**Draft Kent Housing Options Group Full Meeting Notes, 25 May 2023 in person meeting at Trinity in Maidstone.**

DRAFT

**Present**: Toni Carter, Dartford and chair; Nicola Bowen, Choice Support; Kenan Dogan, Gravesham BC; Nicola Conroy, Sevenoaks DC; Rav Kensrey, Medway C; Polly Hardy, Interventions Alliance; Emily Oates and Max Guest KCC Adults Commissioning; Hazel South and Robin Cahill, KCC Childrens Commissioning; Emmanuela Edokpa; Hyde Housing; Tara Duchesne, Pathways to Independence; Elly Toye and Pam Millington, Dover DC; Sarah Porter, Porchlight; Ellie Mullin, Homeless Link; Amanda Drummond, Homes for Ukraine, KCC; Graham Urquhart, KCC; Fran Guyatt, MTW; Mark Damiral, Folkestone and Hythe DC; Philippa Nancoo, Pathways to Independence; Natalia Merritt, Maidstone; Claire Keeling, TMBC; Duncan Berrington, Thanet DC; Samantha Butler, Golding Homes; Helen Miller, Kent Housing Group;

**Apologies;** Alison Simmons and Sharon Donald, Sevenoaks DC; Amanda Gill and Rebecca Smith, Ashford BC; Angela Palmer, MHS Homes; Christy Holden KCC; Jess Mookherjee, Kent Public Health; Mike Barrett, Porchlight; Sarah Huntley, DWP; Zsofia Imrie, DLUHC; Niki Verdenik, HMP Elmley; Gill Butler, Folkestone and Hythe DC; Chessy Spencer, Golding Homes; Manpreet Bhupal, Gravesham and vice chair; Liz Elsden, DWP; Roxanne Sheppard and Zoe Callaway, Swale; Stephen Tingley, DLUHC; John Littlemore, Maidstone BC; Claire Jones, Interventions Alliance; Vicky Hodson, HomeChoice; Ian Long, MHS Homes; Serine Anna-Veitch, KCC; June Heslop, Southern Housing;

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| Reference | Notes/Outcome | Who  | Action/Decision |
| Matters Arising from March 2023 | HM request KCC commissioners sent written updates; done and reminders sentHM circulate DA presentation from Stacey and Katie; DoneHM circulate presentation from HS on YPSAFS and shared accommodation services; DoneTC and MBh give KHOGS feedback on support accommodation to meeting on 3rd April; DoneHM Circulate Just Lifes slides; doneHM circulate questions on care leavers and homelessness applications; DoneCH use data collected on care leavers and homelessness applications to support conversation with relevant LAsTC convene a group to review the Temporary Accommodation Placing Protocol HM circulate letter inviting people to webinar DA reciprocal agreement; DoneHM circulate letter from DLUHC on victims of modern slavery; Done All Email ET with how your LA addresses households refusing offer of home.ALL Email ET to let her know how you are approaching timescales for DAHA accreditationAll share the licenses you use for TA with PM and also KGMBh Liaise with LW to clarify the attendance at MAPPA issuePM Set up an extraordinary meeting with Paramount on this issue to be held in April; DoneHM Circulate Excellence Award nomination and category forms; DoneNo further matters raised. |  |  |
| TB in Kent | Fran Guyatt, TB specialist nurse, shared her presentation. The illness is transmitted by coughs. It is curable with antibiotics but there is also antibiotic resistance. It frequently affects the lungs but can affect any part of the body. People can have active or latent TB. The latent TB can become active TB and then the person will begin to have symptoms. Latent TB is not infectious and is treatable. Symptoms are long standing cough, night sweats, loss of appetite, weight loss, tiredness and fever. Risk factors include poor or no housing, poor nutrition, lack of access to information, low income, immuno suppressed due to other illnesses or medication, overcrowding, cultural and language barriers, smoking. The vulnerable groups are children, homeless people, offenders, people who misuse substances, mental health patients, older people, migrants and refugees Asian and African groups and known TB contacts.The number of people with these risk factors are increasing in Kent. The vulnerable groups are more likely to present for treatment late and are less able to complete their treatment. As a result the vulnerable groups have poorer health outcomes. Some people need a large amount of support to complete their treatment. It is much harder to complete treatment when homelessness, being evicted, or having other housing vulnerabilities. Standard treatment are tablets every day for 6 months. If a dose is missed, or there is antibiotic resistance, then the treatment takes longer than 6 months. Some patients are monitored taking tablets. That can be videoing themselves taking a tablet as proof. The final slide gives contact details and shows the teams across Kent.The BCG vaccination is still available but only give to higher risk as babies. People working in prisons or other high risk environments can request the vaccination if under 35. RC said KCC has shared accommodation for asylum seeking children and they’ve had outbreaks in their accommodation. What is the guidance for that? * The active case is offered treatment and they are asked to isolate themselves for 2 weeks. If they’ve taken their medication they can probably return to normal life and continue taking the medication. The medical contact will advise on each case.
* Contacts of active case are all contacted. They are invited for tests. If finding positive cases then they aim to contact a wider circle of contacts.
* Staff around active an case are assessed based on whether they are likely to have had around 8+ hours contact. If more then invite them for tests but if less just given advice on symptoms to be aware of.

Homes for Ukraine have had challenges to support parents on the vaccinations they and their children need. Ukrainians are more likely to decline vaccinations. Fran was invited to visit the Homes for Ukraine Team. There are resources on [TB Alert website](https://www.tbalert.org/) and [Truth about TB.](https://www.thetruthabouttb.org/) Fran should approach the local authority when they have a case with TB treatment. When a person has no recourse to public funds then they is not eligible for TA paid for by the LHA. The LA can secure TA for them but the LA cannot pay for it and but another organisation, for example KCC or the NHS can pay for the accommodation. If the household includes a child they can go to KCC under safeguarding under the Care Act. At Dartford the LHA found accommodation and adult social care would pay for it to the end of the treatment period but this could be a one off,It would be useful for there to be a fund between Health, KCC and social care and FG advised this is being investigated with the ICP. NM suggest we have a KHOG rep for this. NM and Rav Kensrey are interested.EM of Homeless Link said some LHAs are finding innovative ways to help these vulnerable clients.NM Communities of Practice session, give 1.5 hours free time to discuss a case.  | HMHMHM | Circulate FG’s presentationSend list of contact email for each LHA for homelessness to FG to share with her team.Do introductory email for FG, NM and RK  |
| Creating a Kent Homeless Forum | Ellie Mullin from Homeless Link is aiming to set up a Kent Homeless Forum. She has sent invitations out to LAs, community groups, providers, DWP, Health, and HMP. It will share good practice and find solutions.The first event is 16th June at Trinity to agree the vision and agree what to work towards. If you know of other groups please do invite them to make contact with Ellie about joining the Forum. They will want to include Lived Experience and need to plan how to do it in a supported way.  |  |  |
| Seeking a vice chair to begin December 2023 | Manpreet will become chair in December 2023 when Toni steps down. We’d like volunteers to come forward soon so they can work alongside Toni and Manpreet well before December. The chair and vice chair * set the agenda 6 times a year with HM
* They chair the 6 meetings
* They monitor how the strategy is being delivered
* Feedback to the Board twice a year on the strategy

You also become a general point of contact and that is probably more time consuming with Toni estimating this takes an hour a week. The vice chair generally steps up as the chair in two years. NM and Robin may consider stepping forward, and will check with their teams, and all others are invited to step forward. We can have elections if we have more than one volunteer.  | All | Please consider volunteering to be the vice chair from Dec 2023 |
| Any questions from the commissioning documents circulated? | The following updates have been posted online here [KHOG full - Kent Housing Group](https://www.kenthousinggroup.org.uk/events/khog-full/) DA from Rachel WestlakeYSAF from Hazel SouthKent Homeless Connects from Max GuestChildrens Services Commissioning – Robin Cahill and Hazel SouthRobin Cahill asked would the group find it interesting to hear about wider commissioning, not just the parts that Robin covers on housing. **Decision; The group would welcome this wider update.**Max explained that KCC will reinstate the meetings with LAs around the last 6 months of KHC in the next couple of months. |  |  |
| Protocols | * Domestic Abuse Reciprocal – Lisa Clarke – written and circulated with agenda

The system is up and running, the KHG chair has endorsed it. Please sign up to this with Lisa Clarke. Dartford has now signed up. Elly Toye suggested Lisa run another workshop on it. * Young Persons (focus on Care Leavers) - Natalia Merritt/Robin Cahill

RC explained that they are in the final stages and will soon send a final draft to KHOG before the July meeting. DLUHC has provided a long list of tweaks. NM the offer to care leavers from LHAs varies a lot around Kent. Samad has identifies some best practice and he hopes to encourage some LAHs to increase their performance. This can be wider than is in the Allocations Policy and more about partnership working. It could be pre-tenancy training, etc. SN will attend July KHOG.NB do LHAs support offering tenancies in trust? No partners present did offer as standard. Samantha Butler of Golding Homes said they may occasionally offer that if a parent died. GU said KCC will occasionally act as a guarantors. RC said OFSTED would require some kind of support was also offered for any under 18s. RC need to be aware of gap between aspirations for Gold Standards services and the budget available. * Young Persons (focus on 16-17 year olds) - Toni Carter and Hazel South

Toni and Hazel are in final stage of this and are making good progress. They’ve had input from Kim Davis from DLUHC and they will seek further input.The film about the YP experience who have been through joint assessments and there should be one about the process too. The films could be part of a training tool and induction for new staff.* Temporary Accommodation Placing Protocol – Toni Carter

The next review meeting is next Friday. Colleagues have volunteered to help and more people are welcome to join. Claire Keeling volunteered and Philippa Nancoo from Pathways. * Joint protocol with KMPT – Manpreet Bhupal- unable to attend today
* Reviewing Housing Pathway for criminal justice service users. We are seeking volunteers for this task

 Polly suggested she will identify contacts for this. Rav Kensrey will join the group. | TCTCHM | Inform DA reciprocal steering group that another webinar is welcome.Invite CK and PN to join this groupSend introductory email to RK, PH and NV |
| Temporary Accommodation | * Meeting with Paramount

A group of KHOG members met Paramount to address their issues and housing issues. Paramount talked about increased complexity of clients needs, landlords putting prices up, support providers being absent and Home Officer procurement taking some properties from the pool of available homes. Stephen Tingley said he would take feedback to the Home Office. There is a need for more supported accommodation and Paramount are considering entering that market. They are drafting a new guest agreement. Discussions around whether the LA or provider should be the landlord. LA have a range of opinions on whether TA providers should gain access to see if homes being used. This meeting with Paramount encouraged members to look at whether we need a T&F or a TAAG to address the issues* Joint procurement

MBh and TC met David Smith from SEC to look at how feasible to procure or use a framework for TA. We’d need to achieve a good standard of accommodation, local accommodation and to keep costs reasonable. Maria Stevens of the Kent Finance Officers Group would like to talk about costs form TA and how to control them. DA partnership Board highlighted impact on service users of accommodation.CK asked whose responsibility it is to ask a TA client to leave accommodation and to get all the agreements the same as she has had conflicting advice. London LHAs did a dynamic purchasing framework for TA. Procurement should cover who asked client to leave. TAAG may be able to offer advice. Ellie Mullin suggested there would be examples of good practice that could help. RC KCC also have clients who refuse to leave and are seeking legal advice. Once received he is happy to share. The [Renters (Reform)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/guide-to-the-renters-reform-bill) Bill may change this in future. We also expect a Bill around Exempt Accommodation. Some are using licensees and some uses tenancies. Some housing benefit departments require the agreements to be between the LHA and the client. There is a lot of variation between LHAs in Kent. Perhaps LHAs would want to come together to get Legal advice – yet even then the case law is conflicting. Golding Homes used Paramount but as many clients left the accommodation due to ASB they now use ICAB (Insurance Claims Accommodation Bureau) and use license approach.  | HMRCTC | circulate questions from DS at SECShare Legal advice on clients who refuse to leave TA when availableAt next week TA meeting include do we want to have a TAAG and invite CK |
| Any Urgent National Policy, Case Law Updates | The Renters (Reform) Bill removes no fault evictions and brings in a landlord portal. NRLA say some landlords are looking to leave the sector which could change the market. If the market crashes some who’ve been renting could afford to buy. Some of the mandatory grounds could be heavily exploited. RC OFSTED legislation for accommodation for 16-17 is live so landlords need to get their applications in by October. Once registered the support must begin.Some independent accommodations providers have feedback to KCC that they won’t go through new process and may move to private rented sectors.  | All | See email forwarded by HM from NM on this |
| Nominate for KHG awards | The deadline has been extended to midnight 30th May. The forms are online here [KHG Excellence Awards](https://www.kenthousinggroup.org.uk/kent-housing-group-excellence-award-2023/) The judges can only go on the information provided by nomination so please give a full application. KHOG as a group can put a nomination in for an excellence award.  |  |  |
| AOB | Toni Darter will be seeking DA statistics together as there is some missing TA use for DA clients. Vic May will be asking for TA snapshot soon. In future could these figure come from HUUME and the same report for consistency?TC said the final decision has been made on Afghan resettlement scheme with closing hotels at end August. LAs are being asked to say how many cases they will take. TC suggested Ashford and Canterbury have more cases and we’ll all need to pitch in.SSMTR housing support protocol has come from Sofia Serenelli. Short discussion on the move to HUUME how organisations are communicating with their customers. Claire Keeling will share their materials for HM to circulate. At TMBC everyone needs to reapply yet their materials give some ideas and adapted to your organisations needs. TMBC have been liaising with their customer services team to keep them ready for any additional calls. Auto replies on emails could also be updated. Maidstone is mainly ready to go on Huume with minor tasks to do. NM liked the video Dorset use to show how to use the system and is asking her communications team to create everything. ET raised an email about report on PTSD and second hand trauma in housing officers. Maidstone offers reflective practice for their housing officers. NM to send details of this. Many organisations provide counselling and some organisations have this specific service for housing officers.Dates of next meetings; 19 Jul LA; 7 Sept Full; 22 Nov LA; all virtual by Teams. | CKETETNM | Send materials to HM to circulateLiaise with Vicky Hodson and DDC on whether a Kent wide video can be createdSend email to HM for circulationSend details of MBC’s support for HM to circulate |