Housing Strategy and Enabling

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| **Date of update; 21st September 2023** |
| ref |  | General Contribution | Action this period |
| **Theme Health and wellbeing** |
| HW2 | Where appropriate, work at a local level with planning and developer colleagues to ensure the right type of high quality housing within sustainable communities is developed across Kent and Medway to meet identified local housing need | For new homes | An event is to be arranged with HSEG, planners and developers to ensure closer working, to address concerns with the process. Progress is being made on this with the chair and vice-chair pulling together a scenario on 100% affordable housing schemes with Liz at Sevenoaks. We have held a meeting but this needs more work. |
| HW9 | Ensure housing is resilient to the future changes in climate to give the best possible health outcomes and prevent overheating | For new homes | This was discussed as part of the work Thanet Council have delivered on an MMC site in Broadstairs (see SH5) – The Ashford MMC scheme is due on stream by summer 2024. |
| **Working together for safer homes** |
| SH4 | Strengthen the partnership working to include how Kent Housing Group respond collectively to local or national consultations that will impact upon the safety and well-being of Kent and Medway residents |  | The HSEG meeting on 29th June (this was the last meeting held) was really engaged with the subject matter. There is also talk of going quarterly with these meetings rather than just three per year. The group members will be asked for feedback on this if it would be useful.  |
| SH5 | Explore and learn about how new technology or approach can positively impact upon the delivery of new homes and enhance the condition of existing stock | For new homes | Thanet Council colleagues gave an excellent presentation to show the work at Poorhole Lane, Westwood Acres, in Thanet. This is a 153-home scheme all of which is affordable housing (57 rent and 96 s/o). The use of MMC is a really good example of modern technology and the presentation illustrated what could be achieved. KHG Damp and mould session was useful in this regard. Folkestone buying 14 homes with PV panels and air-source heat pumps. Further sessions involving Switchee and other providers may be useful to the group. |
| **Infrastructure First**  |
| IF1 | Support, promote and align with the Kent and Medway GIF through marketing, research and partnership working | For new homes | Partnership working was touched upon by the CAKEDOG work which the Chair presented.Meeting to be arranged with Chair/Vice-Chair with Sussex and Essex groups around conversations between enablers and developers – especially on s106 sites. Thinking about RentPlus and new products in the market.  |
| IF2 | Explore the benefit of developing an Investment Protocol to collectively overcome the challenging practical issues of delivering new housing developments | For new homes |  |
| IF3 | Consider, respond and implement recommendations from Government reviews that promote a positive change in approach and outcome, e.g. Letwin Review | For new homes | Presentation from Homes England on the latest news within its 2021-2026 affordable homes programme led to many questions regarding estate regeneration and replacement dwellings which are now included in the mix as long as there are also new dwellings delivered on a site.Any lobbying requests of Homes England – i.e. grant funding on s106 sites, for example and LHA rates. |
| IF4 | Consider and understand all implications of permitted development, across all partnership organisations involved in this process of enabling deliver of new homes | For new homes | Discussion to be held around ‘vulnerable’ buildings in urban areas and associated knock-on effects on infrastructure – Folkestone e.g.  |
| IF5 | Influence, inform and lobby at a local and national level to ensure access to and award of funding to delivery infrastructure and housing e.g. Housing Infrastructure Fund and Garden Communities Fund | For new homes | Chair of HSEG was invited to attend the Housing Forum Planning Working group meeting on 22nd June to present to the wider Housing Forum membership on the benefits of planning. Draft report has been produced by Housing Forum. |
| IF6 | Support and work collectively across the KHG membership, partner agencies and professional groups including Kent Planning Officers Group to enable a single conversation with Government, to enable timely and appropriate access to funding to realise housing and infrastructure delivery ambitions | For new homes |  |
| **Accelerating Housing Delivery** |
| HD2 | Facilitate partnership working across Kent housing planning and development groups to explore how partnership working and approach can accelerate delivery of housing | For new homes | Again, the CAKEDOG work in East Kent is something that could well be important in the partnership working element listed here. Altair are procured to run the workshop and produce a strategy document for the councils.  |
| HD3 | Ensure that protocol documents that reduce barriers to delivery are fit for purpose and relevant | For new homes |  |
| HD4 | Explore how countywide approaches across housing, planning and development can support delivery against local plans and meet identified housing need | For new homes | The new RACE work is delivering on this mission in rural areas and its position now under KHG illustrates the importance of this service being continued following the demise of ACRK.Presentations from those areas reviewing local plans? What are new members post May 2023 asking for? |
| HD5 | Share and learn from best practice, providing a platform and networking opportunities across housing planning and development sectors in Kent, Medway and neighbouring county areas, including peer support opportunities | For new homes | Discussions at future HSEG meetings will include sharing best practice, looking at ways of innovating to deliver new homes in the tough economic climate. |
| HD6 | Explore, learn and share knowledge and experience of Modern Methods of Construction and to realise ambition regarding opportunities for off-site construction within Kent and Medway | For new homes | Thanet’s presentation was a prime example of how this work is apparent in the county, despite issues with organisations falling into administration and backing away from MMC delivery. Ashford’s Henwood scheme is another that can be pitched to the group as an example of good practice as that proceeds. |
| HD7 | Facilitate the review and influence existing procurement practice and frameworks across the county to ensure value for money and acceleration in delivery, to include the role and use of SME contractors | For new homes |  |
| HD8 | Support, promote and influence the delivery of housing in rural communities, exploring all funding resource and by sharing best practice and learning | For new homes | Tessa O’Sullivan attended the last HSEG session to talk about exactly this point. The first local needs surveys under the new regime will be conducted in September.  |
| **Affordability** |
| A1 | Support, lobby and influence national policy reform and decision making to ensure that affordable housing is delivered across a range of tenures, and reflects the local housing market and associated costs | For new homes | Shared experience funnelled through Chair of KHG to Government. |
| A2 | Explore what housing tenure and type/products are appropriate to meet diverse housing need, and how support can be provided to successfully sustain a tenancy | For new homes | Place-making, additional grant funding, First Homes.  |
| **Other important matters since last update including any cross sub-group working;** |