**Draft KHG Private Sector Housing Sub Group 1 December 2022, Microsoft Teams Call**

DRAFT

**Present**: Julian Watts, Ashford and group chair; Tim Lovell, Dover; Hazel Skinner, TMBC; Clare Reynolds, Medway; Sue Oliver, Tunbridge Wells and vice chair; John Chilcott, Canterbury; Daniel Killian, Gravesham; Marion Money, NRLA; Daniel Shaw, Sevenoaks; Richard Hopkins, Thanet; Ross Anslow, Glyn Pritchard, Swale; Rachel Monaghan, Lloyd Rees, Paul Salter, Medway; Jason Wheble, TMBC; Donna Crozier, Peabody; Peter Littlewood, iHows; Ellis Turner, UWE; Rachel Evans, Dartford; Helen Miller, KHG;

**Apologies:** Daniel Otley, Canterbury; Kerry Petts, Folkestone and Hythe; Sarah Porter KFRS as leaving that role; Claire Pickering, Tunbridge Wells; Andrew Bigginton, KFRS;

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| Reference | Notes/Outcome | Who | Action/Decision |
| Good Homes Survey, peer learning and best practice | Rachel Monaghan, from Centre for Ageing Better, shared her presentation on Good Homes for All which will be circulated.  One of their aims is to supporting age friendly homes, warm, suitably adapted easy to access. People on lower incomes, and older people are more likely to live in homes that do not meet their needs.  They commissioned the Good Homes for all, which is available on their website [Resources | Centre for Ageing Better (ageing-better.org.uk)](https://ageing-better.org.uk/resources) that leads to recommendations. The report focuses on home owners as they are the biggest group.  They recommend there should be a Good Home Agency in every area, to help people know who to trust to quote and do works, understand the works needed, how to pick suppliers, advise on grants and loans. They believe this requires building on work already available and that varies across the areas.  Rachel highlighted the Good Home Network, a hub for active learning and connection, to help support a member led group to meet every quarter. First meeting on 12th December which will seek the issues that people are facing and what they’d like to address first. She would welcome a rep from Kent to this event.  JW advised that someone from the group will intend to attend. |  |  |
| Introducing the [Strategic Domestic Retrofit group](https://www.kenthousinggroup.org.uk/subgroups/strategic-domestic-retrofit-group/) HW5 | Unable to attend so written update provided. |  |  |
| Review of recent housing literature | Ellis Turner is a senior lecture from UWE and before that he was a housing practitioner in London, shared a presentation on Critical PRS literature - regulation, oversight and support. He highlights the presentation was written in summer and the world has moved on somewhat since then.  The National Audit Office, Sept 2021, highlights that PRS are less likely to meet minimum standards, it was critical that DLUHC has taken a piecemeal approach to intervening in the PRS, is limited by gaps in data, lacked insight into regulatory approaches .  HoC Committee Public Accounts – Regulations of Private Sector Highlighted  The LAs do not have the capacity and capability to protect renters  DLUHC is not doing enough to support LAs to regulate effectively  Both reports recommended;   * Assessment of resources for LAs to regulate effectively * Evaluate if licensing schemes are working * Ministry should help sharing of good practice   In June 2022 Local Authority enforcement in the PRS; headline report found;  Again capacity of local enforcement teams  Experience and expertise varies – some teams are very small  Legal framework if fragmented  Ellis Concluded;  Government knows that there are challenges in PRS  There is published evidence from credible sources showing the issues  No real focus on health – opportunity to collaborate with health and social care  He highlighted toolkits that provide support for EHPs from MHCLG, the PRS Enforcement – knowledge bank and PRS Enforcement toolkit.  LGA Improving the PRS A toolkit for councils is worth working through.  More recently JRF released their document, Making a house and home; which challenges whether the PSR is suited for housing vulnerable people long term and may be more suited to those needing flexibility.  IHE paper; Fuel Poverty, Cold Homes and Health Inequalities reminds us that cold homes are bad for our health and impacts on vulnerable people more. Could this be used to get political buy in?  IHE paper Evidence Review; Housing and Health Inequalities In London highlights the gap in housing related health inequalities are widening.  Investment in achieving Decent Homes Standard in all homes would save the NHS money.  We may be able to work with the Integrated Care Partnerships to create stronger links with housing health and social care. Integrated care networks with GPs also identifies frequent flyers and it’s possible that EHPs would have a role to address the housing issues.  K&M Integrated Care Board have invited Sharon Williams to speak at their meeting in December on KHG and how it addresses wider determinants of health.  Kings Fund had a conference in 2014 which highlighted great projects where health and housing can come together. <https://www.kingsfund.org.uk/topics/housing> and <https://www.kingsfund.org.uk/events/housing-and-public-health> |  |  |
| Roundtable discussion on addressing dampness and mould and the governments letter | All LAs received a letter from DLUHC on creating a plan on how they will address dampness and mould in homes.  JW asked how other LAs are responding to the letter.  Ross from F&H sent their submission yesterday. It was difficult to find the data requested. They know of the homes they improved and based their data on that from April 2019 to March 2022 for cases including dampness and mould. Some cases do appear to be condensation which can be linked to occupiers behaviours and they do document any advice given. There are occasions when ventilation is good and heating is available and there are no works they could ask the landlord to carry out, yet condensation persists. These homes are included in their homes improved data. F&H find dampness and mould cases to be relatively small proportion of the total, fewer than excess cold or fire. They identifies 70 cases, all category 2 hazards, so fewer than other hazards. They await further direction on what will be required going forward.  Julian from Ashford, also found they did not find a high proportion of dampness and mould. They had no notices specifically for dampness and mould as matters were resolved informally.  Hazel from TMBC, a lot of their dampness and mould complaints come from social housing tenants. They are looking at how to work with HA’s on this. They are encouraging the HA to consider how they will respond. This is probably going to be a useful part of addressing the dampness and mould issue. They do not get a lot of complaints from PRS – they are looking at how to find those homes.  Richard from Thanet, ran an M3 Crystal report, and was surprised by number the low number of Cat 1 hazards, just 6 but 226 category 2 for dampness and mould. They remediated 121, so not every single home. Some homes do not have any works needed and yet still experience dampness and mould. They will update their website and update a leaflet. When the get a complaint from a tenant of a HA they direct it to the HA and ask them to address the matter and then let them know the outcome. They may revised this but not clear yet. Only one prosecution/financial penalties related to dampness and mould. They had served 80 notices that included elements for dampness and mould and this included all legislation including Building Act and nuisance notices. The direction in the Government’s letter to provide an assessment of dampness and mould in your district is challenging. They have a stock conditions survey, but that doesn’t break it down to all 29 hazards so dampness and mould is not separate.  Tim Lovell from Dover, their numbers are similar, 89 recorded hazards for dampness and mould from April 2019 to March 2022. He extrapolated from excess cold data for dampness and mould and that did not flag a huge dampness and mould issue. With fuel prices rising and the increase of press coverage of dampness and mould they are getting more complaints  Glyn from Swale, similar to others they will update website, and continue to refer cases where the tenant is renting from a HA to the HA. 37% of complaints mention dampness and mould. The most serious ones were owner occupied and came through from hospital discharge cases and hoarding cases. The sea water flood in 1950s in Sheerness does make those homes more vulnerable to damp and it is more expensive to treat. Swale BC sends leaflets out for each complaint on dampness and mould.  JW should we all share our dampness and mould leaflets?  JW asked should we use the EPA to require anti mould paint and then Housing Act for works like extractor fans? Should we require landlords to clean mould down? Most thought cleaning off mould, like other cleaning, was the tenant’s responsibility.  We used to recommend a mild bleach solution to wash off mould but now recommend white vinegar in warm water or a mould remover/inhibitor.  Swale uses data loggers that record humidity and temperature data to get a good picture of when the heating is used and this often flags that the internal temperature is very low. This can provide evidence of whether the home is ventilated, heated and even occupied.  Rachel from Dartford, their findings are similar. There were two letters. The second directed that to deal with cat 2 hazards at D and E level. That is not what their enforcement policy says now so that may need changing too.  Sue TW waited for the response form to be provided and also seeking clarity on what 3 years mean, calendar or financial years.  Paul from Medway said Medway has a lot of solid walled homes, so harder to heat. Dampness and mould is their 3rd highest category. In the 3 year period they had 211 cat 2 and 8 cat 1 dampness and mould hazards. They have taken 9 financial penalties and 16 HA enforcement notices. Their stock conditions survey was over a decade ago so they will commission a new one. They intend to create a tenant liaison group and work with schools to find out what the picture is and how to get useful information out to people.  Tim from Dover agreed with points raised. They will be asking landlords to get them very damp homes dried using dehumidifiers and he has senior management agreement to do this as works in default if needed. Once dry it should then help find the source of the water. It seems a sensible approach to help address potential health hazard and help with diagnosis of any problems and identify any works needed. It could be useful if this action is appealed to get clarity. They also use data loggers.  Paul from Medway suggested perhaps we need wider enforcement to gain clarity on what is required?  Peter from iHows was alarmed when Housing Ombudsman said 10% of homes have dampness and mould. He suggested this is probably 10% of those inspected due to complaints rather than all stock. He was very pleased to hear many LAs don’t see dampness and mould as the most common issue. His organisation does encourage landlords to go out to have a look when they have a complaint of dampness and mould growth to see if works are needed and give advice. | All | invited to share your leaflets with the group by email or sharing the web link if online |
| Chair and vice chair | Julian is stepping down after two years as being the chair. Sue Oliver, our vice chair, is stepping up as chair. We do need a volunteer for vice chair.  Sue explained that being a vice chair is a good role. HM supports the chair and vice chair who prepare the agenda and run the meetings. Do feel free to contact Sue to ask more about the role. | All | Consider volunteering to be vice chair. Contact Sue Oliver if you’d like to talk it through. |
| Delivering the K&M Housing Strategy | Not covered due to lack of time |  |  |
| AOB | Dates for 2023 meetings; 28 June; 21 November; |  |  |