**Present**: Sharon Williams, chair of KHG and ABC; Brian Horton, SELEP; Robert Platt, KCC; Linda Hibbs,TMBC; Paul Koster, Dartford; Mark Breathwick, Medway; Marion Money, NRLA; Dipna Patttni, GSEEH; Josephine Yousaf, KCC; Caroline Smith, KCC; Louise Taylor, Dover; Nicola Bowen, Choice Support; Matthew Beard, Clarion; Donna Pearson, Look Ahead; Rachel Westlake, KCC; Daniel Killian, Gravesham; Ashley Jackson, Thanet; Charlotte Hudson, Swale; Cynthia Allen, Interventions Alliance; John Littlemore, Maidstone; Linda Perkins, Goldings; Sandra Woodfall, Dartford and KEEP; Simon Thomas, Canterbury and Kent Planning Group; Vanessa Biddiss, Optivo; Maria Jacobs, Moat; Sharon Donald, Sevenoaks; Nick Fenton, Kent Housing and Development Group; Amada Martin, Dover and KEEP; Mike McDonagh, Cipfa Cco; Natalie Abraham, Cipfa Cco; Fiona MacGregor, RSH; Helen Miller, KHG;

**Apologies:** Tracy Allison WKHA and vice chair; Sasha Harrison, SHG; Christy Holden, KCC; Sarah Robson, Sevenoaks; Kerry Newbury, Optivo and Events Group Chair; Rebecca Wilcox, Sevenoaks; Bukky McGlynn, GCHA; Jeanette Young, KCC; Marie Royle, Canterbury; Mike Barrett, Porchlight; Louise Humphrey, MHS; Shola Alao, Hyde;

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| **Reference** | Notes/Outcome | When | Who | Action/Decision |
| Introductions | Speakers and members were welcomed and told the session was being recorded. |  |  |  |
| SELEP Update | BH explained that SELEP continues to get feedback from the construction and developer sector on shortages of materials and labour and they fear the matters may get worse. This could put pressure on housing delivery. The Government’s view is that things should get back into phase and is not a structural issue. However, although costs are increasing, the prices also appear to be increasing so margins are being maintained.  BH has spoken to partners regarding First Homes. So far no-one is aware of a live bid coming forward under the pilot scheme. Homes England (HE) say the pilot schemes are going ahead so we may need to feed into HE what the values need to be for the south east to ensure schemes are viable. The £250,000 cap appears to be a barrier.  NF said we need to understand why they are no schemes in the South East so it can be fed back to HE and the MHCLG.  BH and NF will meet with Chris Pincher again soon. They have regular dialogue so please bring items to his attention so he can raise the issues.  MB said Medway Council’s Development Company is bring forward a First Homes bid, perhaps on 1 and 2 beds.  SW reminded participants to raise issues with BH or NF by email if not wishing to do at this meeting. |  | All | Feed concerns around First Homes and wider housing development to BH or NF so they can be flagged with HE or government |
| Phosphates and nitrates | Nick Fenton explained this is an ongoing issue resulting in no planning approvals since November 2020 in 5-6 areas in Kent for buildings where a person may wish to stay overnight and so is having a drastic impact on the delivery of units. NF hopes this can be resolved by January 2021, but then also placing conditions on planning, for example preventing overnight stays until remediation is in place. They hope to keep the expense for the solution from both the public purse and from developers. NF believes this should be badged as Covid-19 recovery, places for people and placemaking to access funding to resolve the issue. There is also money in Southern Water’s purse that could help on the phosphates side. Districts wrote to government to suggest funding to resolve the issue using onsite sewage treatment works but NF believes this is unlikely to be successful. Natural England, DEFRA and OFWAT are in the loop and this issue affects large parts of the country so it’s a significant issue. It’s important to ensure there are mitigation strategies in place.  ST, from planning perspective, it’s about addressing the problem from every angle; central government and locally its matter of working with local agencies. They are keeping every line of investigation open. They are currently considering creating wetlands and need a catchment wide strategy so it would be cross LA borders. They are also clarifying when and where other agencies take responsibility for the issue, including Natural England for run off from agriculture and Southern Water for waste water treatment, etc. This is a big issue for housing delivery that is being focused on throughout Kent.  NF, all districts are active and assuming they need to find solutions and this is exactly the right approach, yet it is clear that we do need assistance from government. |  |  |  |
| Improving energy efficiency in social housing | Alice Monty of EQUANS, part of the Engie group, gave a presentation which will be posted on the website with the other papers. They work with new and existing homes, including social housing. She highlighted the UK governments net zero by 2050 commitment and so the need to reduce carbon emissions from homes significantly. She highlighted the fabric first approach to reduce heat loss from homes. She outlined the types of retrofit measures for the fabric, ventilation, heating, renewables and others. She mentioned the funding streams including the social housing decarbonisation fund, LADs, ECO3 and 4, Renewable Heat Incentive, Smart Export Guarantee for electricity generations and Clean Homes Funds.  She covered thePAS2035 guidance and that grants require adherence to this standard.  There is a BSI document PAS2035:2019, Retrofitting dwellings for improved energy efficiency- Specification and guidance <https://shop.bsigroup.com/products/pas-2035-2030-2019-online-1-licence> but there is a charge    She highlighted learning from previous retrofit schemes including knowing what you are aiming to achieve, (for example EPC C/ reducing fuel bills/greater comfort and then choosing a suitable way to monitor that), having good data on the home, then planning works across teams in your organisation to allow for good timing of works and working with your planning department to ensure works are acceptable. Alice explained that EQUANS are happy to help organisations on their journey to net zero.  NF said his biggest concern is whether the technology can keep up with our aspirations and that we continue to work towards ensuring we’re using the best technology. He suggests gas will be phased out to allow the country and that hydrogen may have a part a play. NF has seen solar panels that should be able to provide significant power and then topped up with a propane heating for rural homes.  AM agreed that EQUANS continue to review the new technology coming forward.  JL said Maidstone has looked how to improve energy efficiency in temporary accommodation but hit barriers as some funding schemes that require longer tenancies. AM agreed that none of the funding streams she highlighted for short term tenancies. AM said she’s ask colleagues if they have any expertise on funding for temporary accommodation. SW highlighted that some LAs had been looking at TA as part of their LAD2 proposals.  NF said Governments Buildings Regulations may not be the best and he suggests that organisations like theirs should continue to lobby the government to get the standards right and that the move to electricity will require more substations and more electricity.  AM said the government has requested feedback on their SHDF project so that learning can be shared. This has highlighted some planning issues.  DP highlighted that we need the supply chains up and running. The [GSE Energy Hub](https://www.energyhub.org.uk/) are working to get the supply chain working. They also have a useful newsletter that can be signed up to using this link [Greater South East Energy Hub (list-manage.com)](https://energyhub.us4.list-manage.com/subscribe?u=0a10181aec31b7be6d4b4fc3c&id=52a3a866d5)  BH, government believes that RPs have more knowledge of the their stock then LAs do. The Asset Management group met on 1st Oct. They now have Neil Diddams as chair and Mark Breathwick as vice chair. This group will draft its Terms of Reference and BH will address governance between relevant groups across Kent. The presentation from Peter Rickaby on PAS2035 can be found here [Asset Management - Kent Housing Group](https://www.kenthousinggroup.org.uk/events/asset-management/) |  |  |  |
| Corporate Parenting update KCC | Caroline Smith’s update on UASC explained that Kent have entered into a new agreement with the Home Office and DFE, for new arrivals of unaccompanied asylum children. Kent will continue to have its 0.07% cohort of Children in Care, as agreed by the Home Office for all local authorities. This is currently 240 children for Kent.  For any new arrivals over their agreed 240, Kent will run a new Reception and Safe Care service for up to 120 young people primarily using the Milbank reception centre. These young people will not be subject to the usual statutory requirements for children in care but rather safely cared for by KCC, for up to two weeks whilst the Home Office identify an alternative Local Authority to care for them through the National Transfer Scheme (NTS). If Kent were to reach the agreed 120, they would not be able to accommodate any new arrivals of young people, until our numbers within the reception centres were reduced through the transfer to other local authorities.  A report was taken to corporate parenting panel around pressures for housing for young people leaving care. They will review the joint protocol as part of this. KCC have 84 21 years olds to be moved on from shared homes.  There is a signification problem with young people with drug overdoses at the moment so care leavers services have these challenges.  SW has joined the corporate parenting panel to represent KHG. There is a commitment from housing colleagues to look at how to work together on these pressures to help it work more smoothly. |  |  |  |
| Domestic Abuse Commissioning | Rachel Westlake from KCC shared her presentation covering the new legislation, the needs assessment, the consultation on the strategy and EqIA, the Kent Integrated Domestic Abuse Service (KIDAS). She highlighted how findings of the needs assessment identified gaps and the commissioning actions to address these and the next steps.  We are planning a KHG/KCC domestic abuse event so please do let RW/HM know of any areas this event should cover.  JL said they’d presented an early draft or the strategy to the Kent Chief and they were supportive. He advocated signing up to Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance [Accreditation](https://www.dahalliance.org.uk/what-we-do/accreditation-for-housing-providers/) (DAHA) [DAHA - Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance (dahalliance.org.uk)](https://www.dahalliance.org.uk/) |  | All | Contact RW/HM to highlight areas you would like to see covered in the DA event. |
| Matters Arising from county wide Information Brief | This was circulated in advance. No questions were raised. |  |  |  |
| COMF Update | KHG was successful in its bid for the Contain Outbreak Management Fund (COMF). This funding, from KCC, is to address financial hardship, caused by COVID, that may lead to homelessness. Funds must be spent by 31st March 2022. There are two strands;   1. Encouraging landlords to work with LHAs early when considering eviction. This work will include a website, an animation and marketing. The website and animation are being worked on now and we hope to engage a company to provide the marketing soon. 2. Money for each LHA under KCC, to use to address homelessness in households financially adversely impacted by COVID. The ways that this funding can be used have been set out in the MoU that all councils have now signed. Payments have been arranged and the payments for those who returned their MoU first should have arrived yesterday with payments to Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells on 12th and Canterbury the Tuesday after.   The COMF work is discussed at each KHOG meeting. The first data return will be for October and should sent to HM by 15th November.  SW explained this fund is £2.5million, and a very useful, and timely, fund. The money goes to LHAs but if other partners are aware that a household is vulnerable to homelessness due to COVID please contact the homelessness service at local housing authority where the vulnerable person is living.  Linda Perkins asked how to find out more. SW suggested they contact HM. SW we need to provide a COMF update to all members each month.  JL MBC will be working with their HA partners to ensure the get the message out to ensure the help is sort and the funding is spent.  VB asked whether people need to be at immediate risk of eviction for this fund to be relevant. SW explained that it does not have to be imminent but does need a hardship issue due to covid. The route to flag households is with your local housing authority.  Nicola Bowen ased all advice agencies know of this fund. SW suggested that each LHA shares the message with their local networks. KHG will also promote it via a new website, animation and marketing. Nicola also suggested posters, etc. to help LHA to share that information about the funding, perhaps to those who assess DHP, etc. |  | **All LAs**  **All LAs** | Please let HM know who to expect the data return from if not already done  Consider how to share the messages internally and with your local networks. Please remember KCC has asked that any press releases are reviewed by [Jo.Allen@kent.gov.uk](mailto:Jo.Allen@kent.gov.uk) before release. |
| KHG Events | BH outlined the Development Partnership Forum Housing Forum event had run on 16th September, face to face, and 80 people attended  The Extra Care Housing Event with KCC ran on 22nd Sept, 36 attended, and was a very positive event  The Strategic Partnerships virtual event is scheduled for13th Oct, with speakers from Homes England, Hyde, SHG and Optivo. Many people are booked on. If you would like to attend please contact HM to book.  The White Paper virtual event is scheduled for 9th November. Speakers will come from the Regulator of Social Housing, Cipfa Cco and Housing 21. Many people are booked on. If you would like to attend please contact HM to book.  There is the potential for an event with housing, planning and developers.  An event on domestic abuse is being planned with KCC. |  |  |  |
| White Paper | Fiona MacGregor of the Regulator for Social Housing shared her presentation on the White Paper. FM highlighted that this applies to all social housing landlords, so local authorities, housing associations and for profit housing organisations. It is the landlords responsibility event if management is contracted out.  Consumer standards underpin this work. The standards will be outcome based not a set of rules. Co –regulation approach so the Board members and Councillors will be responsible. It will be for organisations to provide assurance on compliance. The inspections approach is being developed but is likely to focus on how the organisation can give assurance on compliance. The framework should make a difference to tenants, be deliverable by landlords, and be measureable.  They do not yet have a slot for the White Paper to become primary legislation, apart from on the tenant satisfaction measures. There will be a formal consultation on this this winter.  Landlords can begin making any improvements now, they do not have to wait. This could include looking at their Consumer Regulation Review 2019-21. Themes are making sure they homes are safe, looking at complaints in the round and highlighting any themes.  FM suggested that if you believe your organisation is in breach of the standards you can self refer to the RSH and that will be taken into account.  BH highlighted the White Paper event on 9th November that will give more detail.  FM we will continue with an outcome approach and the framework will not specific precisely how things must be done. They want to give providers the scope to provide as needed for their tenant groups, demographics, vulnerability, etc. The Regulator will avoid a tick box approach.  FM was pragmatic and aware that ITV gets viewers by providing an interesting story. On the positive side the ITV story has opened up this topic, and they may be more as they are still trawling for stories.  BH, asked how we address perception versus reality. He asked FM whether she will be able to aim to debunk some of the myths.  FM they will take advice from officials to find out whether a dialogue would be useful with the new secretary of state, and the best approach. The RSH does have active input via briefings and will am to debunk myths. Eddie Hughes and Chris Pincher have kept their roles and they have a good understanding of social housing.  SW thanked FM for her presentation and guidance. KHG will be looking at best practice to ensure we’re hitting the right notes. |  |  |  |
| AOB | BH we are looking at ways to use the Voice of Kent to bring inward investment using the Infrastructure First discussion. This could become a joint event with housing, planning and developers. |  |  |  |