs Group; Manpreet Bhupal, vice chair of KHOG and Gravesham; Vicky May, Homechoice and Gravesham; Charlotte Hudson, Swale; Simon Thomas, chair of Kent Chief Planning Officers Group and Canterbury CC; Julian Watts, chair of Private Sector Housing sub group and Ashford BC;

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| **Reference** | Notes/Outcome | Who | Action/Decision |
| **Chair and vice chair** | This should be SWs last meeting as chair as she has completed the two year period. We need to elect a chair from a housing association and a vice chair from a local authority. We will look at a transitional arrangement.  BH has spoken with Steph and Mary who are our HA reps. Steph is considering stepping up but needs to talk with SW first. We also need to elect a vice chair.  Once sorted we shall email the Board with the progress on the matter.  May need a delegated authority from the group to SW and BH to arrange this and plan an orderly transition. | SW | Meet with SG |
| **Sub group feedback** | Neil Diddams, Asset Management sub group  It has had two meetings since last update. They’ve looked at addressing the cost of living and energy crisis to include Endotherm additive for wet heating system which has been tried by partners. WKHA will be using the product and monitoring its impact on energy use.  The group has had a discussion on dampness and mould. ZapCarbon gave a presentation on removing mould then using monitors to understand the situation in the home. The group agreed members will ask their residents to report dampness and mould so cases can be dealt with early and actively. ND is working on a dampness and mould policy and procedures which he will share with the group. The Spotlight on; Dampness and Mould [report](https://www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/Spotlight-report-Damp-and-mould-final.pdf) from Housing Ombudsman is clear that dampness and mould is not around lifestyle choices.  The group had a presentation from KCC on Wayleave agreements for digital connectivity and they shared key documents to help social landlords.  The group had a presentation from Kent Fire and Rescue (KFRS) about primary authority partnerships with social landlords.  Neil made the request that all groups to look at cost of living, dampness and mould with the awareness that some residents cannot afford to heat their homes properly and some are choosing to live in one room.  SW There has been the first ruling that a young child’s death was caused by [mould](https://www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk/2022/11/16/ombudsman-writes-to-rochdale-boroughwide-housing-following-awaab-ishak-inquest/) in the home so this highlights the issue in the public eye. The Housing Regulator is clear that though are many requirements on social landlords at the moment and tackling building safety and standards remain a high priority.  Cathy McCarthy from Housing, health and social care sub group (HHSC)  They have trying to work with KMPT to arrange a joint event but KMPT have been unable to field staff consistently to attend meetings plan this so the matter has been put on hold for 2022.  Sarah Tickner has been coordinating a review of the Fuel Poverty Strategy.  In December the group meeting will focus on hoarding which is a big issue for tenancy sustainment. T&CH will be invited.  ST has resigned and leaves in December  Cathy steps down in December and they do not have a sub chair to step up. Please do highlight anyone who’d want to be a chair. They have emailed the HHSC group seeking a chair and will continue to seek a chair across KHG.  SW The HHSC group achieves so much. We have a hand over session with ST. We will seek a new chair and vice chair.  Vicky Hodson, Kent Homechoice,  There is a transition from Locata to Huume. Work is currently on target. LAs have had a training a session and there has been a session with each HA. Vicky is planning further training for spring. There is a high level project plan and a plan for each LA to follow. Huume and Dover DC are working on the design of the new website. Vicky has had an exit meeting with Locata and has resolved keeping the same web address. They will provide data early to enable it to go into Huume. The housing register will be shut from 1 June to 1st July 2023. Vicky has drafted a report that each LA can use as the basis for their reports to their Cabinet/committee. A communications plan is being drafted. The Huume system will be better for customers to use. They seem very flexible.  SW asked what happens for urgent cases in the one month when the housing register is shut? VH explained that direct lets can occur when the register is shut. This issue will be managed.  SW asked whether anyone challenged the legal position of shutting the housing register for a month. Vicky confirmed this hasn’t been raised.  Peter Dosad from Strategic Domestic Retrofit group  This is a new group which aims to promote the retrofit agenda in private domestic sector. It hopes to pool knowledge and successes. PD sits on KMEG and is raising the profile there. KMSEP has gone now and there was a gap in governance, information flow and actions. So far the group has found there is no Kent wide data so harder to know where we are and harder to bid, there is no central coordinator and there is a lack of installer capacity meaning work both delayed and going to non-Kent contractors. Bidding is time intensive. The group is includes a rep from KEEP, KCC, Asset management group and the Private Sector Housing groups. They want to map the customer journey to retrofit and smooth it out for the non grant aided cases. It would appear that residents need a central point for seeking advice.  SW lots of important work to be done there. This will help all organisations to help themselves on this. Please bring further updates to the Board.  Becs Wilcox from Events Group  We’ve run the levelling up event on 30th Sept for KHG, KH&DG and KCPOG. Quite a lot of participants dropped out in last week due to Covid, flu and work pressures resulting in excess catering. There will be a further event if requested.  The Awards were positively received. The events group worked long and hard to make the event work. The sponsors were happy and will sponsor next time. The feedback was really positive and people did feel congratulated and appreciated. The event ran well with no technical issues and the length of event was popular at 1.5 hours. People have asked for face to face awards for 2023 and want to give space for the winners to comment.  The group may aim to use some local companies for artwork, certificates, awards, etc. as the company that covered all these tasks required a lot of event group time. HM has updated the [website](https://www.kenthousinggroup.org.uk/kent-housing-group-excellence-award/)  The upcoming events are;   * Supporting people with autism through the housing service, Jan 2023 * Fuel poverty and journey to net zero, 19th or 23rd Jan 2023 * Launch of domestic abuse reciprocal agreement for social housing Feb 2023   Another events group newsletter will go out in 2022.  We did have a flurry of new members but we’ve also lost a few due to people having new roles so again we need to put a call out for new members. Please ask your colleagues to consider joining. It’s a fun group. Please contact Becs or Helen to volunteer.  SW there is an enormous amount of work to run events. SW does like some face to face events each year.  Lin Perkins from Engagement Group  Lin is a co-chair with Beth Becks and Nancy Baxendale is vice chair. Previous meetings looked at what our standing items should be – what the ongoing issues are. These include;   * TSMs with many doing pilot surveys and sharing around that will be very useful. * Cost of living is also a standing item to help sharing resources and information.   They had a speaker on [ReferKent](https://www.kent.gov.uk/social-care-and-health/information-for-professionals/referkent) and how to refer rather than signpost vulnerable clients. Also discussed onboarding tenants and the information we provide at that key moment and balancing what info to give in what timescales to be enough but not overloading.  The members are aware of the need to find informal and flexible ways to pull people into engagement that fit with the amount of time they have and aim for a more representative group. May need more flexible models of engagements that work around a job and childcare.  SW generally HAs are further on with this than LAs and we can learn from you. Would this be a good topic for an event around how we’re gearing up for TSMs? Love idea of being more flexible and fitting around clients’ availability to engagement.  MG is the group looking at tech to allow engagement to allow engagement to be little and often and topic specific.  LP at Golding they can send out communication, other surveys and so they invite tenants to join a digital engagement group. They can be sent out to specific topics and always acknowledge that people will respond to the topics that interest them. It appears to be working and they still seek tenants to sign up to that.  SW perhaps some info on the digital survey tool could be part of an event.  Mark James from Housing Strategy and Enabling subGroup (HSEG)  Mark is our new chair, taking over from Emma Bartlett and working with Kimba Layton, our vice chair. Simon Thomas gave an interesting presentation on the planners’ perspective and how planners, enablers, HAs and developers can work together well. The group hope to have a workshop with KH&DG, Planners and HSEG.  The levelling up event also helped bring people together and share skills.  Next meeting has a talk on supported housing and Anya Harris of KCC will join that part. Also looking at T&CH scheme and Ashford schemes using modern methods of construction. Will continue to look at affordability and First Homes.    Toni Carter from Kent Housing Options subGroup (KHOG)  Key focus is around private rented sector and temporary accommodation availability and procurement and whether there are ways we can cooperate with each other to keep costs down and standards up.  Also looking at the protocols and reviewing the Young Persons protocol but now considering splitting it to two documents, one for 16-17 year olds and also a care leavers protocol.  A working group is reviewing the intentionally homeless families protocol with a focus on developing guidance on helping vulnerable families with KCC.  Nearly finished the review of the protocol of homeless person being discharged from a MH facility.  The Locata contract ends and the new provider is Huume and that involves some work for Vicky H and for each LA.  KHOG hears from KCC on the end of KHC contracts and how to keep the accommodation going and ensure there is support for those leaving. This will have a huge impacts and we’re trying to manage the issue as well as we can.  There is a new HAST contact at DLUHC so a transition going on. There was a national consultation on the Homelessness Prevention Grant and the group await the feedback on that.  SW busy group with a lot of very important work. Would it be useful for the group to look at allocations and what percentage goes to homeless households for LAs and perhaps RPs and the percentage going into the private rented sector?  JL The proportion of lets going to different types of client on the register and homeless would be interesting. The refuge programmes increase the pressure on private rented sector as LAs are instructed to move families from hotels.  SW we should feed the refugee programmes and the resources available and help for LAs to achieve it issue up to TK to go to Kent Chiefs.  Vitra from Tenancy Management  Vitra is a new chair to this group and Julie Terry remains the vice chair. The last meeting covered planned fire safety awareness and working with KFRS to run a campaign in January around fire safety in communal areas, using plugs in communal areas, encouraging safe heating choices. This also encourages tenants to report repairs needed.  The group had a good presentation from ReferKent to move from signposting to referral. Julie of WKHA will present at the next event on their way of addressing domestic abuse. The tenancy fraud forum feeds into this group and will be presenting at the next meeting. Many HAs do not have specialist tenancy fraud forums and teams so are keen to learn from this. The group also discussed TSM and learning from our survey pilots.  SW is there a piece of work with colleagues in social care and health around managing vulnerable tenants? How do we recognise their vulnerability and also the impacts they have on their neighbours.  SG asked whether there is a cross over on KFRS and Engagement group and finding out what people think on fire safety. Vitra and Lin may find it useful to come together on this issue. HM to bring Lin, Beth, Vitra and Julie together by email so know of each other.  SW Regarding the fire safety campaign, KHG has comms support from ABCs comms service. You may wish to liaise with them. Ashford had a dreadful explosion in 2021 causes by a leaking potable gas heater, used as an alternative to using ordinary heating. May be worth asking what ABC did. | All  All  SW & JL  HM | Seek a volunteer to be chair or vice chair for the housing health and social care sub group  Please ask for volunteers to join this group from within your organisation  Brief TK on the impacts of the refugee programmes on homelessness and resources.  Email the chairs of the Engagement and Tenancy management groups on fire safety to ensure groups know of the agendas |
| **Matters arising from Sept 2022** | SW asked if any questions from notes from last meeting – none raised. The following items have been actioned;  HM share Board guidance on addressing dual diagnoses with ST and CMc – done  PD flag new strategic domestic retrofit group with KMEG and Kent Chiefs. Done.  HM Create working group on EDI. Done with first meeting at end of Nov 2022.  HM to feedback to Events Group that Board would welcome face to face event opportunities. Done on 8th Nov 2022. |  |  |
| **K&M Housing Strategy** | Brian offered his thanks to those attending the meetings for the themes of the [K&MHS.](https://www.kenthousinggroup.org.uk/protocols/kent-medway-housing-strategy-2020-2025-a-place-people-want-to-call-home/) We are populating the implementation plan and will meet again and report back to the Board on this next time.  SW explained KHG will be seeking a partnership assistant who will help with strategy delivery. The strategy delivery paused due to Covid and the Board did agree we could try a 1 year post to kick start it again. This could suit a secondment. |  |  |
| **Budget** | The spreadsheet and budget paper were circulated the week before the meeting.  HM explained that we have the funds for the HHSC post for the year 2022-23. ST is leaving mid December 2022 so will leave the funds for 3.5 months. This raises two questions posed in the budget paper;   1. Does the Board want to continue the post? 2. Does the Board want to continue the post, at its own risk, beyond the 3.5 months we have funds for   SW yes we want to continue and we have reserves that can cover this but that would be at risk and would hope that Kent Public Health does choose to cover.  JL are Sevenoaks still willing to host this post?  SW will approach SR at Sevenoaks to ask if still willing to host. Also needs to discuss the costs for this. If they cannot host we’ll need to reassess whether it goes. ICP and Kent Public Health are keen to work with us in principle.  SG V important post. What do ICP expect of KHG? Do we need to revisit the priorities of the sub group to realign with the ICP? SW discussed ICP with TK and BH yesterday and we currently don’t know what the ask will be and perhaps it is for us to highlight how housing can contribute to health. K&M ICP has invited SW to present to them at 8th Dec.  JL Cedi Fredericks has visited Trinity Foyer which provides services for those with MH. He seemed very interested. Not been invited to have voting rights but are invited to attend. The message is coming through.  K&M ICP has invited SW to present to them on 8th December on what Kent Housing Group does and how it addresses health and wellbeing and inequalities. SW sought a steer from the group. Can cover HHSC group, post, the knowledge across the partners. Should we suggest whether we are a major player and have voting rights? We would need to explore how we can go.  JL has a presentation he can share. These Boards provide strategies but it’s our organisations that deliver and know the contacts and can bring people together. As such we are important players on delivering the health agendas. We need to work collaboratively. SW invited JL to attend in Medway with her.  Board is happy to support the post, at risk, for a year.  SW asked if any questions on budget. None were raised. | SW  JL | Contact SR at Sevenoaks to ask if willing to host post and discuss costs for this.  Share presentation with SW. Liaise with SW on attending the meeting on 8th Dec together. |
| **Levelling up event feedback** | HM did circulate a paper in advance.  Political change had made the agenda change and there is an element of watching to see the new shape.  Working group meets on 28th November to decide what is needed next. |  |  |
| **Update from communications service** | Jeff Sims gave an update from the ABC communications service that supports KHG from Sept 2022 to August 2023.  They attended the levelling up event on 30th Sept and used this to create a press release which has been picked up by partners.  They attended the Awards event on 12th Oct and used this to create a press release and then additional releases to show any winners relevant to their area. Isle of Thanet News covered the winners at TDC.  They worked with HM to identified questions for two short surveys, one for main KHG members, the other for sub group members, to help with knowing what members value. If you would like to see these surveys before they go out please contact HM. These surveys may also help to know what members value about KHG to inform the membership renewal letters.  KHG Newsletter will go out each quarter and can be used as a new members recruitment tool. It will also go out to Kent media. It’s called Home Front. Proofs will go to SW and HM and sub group covered have been consulted. This should go out before the end of November 2022.  Next quarter the fire safety awareness campaign could be key and give good press coverage and he will also ensure KFRS are engaged.  SG Do you have network of links to comms team for all member organisations. Yes for LAs, less so for other members and will work with HM on this. MB offered to make link with Medway Council comms if needed.  SG Do we have a comms plan for K&M Housing Strategy. HM will send to Board. There is a broad strategy for next 12 months but issues arise (like the possible KFRS campaign) and so the plan needs to be quite flexible.  SW would like to share the current communications strategy with the Board and then an update once a quarter. Perhaps this can be timed with the newsletter so all dots are joined up.  SW suggested that Jeff is invited to every Board meeting so he knows what is happening and he gives a short update when he can attend. | All  JS  HM  HM | Email HM if you’d like to be sent the link to see these surveys before they go live  Tell HM what is needed so it can be sought from members they do not have contacts with  Send comms plan to Board.  Invite JS to all Board meetings and put item on agenda for those he can attend. |
| **Regular Updates** | Medway Council  Mark Breathwick housing services are feeling strain around increased costs of TA, increased complexity of cases and more cases.  Good to hear about Fire Awareness Campaign. There have been fires in their stock, thankfully no significant injuries, but growing issue.  Medway Council has joined the Making Every Adult Matter partnership. This is a coalition of HomelessLink, and MIND which provides a framework for addressing very complex multiple disadvantage. Medway are working through the process to help them identity policy and practice changes needed. This will complement work of Blue Light project team.  SW would you update the Board on MEAM in your Medway update next time?  With Maidstone, Swale, Tonbridge and Malling they’ve had some success with the Supported Housing Improvement Fund for exempt accommodation which will address quality of accommodation and of support.  First Homes pilot sale are going well in Chatham. JL are you seeing less affordable rent due to more First Homes? MBr yes we anticipate that but the pilot was all additionality. Some SMEs want to do more First Homes.  COMF  Does Board approve the report to be sent to KCC. Yes.  COMF, KCC has indicated that LHAs with underspend will probably be allowed to retain the underspend and use it to address homelessness but must be spent by March 2023. The COMF team at KCC has gone so the tasks are being picked up by others when they can. As soon as KCC confirm the offer HM will circulate it to LHAs with underspend. | HM | Send COMF report to KCC |
| **AOB** | SW There is a risk to the Rural Housing Project run by RHE. They have contacted SW and asked for feedback around if RHE could not continue to oversee its work whether there is a role for KHG in terms of providing some sort of oversight of the work, perhaps as an additional sub group of KHG.  The group discussed the matter and agreed it would invite Alison Thompson to speak at the Board if this becomes an issue.  HM on seeking Boards guidance on understanding and meeting the needs of Gypsies and Travellers and the paper circulated. SW suggested plug it into the right sub groups.  JL There is a K&M G&T group next week so lets let that run and then decide what the KCC ask if and then come back to us. It seems better to plug into each sub group as needed.  HM and The Integrated Care System pledge was circulated for the Board to decide whether it would wish to sign up to this. SW suggested have meeting on 8th Dec and then decide.  SG Believes the K&M ICB is the new regional health authority. She is not clear how this links with public health’s Joint Strategic Needs Assessment.  The K&M Integrated Care Partnership Joint Committee has invited SW to give them a 10 minute presentation at their meeting on 8th December on the work of Kent Housing Group and how it and housing address inequalities in health. |  |  |