

SOUTH EAST ENGLAND REGIONAL ASSEMBLY HOUSING ADVISORY GROUP

Draft Minutes of the meeting held on 11 June 2008

Present:	Gerry Wyld	Slough Borough Council (acting Chairman)
	Alison Bailey	Regional Assembly
	Edward Dawson	SEFS/CPRE
	Pete Errington	Home Builders Federation
	Richard Feasey	Kent County Council
	Paul Geehan	South East District Councils
	Ian Haynes	Milton Keynes Council
	David January	Waverley Borough Council
	Chris Kenneford	Buckinghamshire County Council
	Sandrine Mathard	Regional Assembly
	Tina Morris	Regional Assembly
	Catriona Riddell	Regional Assembly
	André Schmid	Regional Assembly
	Cath Stubbings	Regional Assembly
	Barbara Thorndick	West Kent Housing Association
	Mark Williams	Regional Assembly

I Introductions and Apologies

1.1 The Chairman welcomed André Schmid, Regional Planner at the Assembly. David January informed the Group that this would be his last meeting.

⇒ **Action: David January to give recommendations to the Regional Assembly on a possible successor.**

1.2 Apologies were received from: Leigh Herington, Kent County Council (Chairman); Barbara Compton, Southampton City Council; Chris Woolf, GOSE; Graham Ashworth, New Forest District Council; Ian Walker, Oxfordshire County Council; Paul Abey, Housing Corporation; Paul Treadgold, East Sussex County Council; Ricky Taylor, NHPAU; Sharon Smith, Regional Housing Forum Chairperson; Sunethra Mendis, GOSE.

1.3 Yvonne Edgar has stepped down from the Advisory Group.

2 Minutes of the meeting held on 25 February 2008 and Matters Arising

2.1 The minutes were agreed. All actions agreed at the meeting had been completed.

2.2 **Item 4.2:** The issue of carrying forward over and under-provision against RPG 9 housing targets 2001-2006 was discussed at the PPS 3 Task Group. It was left

with GOSE and CLG to respond. Inspectors' reports on LDF core strategies suggest they are content for under-provision to be carried forward.

3 South East Plan

- 3.1 **Timetable for Proposed Modifications:** The Regional Assembly are expecting the Proposed Modifications to be published before the Parliamentary summer recess with a 12 week consultation period.
- 3.2 The Regional Assembly's formal response to the Proposed Modifications will be managed through the RPC in September and then the Executive meeting in October (as the Plenary following the expected publication of the Proposed Modifications will not be until November).
- 3.3 The role of the Group after the publication of the Proposed Modifications will be to help, along with other advisory groups, to formulate a draft response.
- 3.4 **NHPAU Advice:** The Regional Assembly reported that the NHPAU advice has been submitted to Ministers. It is not clear what the timetable or process for publishing the advice will be, though the NHPAU Conference takes place on 2nd July.
- 3.5 Ricky Taylor from NHPAU has agreed to give an update to the Advisory Group at the next meeting. He will also be making a presentation to the CPRE Regional Group meeting on 18th July.

⇒ **Action: Edward Dawson to circulate the presentation to the Advisory Group.**

Update: The NHPAU guidance was published on 26 June.

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/nhpau/keypublications/meetinghousingrequirements/>

- 3.6 **Eco Towns:** From the Regional Assembly's viewpoint two of the locations (Ford in West Sussex) and Weston Otmoor in Oxfordshire) are in unsustainable locations, are inconsistent with the South East Plan and would undermine the ability to deliver agreed spatial and economic priorities in the sub-regional areas. The principles of eco-friendly development should apply generally and not to one-off projects. Finally, eco towns should not be taken forward outside of the planning system.
- 3.7 The Group asked whether the eco town figures will be additional to or for part of planned rates of housing provision. This was not clear, though messages coming from Government suggested that rates of housing provision in the Proposed Changes will be minima.
- 3.8 **East of England Regional Spatial Strategy:** The Group noted that the finalised RSS for East of England had been published in May.

- 3.9 **Housing Task Group:** A small task and finish working group had met earlier in the day. Its first task was to help the Assembly compile the evidence base for any review of the levels of housing provision set out in the South East Plan. The Task Group will keep the Advisory Group updated on progress as a standard agenda item.

4 Gypsies and Travellers Update

- 4.1 Mark Williams stated that the RPC report included updated advice from local authorities on gypsy and traveller provision, consultation proposals, new material on travelling showpeople requirements and a devolved approach to the decision making on transit provision. The RPC is supportive of all the recommendations put forward in the report and will advise as such to the Plenary.
- 4.2 Key points highlighted: 30% reduction in the updated information on gypsy and traveller pitch provisions across the region, principally in Kent and Surrey. Travelling showpeople information showed a very high concentration within Hampshire and Surrey.

5 Regional Housing Board Meeting 15 May 2008 - Update

- 5.1 Cath Stubbings highlighted the following points for the Group to note:
- The Home and Communities Agency plan to work closely with the Regional Housing Board.
 - CLG have introduced a new target for larger homes in the South East (28%) and the Housing Corporation has been given a rural target for the South East of 2,286 homes in small villages over three years.
 - The Board discussed the impact of current market conditions. Although there are risks and opportunities with regard to provision of affordable housing in the short-term, there is also considerable concern about section 106 as a route for affordable housing provision in the medium-term.
 - The Board is very interested in issues relating to sustainability and the Assemblies Select Committees recommendations on retro fitting measures to the existing housing stock.
 - Regional Funding Allocation: The Board expressed concern over the current situation regarding the Housing Revenue Account and the net contribution of the region into the fund.

- 5.2 David January lead a discussion on the Housing Revenue Account. The Group expressed similar concerns to those expressed by RHB. David drew the groups' attention to the following article:
<http://www.guardian.co.uk/society/2008/jun/04/housing>.

6 Other Business

- 6.1 RHB Protocol: It is proposed that the Board's Terms of Reference be revised to create a mechanism whereby local authority members may express an interest in contributing to the discussion on particular items. The proposed revision will be circulated to the Board members for their comment. Heads of Housing and Planning will be updated once it is finalised.

- 6.2 Martin Tugwell, Director of Development for the Regional Assembly: Catriona Riddell informed the group that Martin has been seconded to SEEDA for nine months to help facilitate the South East Delivery Plan.

- 6.3 Demography:

- Sub-National Population Projections: Alison Bailey explained that these would be published by ONS on 12th June and the expectation is that they will be significantly higher than the 2004 revised set. John Hollis will be drafting a briefing note that will be posted on the Regional Assembly's web site. The note will look at projected change 2006-2026 and 2006-2031.
- The Demography Sub Group had met on 13th March. The agenda included a presentation from Prof. Ludi Simpson on POPGROUP. The Sub Group felt that this could be a credible alternative to Chelmer.

➤ **Action: Tina Morris to circulate the briefing note by John Hollis.**

➤ **Action: Alison Bailey to invite John Hollis to the next Housing Advisory Group meeting.**

7 Date of next meeting

➤ **Action: Tina Morris to check availability for August / September.**