

**REGIONAL HOUSING ADVISORY FORUM  
MONDAY 21 JUNE 2010  
COMMENCING AT 2PM IN ROOM 2  
THE REGIONAL PARTNERSHIP CENTRE, BIRMINGHAM**

---

**AGENDA**

- |     |  |      |
|-----|--|------|
| 1.  | Welcome and Apologies  | 2.00 |
| 2.  | Draft Notes of the last meeting held on 1 April 2010 and Matters Arising   | 2.05 |
| 3.  | Presentation by Professors Brendan Nevin and Philip Leather, NLA, on the Housing evidence base overview report   | 2.10 |
| 4.  | West Midlands Leaders Board Update (verbal by WMLB)  | 2.45 |
| 5.  | Discussion on future regional housing priorities and key messages for the West Midlands Leaders Board (led by Chairman)  | 3.00 |
| 6.  | Regional Housing Research Programme update, including information on 2 research requests received; one regarding the financial benefits of homelessness prevention work, the other on understanding the housing needs of PSA 16 groups. (WMLB report attached) | 3.30 |
| 7.  | a) Update on the National Affordable Housing Programme, Homes and Communities Agency (report attached), and<br>b) Gypsy and Traveller Site Grant Programme 2010/2011 update (report attached)  | 3.45 |
| 8.  | Kick Start (Equity Loan) Partnership, Programme update and future direction (report attached)  | 4.00 |
| 9.  | Housing and sub-regional working update paper (WMLB report attached)   | 4.15 |
| 10. | AOB  |      |
| 11. | Date of next meeting to be discussed on 21 <sup>st</sup> June 2010   |      |

**Regional Housing Advisory Forum**

**Monday 21 June 2010**

**Draft notes of the RHAF meeting held on Thursday 1 April 2010**

**Present:** Richard Gabb (Herefordshire – in the Chair), Kerry Bolister (Wolverhampton CC), Michael Craggs (WMLB), Steve Forrest (WMLB), Marie Greer (AWM), John Horseman (GOWM), Emma Kiteley (WMLB), Yvonne Leishman (Community Housing Group/CIH), Peter Newman (Malvern Hills DC), Sharon Palmer (RAWM/Housing Network), John Pattinson (WMLB), Rose Poulter (WMLB), Steven Price (Shropshire), Michael Walsh (Birmingham CC), Helen Wilkes (HCA), Paul Williams (NHF).

**1. Welcome and Apologies**

The Chair welcomed all to the meeting.

Apologies were received from: Val Bourne (Stoke CC), Andy Coel (Bromsgrove DC), Jenny Dereham (Business Voice West Midlands), and Alan Murie (University of Birmingham).

**2. Draft notes of the RHAF meeting held on 4 February 2010 and Matters Arising**

Helen Wilkes advised the RHAF that the targets referred to within the final bullet point under item 6a were a CLG and not HCA target.

It was **agreed** that the remainder of the minutes were accurate and a true record.

**Matters Arising:**

11(a) – Michael Walsh informed the RHAF that Housing Vision consultants had recently been commissioned to undertake the housing overcrowding research work. It was expected that Housing Vision would issue a first draft in May.

**3. Clarification on new regional structures, including Sub Regional working arrangements and engagement**

Rose Poulter, Director of Policy, West Midlands Leaders Board (WMLB), informed the RHAF that the West Midlands Regional Assembly (WMRA) was abolished on 31 March 2010. Its functions had been formally taken over by the WMLB.

Emma Kiteley had been appointed to the role of Strategic Adviser for Housing within the WMLB. Joanne Rosa had been appointed as Housing Policy Officer and would commence her new role following return from maternity leave in July. Steve Forrest

was to depart the WMLB on 16 April 2010. RP thanked SF for all his contribution to regional housing work.

The RHAF heard that the AWM had retained its role for economic development within the Region until further notice. AWM and WMLB had delegated responsibility to the Joint Strategy and Investment Board (JS&IB) to take forward work for the Strategy for the West Midlands. The JS&IB also possessed responsibility to oversee other key strategic projects, including regional funding advice.

Partnership working at the regional and local level was expected to be strengthened. RP referred to a previously circulated joint letter from Paul Spooner and Olwen Dutton (12 March 2010) which explained that close future working relations between HCA and WMLB were anticipated, as a primary example.

The RHAF was informed that the WMLB and JS&IB had taken a pragmatic decision to agree new sub regional geography and had since settled on the creation of six new sub regions: Birmingham; Black Country; Coventry, Solihull and Warwickshire; Staffordshire and Stoke; Worcestershire; and Herefordshire, Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin. RP reported that local authorities had largely reacted positively to the new geography.

Paul Williams commented that the National Housing Federation would support local authorities during the transition to new sub regional groupings.

#### **4. Changing roles and expectations of a future regional housing group**

RP informed the RHAF that, following the abolition of the Regional Housing Executive, the Region was required to set up new housing arrangements with a level of democratic accountability in line with its continued responsibility to have a Regional Housing Board. It was the current intention for a strong regional housing officer group to feed into the RHE's successor and help ensure a consistency of approach across the six new sub-regions.

RP referred the RHAF to the draft WMLB structure. The new Regional Housing Board (RHB) would fit directly underneath the WMLB. The majority of WMLB groups would be created as task and finish groups for specific purposes.

It was suggested that future membership of the RHB and RHAF might include representation from both economic and planning circles. It was also commented that vulnerable people groups, primarily PSA 16 groups, should be represented within the new arrangements. SP commented that there should be a commonality across the Region in terms of engaging the third sector.

It was expected that WMLB secretariat support would be provided to service the new Regional Housing Board. Limited secretariat support for the RHAF was envisaged with a move towards a more discussion based type of meeting with fewer papers.

Helen Wilkes informed the RHAF that fifteen Single Conversations were taking place between HCA and local authorities throughout the Region. Each Single Conversation would be used to develop Local Investment Plans. Local Investment Agreements would eventually be produced for each individual local authority. The RHAF expressed concern that local authorities would soon possess limited staff capacity to undertake such work.

**Action** – WMLB Secretariat to put together a paper drafting new governance and officer support arrangements for discussion at a future RHAF meeting.

## **5. Progress on Regional Strategy development**

John Pattinson, Head of Development, WMLB, updated the RHAF on progress on the Regional Strategy for the West Midlands. The new Strategy would merge the Regional Economic Strategy (RES) with the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) as approved in January 2008. This included the completed Phase One Revision. JP also regarded the Regional Housing Strategy (RHS) 2005 as an integral document in informing the new Regional Strategy.

The Project Plan for the new Regional Strategy was in development. Emphasis was being placed on developing the new Strategy via a 'bottom up' approach through working with local authorities.

The Region would be required to fulfil certain requirements as instructed by Government. However, Government was expected to issue far less prescriptive guidance in comparison to that in developing the RSS.

JP referred the RHAF to the goals, focus and current timeline in developing the Strategy. Finalisation of the Strategy was currently predicted for late 2012. It was the intention for the Strategy to be regularly reviewed during the development stage.

Proposed changes from Government to RSS Phase 2 Revision were still awaited. It was thought that the final agreed document would eventually be taken into the new Strategy in late 2010.

Under RSS Phase 3, Interim Policy Statements for the provision of future accommodation for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople, and the sub regional apportionment of aggregates had both been agreed by the West Midlands Regional Assembly (WMRA). Policy recommendations for the other elements of RSS 3 had also been agreed by WMRA.

## **6. Local Economic Assessments and relationship to housing**

RP informed the RHAF that the JS&IB had written to all local authorities to request that local economic assessments (LEAs) be undertaken either individually or

collectively with neighbouring authorities. It was the intention for the main messages from the LEAs to be fed back through the sub regional structures to inform the Strategy for the West Midlands. Local authorities had been asked to submit a 'first-cut' LEA by June 2010 before being reviewed in September 2010. Each of the six new sub-regional groups would be represented on a working group to look at how best to undertake the LEAs.

Government Guidance indicated that housing would be an integral part of the LEAs.

## **7. Interim Gypsy and Travellers Policy Statement**

Steve Forrest informed the RHAF that the Interim Gypsy and Traveller Policy Statement had been formally approved at the final Assembly Board meeting on 17 March 2010 and had been submitted to GOWM. The Statement would be taken forward through work on the Strategy for the West Midlands and inform future local core strategies and planning decisions.

## **8. Gypsy and Traveller Sites Grant Programme 2010/11**

HW understood that no bids had so far been received for the 2010/11 Programme. The bidding process for the Region's £2.5m funding would close on 30 April 2010.

## **9. AOB**

RG suggested that the RHAF terms of reference and membership be immediately reviewed in light of the new regional arrangements. RG accepted Sharon Palmer's request for third sector membership and proposed that national bodies should have membership representation. **Action** – RG to liaise initially with EK.

RG paid thanks to Steve Forrest for all his support, guidance and expertise to the RHAF during the past few years.

RG congratulated EK on her new appointment.

## **10. Next Meeting**

It was agreed that the provisional date of 21 April 2010 would be released. **Action** – MC to arrange next meeting for mid May. This was subsequently rearranged to 21<sup>st</sup> June 2010.

## Agenda Item 6

### Regional Housing Advisory Forum

Monday 21 June 2010

#### Regional Housing Research Programme: Update and Funding Requests

#### 1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To provide an update on the regional Housing Research Programme including work completed and work ongoing; to provide a summary of issues identified for potential research but not progressed during this time period; and to draw RHAF members' attention to two proposed projects requesting funding from the Regional Housing research budget.

#### 2. Recommendation

- 2.1 That RHAF members:
- a) Note progress on the Research Programme;
  - b) Endorse the allocation of funding to support the progression of the two proposed research projects, subject to agreement of detailed project briefs and receipt of satisfactory costed proposals in line with the West Midlands Leaders Board procurement policy and Sandwell MBC's Standing Orders<sup>1</sup>.

#### 3. Background

- 3.1 In 2006, the Regional Housing Board agreed in principle to progress a programme of research based on the areas identified in Chapter 10 of the 2005 Regional Housing Strategy. Furthermore, in preparation for a Strategy for the West Midlands, it was deemed necessary to refresh the shared evidence base with the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS), particularly given changes in housing markets and the wider economy.
- 3.2 In September 2008, the Regional Housing Executive (RHE) approved a Research Programme to inform the Examination in Public of RSS Phase 2 Revision and to feed into the development of a Strategy for the West Midlands.

---

<sup>1</sup> Sandwell Council is the budget holding organisation, and therefore the accountable body and legally the client on behalf of WMLB

- 3.3 This programme of research was designed to provide data and analysis that will support decision-making to ensure resources are used to best effectiveness in delivering positive outcomes for housing across the region. Partners including AWM and the Homes and Communities Agency have been involved in the research programme through the establishment of reference groups and through consultation in the process of drafting research briefs.
- 3.4 Each piece of work was tendered through a process that complied with the Assembly's procurement policy and with Sandwell Council's standing orders (since Sandwell Council is the budget holding organisation, and therefore the accountable body and legally the client on behalf of the RHE); and in line with the internal approval process agreed by RHE on 25 September 2008.

#### **4. Completed work**

- 4.1 Work has been completed in two stages. The first stage focused on providing evidence for the Examination in Public of the Phase 2 Revision of the Regional Spatial Strategy, which took place in Spring 2009. The second stage began in Summer 2009 and focused on exploring specific issues to inform the evidence base for a Strategy for the West Midlands (the first stage of the research programme is also intended to feed into this evidence base).
- 4.2 The following pieces of work were completed as part of stage 1 of the research programme:
- A survey of "most recent occupiers" in new build housing. The survey updated earlier work completed in 2005, and consisted of a survey of current occupiers of dwellings built between 2004 and 2007. The survey aimed to explore the characteristics of households occupying newly built dwellings, and their reasons for their choice of dwelling and location.
  - An exploration of the potential implications for housing markets in the West Midlands of the credit crunch, which at the time of the study (2008/early 2009) was beginning to bite. The study examined a range of potential recovery scenarios in order to explore how severe and long-lasting the impacts of the credit crunch might be and the potential time before housing markets might begin to recover.
  - An analysis of changing house prices in the Region over the period January 2004 to September 2008, providing detailed geographical analysis of changing house prices in different areas to identify hot-

spots and more localised trends. This updated previous work completed in 2005.

- An analysis of the implications of the National Housing and Planning Advisory Unit's proposed housing supply range for housing affordability in the West Midlands. This study provided a critique of the view that increasing housing supply is the most appropriate policy response to affordability problems.
- A study providing figures for affordable housing need over the RSS planning period to 2026, using the 2006-based household projections as a starting point.
- A study to inform the development of a planning constraints and opportunities based option for provision for gypsies, travellers and travelling showpeople for Phase 3 of the Revision of RSS.
- Additional work to provide a regional overview of the six Strategic Housing Market Assessments (SHMAs) completed in the sub-regional Housing Market Areas, more detail of requirements by bedroom size and housing type, and more detailed analysis of local housing market areas based on the data from the SHMAs.

#### 4.3 The second stage of the research programme has included the following work:

- A study examining the levels of housing demand associated with varying levels of economic growth to 2031. The study modeled three economic growth scenarios and the associated increase in households by occupational profile to determine the potential level of demand for different types of housing at local authority level across the region. This work was a comprehensive update of the Housing and Economy work commissioned by Advantage West Midlands in 2007, taking into account changes in economic conditions, with additional analysis and reporting at local area.
- A review of the 2004 work on West Midlands sub regional housing market geography to test whether the market characteristics that differentiate the Housing Market Areas prevail given the changes to housing markets and economic circumstances since the original work.
- An analysis of the impacts of the recession to October 2009 on housing in the West Midlands. This work provides a follow up to the earlier work on the potential implications of the Credit Crunch and focuses on measurable impacts and their policy implications.

- A study of the implications of the recession for vulnerable groups and homelessness, commissioned by the Regional Homelessness Strategy Implementation Group.
- An exploration of the links between the health agenda, housing markets and housing policy.
- An exploration of the links between transport infrastructure investment and housing markets. This study identified major transport investments and sought to identify whether these led to observable changes in housing markets and development.
- A study exploring the role of the intermediate and private rented sector in the West Midlands and its potential for providing affordable housing as a tenure of choice.
- A strategic overview of the research completed to date and the existing evidence base in order to develop a strategic position statement identifying key regional housing issues to be taken forward into the Regional Strategy.

4.4 The completed commissions above are available on the West Midlands Leaders Board website at <http://www.wmleadersboard.gov.uk/housing-and-regeneration>.

## **5. Ongoing work**

5.1 In addition to the above, the Central Housing Market Area Partnership have commissioned an analysis of potential for increasing the stock of larger affordable homes in areas of the region affected by high levels of overcrowding. This work is ongoing, with the report due Summer 2010.

## **6. Work identified for potential research but not yet progressed**

6.1 The budget set aside by the Regional Housing Executive for housing research has not been exhausted, and there are a number of areas where it would be valuable to undertake further research work. Priority areas are set out below:

- An update of the baseline figures on private sector stock condition. The original study was completed by BRE in 2006.
- The NHPAU is, at the time of this paper, consulting on experiences of completing and using Strategic Housing Market Assessments (SHMAs). It seems likely that from this they will produce recommendations for updating SHMAs or even potentially a SHMA

“toolkit”. It would seem prudent to allow for the possibility that a comprehensive update of SHMAs across the West Midlands may be expected within the next one or two years. The housing research budget provided contributions towards the first round of SHMAs in the West Midlands.

- Work to identify the role of housing (including new development and the existing stock) in delivering urban renaissance, exploring the links with broader objectives and the role of housing in supporting, for example, economic growth and diversification, reduced carbon emissions, environmental protection and enhancement, access to services and opportunities, delivering sustainable transport etc. It is envisaged that the most appropriate way to take this forward would be to commission expert consultancy support.
- The work completed in 2008 on changing house prices in the West Midlands included a commitment to update the analysis given the substantial further changes that were anticipated at the time. It would seem appropriate to consider updating the house price analysis at around mid-2011.

6.2 In addition, there are a number of further areas where additional research work could provide a valuable input into strategic housing throughout the West Midlands. Some suggestions are set out below.

- Understanding the role of housing in supporting vulnerable people
- Understanding the housing needs and aspirations of Black and Minority Ethnic communities and the implications of these in combination with household/population projections for communities and neighbourhoods in different parts of the West Midlands
- Understanding the role of social rented housing in changing economic conditions, potentially also exploring the possibility of new models for provision of affordable housing.

6.3 WMLB’s Policy Directorate is currently discussing with partners the options for taking forward a Regional Housing Research Programme, and it is intended that proposals should be shared with RHAF in due course.

## **7. Proposed projects requesting funding from the Regional Housing research budget**

7.1 WMLB’s Policy Directorate has received two requests for funding from the Regional Housing research budget for proposed projects.

- 7.2 The first proposal, received from Birmingham City Council, is for a piece of research regarding the accommodation requirements of vulnerable groups and how well these are addressed through existing provision. The work would have a particular focus on the four PSA16 groups:
- Care leavers at age 19
  - Offenders under probation supervision
  - Adults receiving secondary mental health services
  - Adults with moderate to severe learning disabilities
- 7.3 The intention is to build on research carried out by Communities and Local Government, providing a national understanding of the accommodation needs of vulnerable groups. The purpose of the research is to gain a greater understanding of the picture across the West Midlands, exploring specific issues and identifying any gaps. The primary focus will be on accommodation, but the research will also explore access to and uptake of housing related support. It is anticipated that the costs for the project will be in the order of £30,000. Further background material is available at Appendix A.
- 7.4 The second proposal, received from the Regional Homelessness Strategy Implementation Group, is for a piece of work to provide a comprehensive evaluation of the benefits of homelessness prevention activity. It is intended that this evaluation should go beyond the benefits to the individual household and attempt to quantify the benefits to communities, housing markets and social cohesion more widely. It should also explore the contribution made by homelessness prevention to broader policy objectives and to the achievement of a range of current and emerging National Indicators. Wherever possible, quantified financial benefits will be calculated. The assessment of the impact of prevention should also take account of the potential links to capital investment in a given area, for example stressing the importance of linking to the HCA 'Single Conversation' and a local area's development and investment planning. It is anticipated that the costs for this project will be no more than £10,000.
- 7.5 RHAF members are asked to endorse the allocation of funding to support the progression of the two proposed research projects, subject to agreement of detailed project briefs and receipt of satisfactory costed proposals in line with the West Midlands Leaders Board procurement policy and Sandwell MBC's Standing Orders.

**Contact Details:**

Fran Gilbert, 0121 678 1040, email: [f.gilbert@wmleadersboard.gov.uk](mailto:f.gilbert@wmleadersboard.gov.uk)

John Pattinson, 0121 678 1041, email: [j.pattinson@wmleadersboard.gov.uk](mailto:j.pattinson@wmleadersboard.gov.uk)

## PSA 16

### *Introduction*

The aim of the PSA is to ensure that the **most socially excluded adults are offered the chance to get back on a path to a more successful life**, by increasing the proportion of the most socially excluded adults in settled accommodation and in employment, education or training. It is the first PSA that focuses specifically on the needs of the most vulnerable adults and will be delivered by both the statutory and third sectors.

A home and a job are the core foundations of normal, everyday life which the majority of people take for granted. The Government wants to extend this expectation and aspiration to the most excluded, for whom a settled home and the opportunity to work can often seem out of reach.

The PSA focuses on four client groups who are particularly vulnerable to multiple forms of disadvantage, and who may be negotiating a difficult transition such as leaving prison or long-term care. These two factors make them particularly at-risk of falling into persistent exclusion, but also mean that they are in contact with the services that could and should make a difference. The four groups are:

- Care leavers at age 19
- Offenders under probation supervision
- Adults receiving secondary mental health services
- Adults with moderate to severe learning disabilities.

A total of eight indicators underpin the PSA and will be used to measure progress for each at-risk group towards increasing the proportions in settled and suitable accommodation and in employment, education or training. All of these indicators will be included in the national set of local government tables. The headline definitions of the indicators are presented in the table below.

<b>Indicators for the socially excluded adults PSA</b>		
<b>Client Group</b>	<b>Outcome 1: Settled Accommodation</b>	<b>Outcome 2: Employment, Education or Training</b>
<b>Offenders - NI 143</b>	Percentage of offenders under probation supervision living in settled and suitable accommodation at the end of their order or licence.	Percentage of offenders under probation supervision in employment at the end of their order or licence.
<b>Care leavers - NI 147</b>	Percentage of former care leavers at age 19 who are in suitable accommodation.	Percentage of former care leavers who are in employment, education or training.
<b>Mentally ill - NI 149</b>	Percentage of adults receiving secondary mental health services in settled accommodation.	Percentage of adults receiving secondary mental health services in employment.
<b>Learning disabled - NI 145</b>	Percentage of adults with learning disabilities in settled accommodation.	Percentage of adults with learning disability in employment.

The following National Indicators relate and support the PSA 16 indicators:

- NI 18: Adult re-offending rates for those under probation supervision
- NI 30: Re-offending rate of prolific and other priority offenders
- NI 40: Number of drug users recorded as being in effective treatment
- NI 45: Young offenders engagement in suitable education, employment or training
- NI 62: Stability of placements of looked after children: number of placements
- NI 63: Stability of placements of looked after children: length of placement
- NI 117: 16 to 18 year olds who are not in education, employment or training (NEET)
- NI 124: People with a long-term condition supported to be independent and in control of their condition
- NI 136: People supported to live independently through social?

## ***PSA Indicator Definitions:***

### **NI 143**

#### ***Percentage of offenders under probation supervision living in settled and suitable accommodation at the end of their order or licence***

This indicator is intended to help improve accommodation outcomes for ex-offenders, as well as helping the wider target of reducing re-offending rates.

Settled accommodation is defined within this group as permanent independent housing, bail/probation hostel or supported housing. The suitability of accommodation for this client groups encompasses both accommodation and suitability of location. Anybody assessed as having difficulties or having major problems in either accommodation or location would be considered to be in unsuitable accommodation. Hence anyone with no difficulties would be considered to be in suitable accommodation.

Offenders in unsettled accommodation are likely to present a combination of one or more characteristics that may prevent or hinder them from accessing suitable/settled accommodation. Some of these relate to their lifestyle, attitudes, social network (or lack of) and support. Timing of release and offender movements prior to release may help inhibit offenders from achieving settled status. The CLG research identifies a circular path for some offenders between jail and chaotic lifestyles. In addition this client group have a more regimental relationship to their lead professional as they tend to see them as people to report to, rather than as a professional to help in advising and referring or signposting to other support services.

### **NI 145**

#### ***Adults with learning disabilities in settled accommodation***

This indicator is intended to improve settled accommodation outcomes for adults with learning disabilities.

Settled accommodation refers to accommodation arrangements where the occupier has security of tenure or residence in their usual accommodation in the medium to long term, or is part of a household whose head holds such security of tenure/residence. The settled accommodation types that fall within this classification are:

- Owner occupier or shared ownership scheme
- Tenant – Local Authority (LA), Arms Length Management Organisations (ALMOs), RSL, Private Landlord
- Settled mainstream housing with family/friends
- Supported accommodation -lodgings, group-home
- Sheltered Housing/Extra Care housing
- Mobile accommodation for Gypsies and Travelers (GT)?

Non settled accommodation are defined to be where living arrangements are identified as precarious, or where the person has low or no security of tenure for example:

- rough sleeping or squatting
- night shelter
- emergency hostel
- temporary accommodation
- short term guest
- registered care home
- registered nursing home
- acute/ long stay healthcare residential facility
- hospital

The definition of settled accommodation is in line with the Valuing People Now set of targets regarding housing situations for people with learning disabilities. CLG qualitative research suggests that this client group experiences multiple barriers in accessing and maintaining settled accommodation. It should be noted that qualitative research findings do not provide a measure for how common assessed factors are, but can be still used to inform (policy) thinking.

Barriers to obtaining settled accommodation are often unawareness of potential housing options, negative attitude of family to the possibility of their living independently and the need to acquire life skills. Lead professionals as well as people with learning disabilities identified the family's attitude as a key factor in accessing (or not) settled accommodation. Once people with learning disabilities are mentally and practically equipped waiting times and lack of choice was found to be down to attitudes of housing providers; particularly private landlords, but also RSLs and even LAs' own housing departments.

## **NI 147**

### ***Care Leavers in suitable accommodation***

This indicator is intended to increase the proportion of former care leavers who are in suitable accommodation.

Suitable accommodation is defined as providing safe, secure and affordable provision for young people. It would generally include short-term accommodation designed to move young people on to stable long-term accommodation, but would exclude emergency accommodation used in a crisis. Some examples of suitable accommodation are living with parents or relatives, community home, semi-independent, transitional accommodation or self contained accommodation with specialist personal assistance support. Decisions about the suitability of accommodation depend on the individual case and it is up to the lead professional to decide.

The CLG research sees recent turmoil/trauma, late entry to the care system and unsettled time in care as some of the factors influencing an unsuitable accommodation outcome for care leavers. Barriers develop to accessing and maintaining suitable accommodation by factors such as the group's general high expectations of accommodation (often leading to rejection of properties), chaotic behaviour and poor engagement with services.

In this client group the lead professional relationship with the clients is generally perceived to be very good. However, services currently available, such as floating support workers or training flats, are perceived as not meeting the group's needs as intended because there is insufficient provision or they are not flexible enough.

## **NI 149**

### ***Adults receiving secondary mental health services in settled accommodation***

This indicator is intended to improve settled accommodation outcomes for adults with mental health problems.

A settled accommodation refers to accommodation arrangements where the occupier has security of tenure or appropriate stability of residence in their usual accommodation in the medium to long term, or is part of a household whose head holds such security of tenure. Examples of settled accommodation are:

- owner occupier or shared ownership scheme
- tenant – LA, ALMOs, RSL, Private Landlord
- accommodation with mental health care support.
- bail or probation hostels

- sheltered housing.

However, nursing homes and mental health registered care homes are excluded. This client group has severe problems accessing and maintaining settled accommodation due to several mismatches in the way services are configured and the complex needs of this group. Factors in people's background and the manner in which their background affects current behaviour emerge as key in the CLG research. It is perceived to be almost entirely up to the clients own abilities and skills to hold a settled accommodation. This suggests that services, as configured, are not equipped to deal with the differences between individual service users' competencies. Substance misuse emerged as a major reason in the research for why people with mental health problems were not in settled/suitable accommodation. There seems to be a clear link between the extent of substance misuse and mental health issues, with those who are in unsettled accommodation being more likely to have a dual diagnosis and/or addiction problems. Street homelessness emerged as a common outcome for those with particularly severe mental health and substance misuse issues. Poor engagement with mental health services and poor levels of trust also are seen as a main factor in producing an unsettled accommodation outcome. Once removed, trust is particularly hard to rebuild in this client group. The availability of suitable accommodation, which is common across all PSA 16 client groups, is a particularly issue for adults with mental health problems. But, the perceptions about the suitability of accommodation are often different, in particular with governmental definitions. Time limits and dependence on funding influence this client group and the ability to access and maintain suitable accommodation. For example, some clients may have to move out before they are ready and breakdowns in funding or the withdrawal of support could result in people with mental health problems losing their accommodation.

### ***PSA 16 and Housing Related Support***

PSA 16 was be considered as part of the Comprehensive Area Agreement (CAA). Local Authorities will want to continue the focus on outcomes and what matters most to local people, with a particular emphases on people whose circumstances make them vulnerable. One of the outcomes being "how will it meet housing need?" This will enable consideration as to whether partnerships are taking a strategic approach to assessing current and future housing need, reflecting demographic changes and local economic conditions. It will mean looking across all housing sectors and working with a range of partners across boundaries to facilitate the delivery of these needs.

Living independently in settled accommodation requires life skills, such as cooking, budgeting and accessing utility services. Some individuals in at-risk groups will need enabling with these tasks in their own homes, while many require supported accommodation and again enabling before they can consider

living independently. Providing assistance at the right time can prevent a full-scale, long-term crisis.

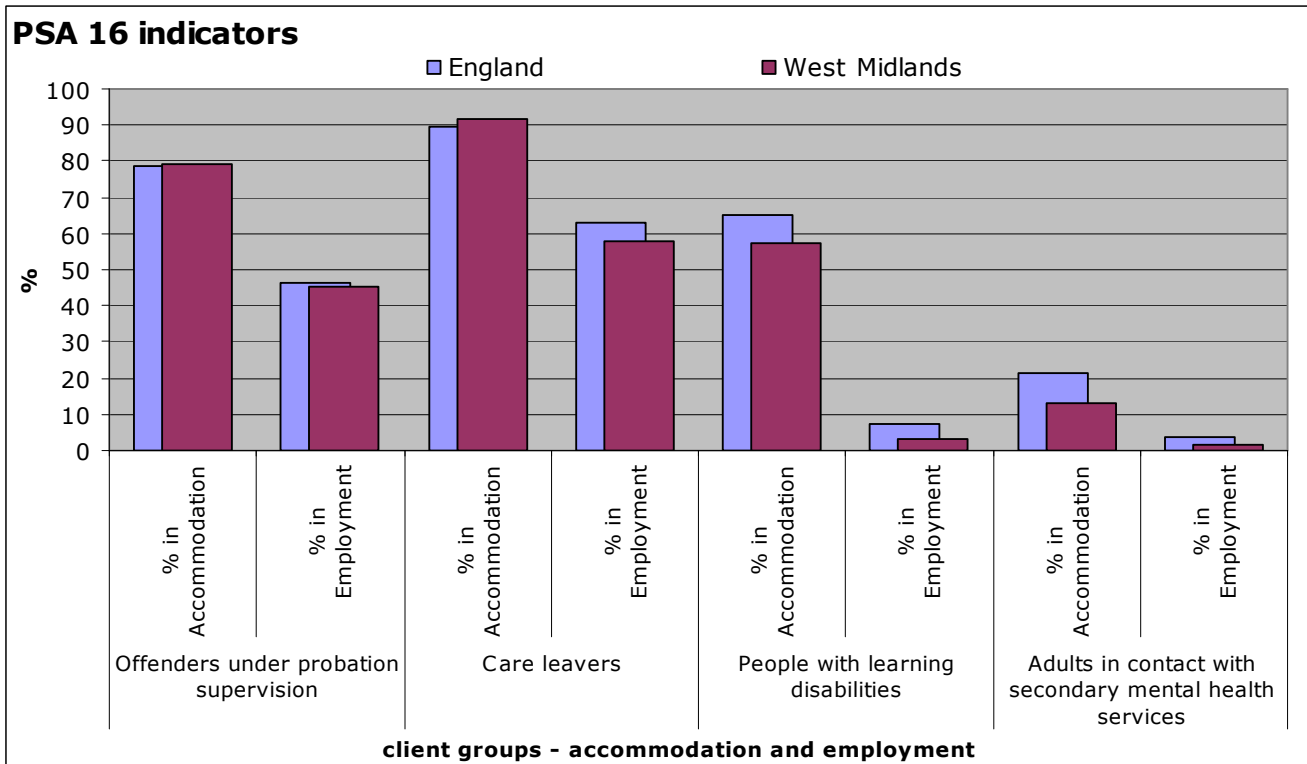
***Without this support many of the excluded adults in the four client groups may not be able to sustain their tenancy in settled accommodation. The Supporting People programme, run by CLG and delivered through Local Authorities (LAs), provides housing related support to vulnerable people. It improves quality of life by providing a stable environment which enables greater independence. The programme has a strong record in delivering appropriate services tailored to the needs of individuals. The Government will build on this success and continue to deliver for the four at-risk groups alongside other groups in need of housing support to achieve settled accommodation. It will place a strong focus on moving individuals, when appropriate, on to settled accommodation in a planned way, and on helping them to identify training and job opportunities.***

***Delivery at a local level will be led by LAs, who have direct housing management responsibilities (where they are landlords), provide advice and assistance directly to those seeking accommodation, and have an important strategic housing role across the social and private sectors. In their capacity as a strategic housing lead, LAs exert an important influence on accommodation outcomes for excluded groups through managing policies on the allocation of social housing, facilitating new housing supply, ensuring that accommodation meets required standards and working directly with the most excluded adults through adult social services, third sector providers and other lead professionals working with at-risk groups.***

## **Regional Performance**

In the following section regional performance is compared to national performance over the PSA 16 indicators and selected West Midland LAs' performance are compared to each other, also across all the PSA 16 indicators. This provides an indication of the range of current performance across the region.

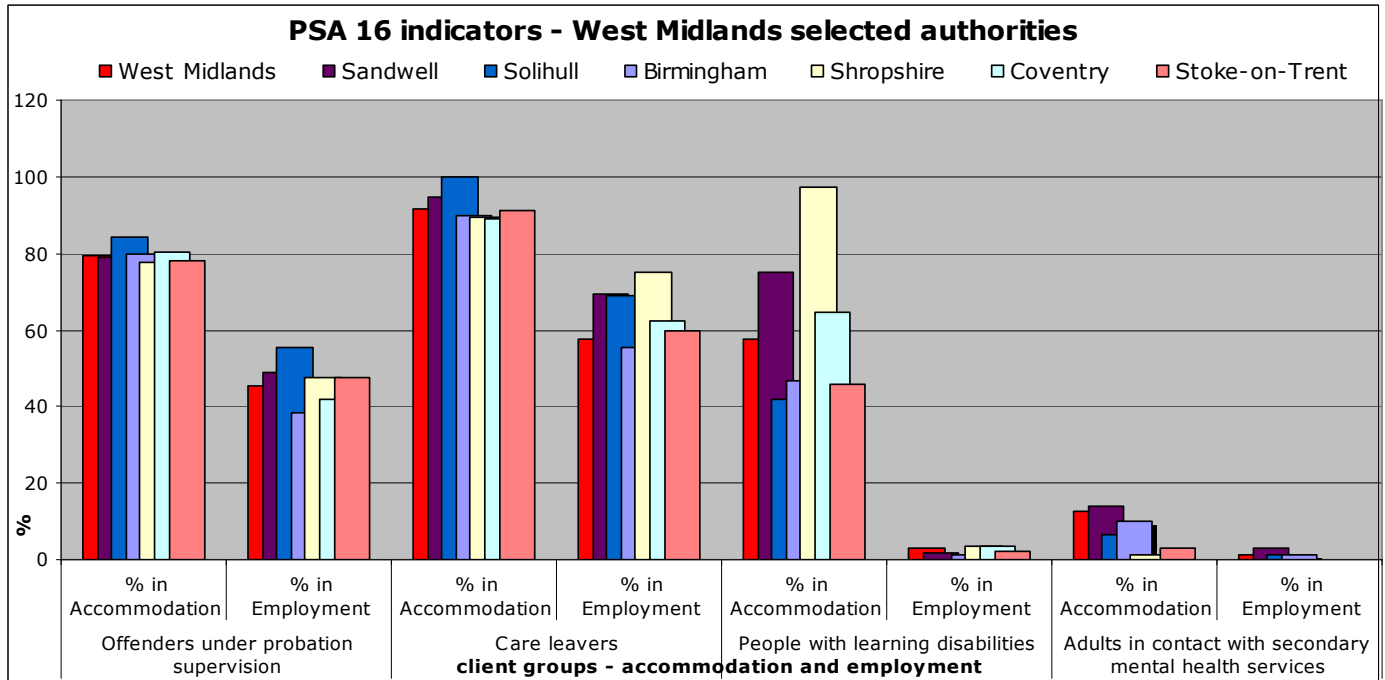
### **Graph 1**



**Data source – PSA 16 NIs, national comparison as of March 2010,**

The graph shows that the West Midlands performs just below the average for England, except for Offenders under probation supervision and Care Leavers in accommodation. These three groups match or slightly exceed the average for England.

**Graph 2**



**Data source – PSA 16 NIs – Selected West Midlands LAs ; comparison as of March 2010**

Graph 2 shows that there is quite a wide range of performance across the region. While the selected sample LAs are all very closely grouped for % in accommodation for Offenders and Care Leavers, there is a far greater disparity for % in Employment for Offenders, Care Leavers and % in Accommodation for learning difficulties.

## ***Issues faced by client groups***

Research has raised several issues affecting the PSA 16 client groups that need to be considered. However, the findings of the qualitative research although representative in providing an initial picture of practices and issues cannot provide to what extent links are applicable. This requires comprehensive quantitative research to take place exploring relationships between each client group and an unsettled accommodation outcome using focus groups and expert interviews to gain an enhanced and more in-depth understanding.

The CLG research project Identified 6 key aspects that contribute to the outcome of housing dimension:

1. Client characteristics
2. Housing Issues
3. Lead professional Role
4. Service gaps
5. Joint working
6. Wider issues.

### **1. Client Characteristics**

Often clients of PSA 16 groups have to deal with multiple issues and are more likely to have chronic issues such as alcohol and challenging behaviour, which make it more difficult to access and maintain settled accommodation. Also often clients do not want or are not able to engage with support services that are available to them, often a result of negative experience in the past, or because of the way their behaviour is perceived.

### **2. Housing issues**

There are two strands to issues presented by housing in that PSA 16 clients not only experience barriers when accessing housing but also remaining in suitable housing.

Some of the potential barriers are:

- **Lack of accommodation which meets the needs of the clients.** This might be in the form of clients or practitioners considering it to be of poor quality, or in areas which are unsuitable e.g. drugs and high rate of crime.
- **Difficulties accessing settled accommodation.** Some landlords, both private sector and RSLs, are reluctant to house those in unsettled accommodation due to the stigma associated with the

client groups and the lack of support available. Some clients are classed as being “intentionally homeless” which means that housing departments do not owe them a statutory duty to provide settled accommodation anymore.

- **Preference for social housing.** The relative preference of social housing often leads to the client or practitioner rejecting other options.. Private sector housing, for example, is perceived as being less affordable and even with rent-deposit schemes unreachable for client groups.

The CLG report points out the potential of private sector housing to be a part of the solutions sought for vulnerable groups in accessing settled accommodation.

### **3. Lead Professional role<sup>2</sup>**

The Lead Professionals work is considered to be very important to helping secure settled accommodation but several problems arise with some being unaware of their lead role and having different perceptions on how far their responsibility extends in providing their clients with settled accommodation. Some other issues relate to strained relationships with housing or support providers and clients feeling unsure of who their Lead professional is and their responsibilities.

### **4. Service gaps**

Existing services to help support people and find them accommodation require a degree of engagement and basic skills which the client may not be able to demonstrate. For example Choice Based Lettings requires internet access to bid for properties, which presents a barrier for people in unsettled accommodation, or people who are IT illiterate and may find it difficult to access a computer

Another gap identified in the CLG research is the fact that due to the multi dimensional needs of clients in the PSA 16 group high-level support is often required but does not exist. This leads to clients not receiving the required support and results in them not being able to hold down a tenancy For example there is limited “out-of-hours” emergency support available to help people who experience crisis which sometimes results in the problem becoming exacerbated, and can lead to them losing their tenancy.

### **5. Joint working/information sharing**

Joint working is perceived to be useful and necessary among professionals in the PSA16 group but is often lacking where there are no statutory obligations to do

---

<sup>2</sup> For more on the Lead Professional role:

[http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/social\\_exclusion\\_task\\_force/psa/supporting\\_delivery/lead-professionals.aspx?](http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/social_exclusion_task_force/psa/supporting_delivery/lead-professionals.aspx?)

so. The consequence is not meeting the clients' needs or not providing the appropriate support because the individual circumstances and needs are not taken into account.

## **6. Wider issues**

The current and future economic climate has an impact on the achievement of a positive change for PSA16 groups in accessing settled accommodation. For example the relative increase in repossessions is seen to have an effect on the PRS in terms of more rented properties being in demand which could reduce the landlords' willingness to house PSA 16 clients. On the other hand the cost of mortgage payments might result in lower rents, enabling more clients to afford private sector rents. Also an increase in social housing waiting lists means a limited choice of housing options for these groups. In addition services, such as charitable donations and support services that rely on local governmental funding might face funding cut backs due to local government cuts.

## ***Recommendations of CLG research***

### **1. Housing Considerations**

Improving access to social housing to PSA 16 groups, i.e. the ones who fall outside priority categories like pregnant women, clients with health problems and older people. Local authorities could give PSA 16 clients specifically priority which would in turn address their preference for social housing.

### **2. Improving access to the private sector**

Rent deposit schemes only partly address the issues clients face in accessing the PRS. LAs could act as an interface between clients and private landlords and reassure private landlords about taking on PSA 16 clients as tenants. The reassurance mechanism process would have to be established on a local level.

### **3. Addressing stigma and “discrimination” towards some groups**

Stigmatisation and discrimination is a further barrier to PSA 16 client groups, particularly accessing the PRS. Again LAs could take an advocacy role on behalf of the clients to help alleviate these issues. Clients would benefit from this in terms of having more suitable accommodation options opened up for them and LAs in terms of having pressure taken off their waiting lists.

### **4. Managing client expectations**

Clients' perceptions and the PSA 16 governmental definitions of suitable and settled accommodation do not concur. The other issue is that perception of what is suitable or not varies from individual to individual. Some have higher expectations than others regarding their choice meaning that what is available may be rejected. Practitioners' awareness of what is realistically available has a critical influence on the clients' duration in temporary accommodation. Often the accommodation they perceive to be the most appropriate is also the accommodation which clients have the least chance of accessing. It is up to the lead professionals here to not raise clients' expectations too high.

## ***Recommendations for in respect of housing***

It is clear that the client groups forming the PSA 16 present a variety of issues. It is also clear that there are data gaps around housing needs and support requirements of these groups. The first step will be to build on the contacts with officers collating the data for the indicators to enable access to raw data.

There is a CLG self assessment toolkit the purpose of which is to assist local housing authorities to deliver improved accommodation outcomes for the for client groups in PSA 16. It is designed to develop, maintain and improve partnership with probation, children's services, adult social care, primary care trusts and other local partners including voluntary sector and RSLs.

The toolkit is based on the Homelessness Prevention Strategy Health check published by CLG in 2006 to assist LAs to develop and improve services for people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness and thus forms part of an LA's role in mainstream homelessness prevention, involving early intervention, support, advice and information.

To a much lesser extent improved employment outcomes for the four groups are covered as well.

On completion of the toolkit LAs and other relevant agencies will be enabled to improve access to settled and suitable accommodation (as appropriate) for PSA clients by identifying gaps and barriers in locally commissioned accommodation pathways, as well as highlighting and learning from areas of good practice. Effective delivery of the PSA 16 settled accommodation indicators for the four client groups will need to build on the joined up and strategic approach developed in LA areas since the 2002 Act<sup>3</sup>, in order to support adults with complex and multiple needs, including

- **more effective information sharing across local delivery partners**
- **strategic joint commissioning built on a detailed understanding of need**
- **lead professionals to help excluded adults navigate key services**

The toolkit assesses four general key drivers of improving settled accommodation outcome

1. LA corporate and member commitment
2. Joint working and partnership
3. Floating/tenancy support
4. Health issues

Additionally to the four main drivers each client group has its own questionnaire going into depth with identifying service gaps and barriers relevant for and adapted to each group individually.

---

<sup>3</sup> Homelessness Act 2002

5. Offenders
6. Care Leavers
7. Mental Health
8. Learning Disabilities

Suggestions in general are as follows (for detailed listing of questions, please refer to Annex II):

- **Key strategic aspects required to effectively improve housing outcomes**

It assesses whether there is member and chief officer “buy in” backed up by adequate resources and the inclusion of the accommodation needs of these groups in local area agreements (LAA)

This might involve interviews with lead professionals for each of the client groups to establish:

- Whether there is member commitment to tackle homelessness and develop settled accommodation outcomes for PSA 16 adults
- Whether tackling homelessness and improving settled accommodation outcomes amongst PSA 16 clients is part of the delivery plan for any LAA target or local target
- Whether improving accommodation outcomes for PSA 16 clients is part of the delivery plan for any targets in the LAA
- Whether there is a JSNA developed for PSA 16 relevant information
- Whether learning from PSA related data is already being incorporated into future commissioning plans

- **Partnerships’ effectiveness and inclusion**

No LA can hope to achieve its long term aims without developing open and transparent relationships between partners, including other council departments, housing associations and the voluntary sector. Given the important role partners need to play in tackling homelessness, shared protocols need to be established with sufficient funding and outcomes agreed through clear, measurable service level agreements or contracts.

This means key officers need to be asked

- whether there is a vulnerable adults forum operating in the council’s area
- and if there is whether it is fully representative of stakeholders
- individual client group protocols
- whether the council is engaged in sub-regional working with other local authorities to prevent homelessness and meet housing needs of PSA 16 clients
- whether the LA has mechanisms in place to ensure that applicants, including those referred by partner organisations, who

have access to the LA's rent deposit scheme are able to access floating support if required

- whether the ten largest private sector key local landlords been identified and contacted directly to discuss any existing rent deposit/bond scheme

- **Effective tenancy and floating support**

Regarding the quality of the tenancy itself and the provision of support relevant assessment questions might include questions as follows:

- Whether there is a support need assessment carried out for people who apply for housing assistance and who may be in housing need, homeless or threatened with homelessness and if yes
- Whether outcomes of the assessments are monitored across the four PSA 16 client groups
- Whether all housing related support contracts that provide services to people who have experienced, or are at risk of, homelessness have been reviewed in the last 12 months to ensure that they are sufficiently focused on helping to prevent homelessness
- Whether targets have been set with each service provider to increase proportion of cases receiving support who are in settled accommodation and minimise the number receiving support who become homeless despite this support
- Whether there is a mechanism to feedback gaps in provision of support required to prevent homelessness from high-risk groups to SP commissioning teams

- **Health issues**

For PSA 16 related health questions might include:

- Whether there are well developed links with local primary care, mental health and substance misuse services to allow effective signposting of clients found to have health concern which needs addressing and referral.
- Whether there are structures and procedures in place for multi-disciplinary assessment of a client with complex and multiple needs
- Whether there is a mechanism to assess for and provide home adaptations as a matter of urgency in cases where the client would otherwise be at risk of homelessness

In Annex II the questionnaire with the complete list of question is provided.

In the following the individual client group's questionnaires are summarised, for further insight please refer to Annex II.

In general it can be said that questions are directed in order to identify any potential gaps in service delivery and potential exclusion and barriers in accessing suitable accommodation for PSA 16 groups.

For example for **offenders** questions to key officers include whether the LA provide housing advice sessions in local prisons and in local probation offices, or if in the LA's area operating RSLs execute any exclusion policies which include the exclusion of offenders (for detailed questionnaire please refer to ANNEX II).

For **care leavers** questions include whether housing and SP staff are involved in pathway planning systems to help anticipate and plan for accommodation needs and prevent homelessness. Also it includes questions about the joint establishment, commissioning and monitoring between SP, housing and children's services.

On **mental health** the questions focus on easy access to housing and cross-agency working locally like whether there is a robust information sharing protocol between housing, adult social care, SP and health for this client group and whether there is an understanding of the impact that dual diagnosis, substance misuse or physical health problems may have on this client group; also if there is an analysis of accommodation needs of this client group at a strategic level.

On **learning difficulties** key officers will be asked whether there is data locally on the current accommodation of this client group and whether this data is available to housing and SP staff. Additional questions about the need of multi-agency and –disciplinarily of assessments carried out on this client group as well as the inclusion of the full range of housing options.

#### Annex I

Socially excluded adults Public Service Agreement (PSA 16), Technical definitions of indicators and guidance notes,

[http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/media/cabinetoffice/social\\_exclusion\\_task\\_force/assets/psa/guidance\\_psa\\_indicators\\_032808.pdf](http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/media/cabinetoffice/social_exclusion_task_force/assets/psa/guidance_psa_indicators_032808.pdf)

Annex II – CLG, An accommodation self assessment toolkit for the socially excluded Adults in Public Service Agreement, 2009

**Regional Housing Advisory Forum**

**Monday 21 June 2010**

**Homes and Communities Agency report on the delivery of the National Affordable Housing Programme**

**1. Purpose of the Report**

To update RHAF on the delivery of the National Affordable Housing Programme (NAHP) 2008-11. The following report shows housing delivery by the original Housing Market Areas, identified by the West Midlands Regional Housing Strategy (2005).

**2. Recommendation**

That RHAF receive this report and note the update.

**3. NAHP Expenditure 2009/10 at 31 March 2010**

Tables 1a and 1b below show the actual expenditure to the end of the financial year 2009/10, by Housing Market Area.

Table 1b shows the additional funds made available to the HCA by Government as part of the Housing Stimulus Package.

**Table 1a: Expenditure – (NAHP ONLY)**

	<b>2009/10 Actual (£m)</b>			
	<b>RENT</b>	<b>LCHO</b>	<b>MISC</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
Central	£96.54	£17.61	£1.01	£115.16
North	£17.73	£2.84	£0.02	£20.59
South	£13.52	£5.43	£0.02	£18.98
West	£13.15	£1.74	£0.02	£14.91
<b>Regional</b>	<b>£140.95</b>	<b>£27.61</b>	<b>£1.07</b>	<b>£169.64</b>
<b>2009/10 Expenditure Target</b>				<b>£141.96</b>
<b>Variance</b>				<b>£27.68</b>
<b>% of target achieved</b>				<b>119%</b>

Excludes Homebuy Direct & Mortgage Rescue

**Table 1b: Expenditure – (PLEDGE ONLY)**

	<b>2009/10 Actual (£m)</b>		
	<b>RENT</b>	<b>LCHO</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
Central	£14.73	£3.49	£18.21
North	£2.80	£0.14	£2.94
South	£5.14	£0.25	£5.39
West	£1.63	£0.09	£1.71
<b>Regional</b>	<b>£24.30</b>	<b>£3.96</b>	<b>£28.26</b>
<b>2009/10 Expenditure Target</b>			<b>£27.63</b>
<b>Variance</b>			<b>£0.63</b>
<b>% of target achieved</b>			<b>102%</b>

**4. NAHP Completions 2009/10 at 31 March 2010**

Table 2 below shows the actual number of homes completed in 2009/10 at 31 March 2010 (3,809). This shows delivery of 1,049 homes above the target set by CLG.

**Table 2: Completions**

	<b>2009/10 Actual (homes)</b>		
	<b>RENT</b>	<b>LCHO</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
Central	1,982	645	2,627
North	246	69	315
South	342	208	550
West	241	76	317
<b>Regional</b>	<b>2,811</b>	<b>998</b>	<b>3,809</b>
<b>2009/10 Target Completions</b>	<b>2,142</b>	<b>618</b>	<b>2,760</b>
<b>Variance</b>	<b>669</b>	<b>380</b>	<b>1,049</b>
<b>% of target achieved</b>	<b>131%</b>	<b>161%</b>	<b>138%</b>

Excludes Homebuy Direct & Mortgage Rescue

**5. NAHP Start on Sites 2009/10 at 31 March 2010**

Table 3a below shows the starts on site achieved to the end of the financial year 09/10 (2,204). The total across rent and LCHO (low cost home ownership) exceeds the CLG target, but due to the housing market conditions, in the Pledge category, there has been a significantly higher proportion of rented starts on site and a lower proportion of low cost home ownership. At the end of the financial year 09/10, there was a shortfall of 81 LCHO starts, with a small number of schemes slipping out of year.

**Table 3a: Starts on Site (NAHP ONLY)**

	2009/10 Actual (homes)		
	RENT	LCHO	TOTAL
Central	1,017	279	1,296
North	304	99	403
South	138	78	216
West	252	37	289
<b>Regional</b>	<b>1,711</b>	<b>493</b>	<b>2,204</b>
<b>2009/10 Target Completions</b>	<b>1,397</b>	<b>366</b>	<b>1,763</b>
<b>Variance</b>	<b>314</b>	<b>127</b>	<b>441</b>
<b>% of target achieved</b>	<b>122%</b>	<b>135%</b>	<b>125%</b>

Excludes Homebuy Direct & Mortgage Rescue

**Table 3b: Starts on Site (PLEDGE ONLY)**

	2009/10 Actual (homes)		
	RENT	LCHO	TOTAL
Central	386	154	540
North	66	6	72
South	90	11	101
West	32	6	38
<b>Regional</b>	<b>574</b>	<b>177</b>	<b>751</b>
<b>2009/10 Target Completions</b>	<b>490</b>	<b>258</b>	<b>748</b>
<b>Variance</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>-81</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>% of target achieved</b>	<b>117%</b>	<b>69%</b>	<b>100%</b>

## 6. Rural Housing

The CLG target to achieve 917 completions in the period 2008-11 in rural settlements (with populations below 3,000) was very challenging. The HCA has been working with rural local authorities to ensure a pipeline of deliverable rural affordable homes, and commissioned a bidding round in November 2009, inviting proposals for rural schemes. The additional commissioned rural homes will allow the HCA to exceed its 10/11 target and deliver the 3-year rural completions target by March 2011.

**Table 4: Rural Housing - Population between 0 and 3,000**

	2009/10 Actual (homes)			
	08/09	09/10	10/11	TOTAL
Central	46	21	198	<b>265</b>
North	4	11	8	<b>23</b>
South	42	44	71	<b>157</b>
West	143	92	202	<b>437</b>
<b>Regional</b>	<b>235</b>	<b>168</b>	<b>479</b>	<b>882</b>
<b>2008-11 Target Completions</b>				<b>841</b>
<b>Variance</b>				<b>41</b>
<b>% of target achieved</b>				<b>105%</b>

## 7. Non-NAHP programmes

Tables 5 and 6 below show performance at 31 March 2010 for the ring fenced programmes of Homebuy Direct and Mortgage Rescue, by Housing Market Area.

**Table 5: Homebuy Direct (Ring-fenced budget)**

	2009/10 Actual	
	£m	Homes
Central	£9.58	669
North	£1.32	105
South	£1.30	73
West	£0.46	36
<b>Regional</b>	<b>£12.66</b>	<b>883</b>
<b>2009/10 Budget</b>	<b>£18.00</b>	
<b>Variance</b>	<b>- £5.34</b>	
<b>Achieved 2009/10</b>	<b>70%</b>	

**Table 6: Mortgage Rescue (Ring-fenced budget)**

	2009/10 Actual	
	£m	Homes
Central	£3.94	54
North	£1.62	20
South	£1.69	19
West	£1.24	13
<b>Regional</b>	<b>£8.49</b>	<b>106</b>
<b>2009/10 Budget</b>	<b>£8.20</b>	
<b>Variance</b>	<b>£0.29</b>	
<b>Achieved 2009/10</b>	<b>104%</b>	

## 8. National Affordable Housing Programme Summary 2008-11

Tables 7a and 7b below show the actual in the 09/10 financial year and the expenditure currently forecast for the remainder of the 2008-11 NAHP, by Housing Market Area. All of the £467m 2008-11 NAHP expenditure budget has been committed.

The right hand column shows the % split by Housing Market Area currently forecast based on approved schemes at 31 March 2010.

**Table 7a: Expenditure**

	% of NAHP	£ (m) of NAHP	2008/09 Actual £(m)	2009/10 Actual £(m)	2010/11 Forecast £(m)	2008/11 Total £(m)
Central	65%	£303.55	£137.72	£115.16	£64.85	£317.73
North	11%	£51.37	£20.00	£20.59	£16.45	£57.03
South	14%	£65.38	£22.70	£18.98	£11.05	£52.73
West	10%	£46.70	£16.78	£14.91	£7.82	£39.51
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>£467.00</b>	<b>£197.20</b>	<b>£169.64</b>	<b>£100.16</b>	<b>£467.00</b>

**Table 7b: Completions**

	2008/09 Actual	2009/10 Actual	2010/11 Forecast	2008/11 Total
Central	2,359	2,627	2,302	7,288
North	254	315	608	1,177
South	612	550	253	1,415
West	361	317	313	991
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,586</b>	<b>3,809</b>	<b>3,476</b>	<b>10,871</b>

### Contact details:

**Clare Wall**  
Strategy and Information Officer  
Homes and Communities Agency  
Email: [clare.wall@hca.gsx.gov.uk](mailto:clare.wall@hca.gsx.gov.uk)  
Tel: 0121 2349979

**Chris Megainey**  
Regional Economic Adviser  
Homes and Communities Agency  
Email: [chris.megainey@hca.gsx.gov.uk](mailto:chris.megainey@hca.gsx.gov.uk)  
Tel: 0121 234 9931

**Regional Housing Advisory Forum**

**Monday 21 June 2010**

**Gypsy and Traveller Site Grant Programme 2010/2011 update**

**1. Purpose of the Report**

- 1.1 To update RHAF on the announcements made recently regarding the Gypsy and Traveller Site Grant Programme for 2010/2011.

**2. Recommendation**

- 2.1 That RHAF note the update.

**3. Gypsy and Traveller Site Grant Programme 2010/2011.**

- 3.1 The Homes and Communities Agency was leading on a bidding round for 2010/11 for Gypsy and Traveller site grants. Bids were invited in February 2010 and bidding closed at the end of April 2010. Bidding was against a 2010/11 resource of £30 million (within a budget of £45 million).
- 3.2 The HCA has been required to make savings of £230 million for 2010/11 and has made reductions against four budgets, one of which is the Gypsy and Traveller Programme. The £30 million reserved for the 2010/11 bid round has been removed and the HCA will not be progressing the bids received. All bidders have been informed of the situation.
- 3.3 Regionally, six bids had been received. These were for projects in Rugby, Stoke on Trent, Telford (two bids), Coventry and Walsall.
- 3.4 The HCA will continue to explore delivery options for Gypsy and Traveller sites within the context of its Single Conversation work, with these and with other Local Authorities. A further update will be issued later this year.

**Contact Details:**

Rob Kilby, HCA  
tel: 0121 234 9971  
email: [Rob.Kilby@hca.gsx.gov.uk](mailto:Rob.Kilby@hca.gsx.gov.uk)

## Agenda Item 8

### Regional Housing Advisory Forum

21 June 2010

#### West Midlands Kick Start Partnership Update

#### 1 Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To update the Regional Housing Advisory Forum about the progress of the Kick Start Partnership since the last report provided to the RHE at its meeting on 18<sup>th</sup> February 2010.

#### 2. Recommendation

- 2.1 Members of the Regional Housing Advisory Forum are asked to note the contents of the report and support continued efforts to roll out the Kick Start Partnership and it's Programme in future years.

#### 3. Summary

- 3.1 The Partnerships 2009/10 programme delivered the following contribution to the output target set by the 2010/2014 Business Plan.

Table 1

Output	Business Plan 2010/14 Target	2009/10 programme contribution
No of homeowners offered housing advice	12800	4746
No of equity share loans made	3300	571 (value £8.75M)
No of repayment loans made	2700	181 (value £0.4M)
No of homeowners improving as a result of non public funded loans or grants	1200	594
<b>Total no of homes improved as result of the Kick Start Scheme</b>	7200	1346

- 3.2 In producing this output the Partnership committed a total of £20.88m regional funds from the £22.741m available to the Partnership in 2009/10<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> This total commitment includes the £1.2M approved roll forward of funds that are held on behalf of joining authorities commencing new local schemes from 2010/11.

The Partnership will roll forward £1.860M of uncommitted funds which in addition to, £7.39M committed funds, £12.71M regional allocation and some £0.2M of repaid loan income, will provide the Partnership with its total programme of £22.16M in 2010/11.

- 3.3 Roll out of the Partnership's programme across the Region is almost complete. Joining authorities are actively participating in the Partnership's governance and decision making processes. The Service Improvement Project is generating significant improvements to the way services are provided to homeowners and value for money to the public purse.
- 3.4 The Partnership has agreed a break of contract with Mercian ART Homes the current Financial Advice and Fund Management service provider. A service wind up plan is now in operation and contractual arrangements are due to end in September 2010. A new Fund Manager service provider has been procured and this service will commence operationally from July, following formal approval of appointment from Birmingham City Council Procurement Cabinet on 16<sup>th</sup> June 2010.
- 3.5 A framework contract for the supply of independent financial advice services is also being tendered by the Partnerships Accountable Body, Birmingham City Council. This service will operate on a sub regional basis and provide panels of Independent Financial Advisors from which local Home Improvement Agencies will draw down services to meet local needs from October 2010.

#### **4. 2009/10 Kick Start Scheme: Value for Money Assessment.**

##### 4.1 Part 1 / Home Improvement Agency Services (HIA's)

4.1.1 The objective of the Kick Start Scheme is to provide publicly funded loans to those in need and assistance to those who are able to self fund by enabling the use of personal resources and market loans. To operate the Kick Start Scheme HIA's (that are locally appointed by each local authority) are provided with a Delivery Fund from the Partnerships Regional allocation. The value for money test for this element of delivering the Kick Start scheme is undertaken through two measures:

- The delivery fund claimed by each authority as a % of the equity loan completions made. (The current benchmark for this test is 20%)
- The average cost per home improved, calculated by dividing the claimed delivery fund by the reported number of homes improved. (a benchmark is to be established for this test during 2010/11)

4.1.2 Table 2 (to be tabled at the meeting) provides the outcome by authority following the application of these tests using 2009/10 data. Members should note that those authorities demonstrating the poorest value for money are in the main newly joining authorities whose schemes started later than originally

planned (producing delayed completions into 2010/11) and which have also incurred some one off set up costs during this year of operations.

## 4.2 Financial Advice and Loan Set up and Management Fees

4.2.1 The table below sets out the costs for independent financial advice and fund management services which are to be secured as a result of the ongoing procurement projects in comparison with costs incurred by the Partnership in previous years with the current provider.

**Table 3**

	<b>Set up fees per loan (£'s)</b>	<b>financial advice per unit of assessment (£'s)</b>
<b>Current provider</b>	700	225
<b>New provider</b>	547	350 <sup>2</sup>

4.2.2 Members are asked to note that an overall saving of some £400,000 annually will be made by the Partnership for fund management services as a result of the new contract. Also, whilst the unit cost of financial advice is likely to increase, the scope of advice to be provided is wider and the number of assessments required to complete Kick Start programmes of similar scale will be lower. Therefore the Partnership expects to see substantially reduced costs and improved value for money across both parts of this service area in future years.

## 4.3 2010/2011 Programme and the Partnership's Business Planning for future years

4.3.1 Since the kick Start Partnership began in 2003/4 a significant number of critical steps have been taken by the local authority members to introduce the use of loans as a viable alternative to public grants and to provide a sustainable way to assist vulnerable homeowners to occupy decent homes.

4.3.2 The Region, through the Kick Start Partnership, has invested in an independent financial advice service that ensures that those who are socially vulnerable and have access to mainstream financial options are supported to use those options to fund decent home works whilst benefiting from the care and conduct of the Home Improvement Agency Service. In tandem a regional policy has been developed to define criteria for financial vulnerability and eligible works in order to ensure that only those homeowners with no mainstream alternative receive a publicly subsidised loan.

---

<sup>2</sup> This is an estimated figure using market research supporting the ongoing procurement project for Independent Financial Advisors via the regional framework contract.

- 4.3.3 A variety of delivery processes emerged from the Kick Start pilot and the best of these have been consolidated into one methodology known as 'The Kick Start Scheme'. A 'Joint Delivery Framework' a document that captures the agreed way of working into a single operational handbook has been produced and is shared across the regions local service providers as the way to operate Kick Start. A fund manager, to offer new loans and manage the Partnership's existing portfolios (that are now valued at some £25M), is in place. These arrangements mean that any authority, no matter what the scale of its local scheme activity, is using a high quality FSA regulated service provider free of procurement and day to day management responsibilities that have been centralised through the Partnership. These arrangements provide a number of efficiency and value for money benefits, and in future will make it possible for the Partnership to access private finance to increase the level of funding to meet growing demand for loans.
- 4.3.4 In governance terms the Partnerships organisational arrangements demonstrate high levels of effectiveness and participation in partnership working. As a result there are now many examples of good practice operating which for the most part may go unnoticed by those who are external to the membership. For example the local delivery plan appraisal process as undertaken by the membership to support local programming improvements and the sub regional Action Learning Sets that review the Kick Start scheme operations to develop and share best practice. These and others provide excellent examples of how local authorities in the West Midlands are working effectively together to increase value for money and produce service improvements in order to do more in the context of limited funds for the private sector housing agenda. It is important that the benefits secured by the Partnership as a result of Joint Working activities are properly recognised, as securing these benefits was one of the original output targets for the Kick Start Partnership. Also going forward joint working and pooling resources to deliver more in the context of less will be vitally important to meet the government's agenda across a number of core strategic themes.
- 4.3.5 In terms of the future the Partnership recognises that the new governments strategic objective, to reduce public spending in support of reducing the National Deficit, will have an impact upon the Partnership ability to implement its Business Plan. This is because the Partnerships current plans are set in the context of growth towards a substantial annual programme that proposes to make a tangible impact on reducing the rate of vulnerable homeowners occupying non decent homes and achieving a scale of operations that is capable of engaging private finance as soon as the commercial market is ready.
- 4.3.6 The Partnership recognises that the announced and proposed future funding cuts highlight the need to take a fundamental review of the Business Plan and that as part of this exercise reshaping and adjustment of the Partnerships organisational arrangements are also likely to be necessary. Executive Officers from the Partnership have started this process and will be consulting with the Partnership's Executive Board and wider operational membership to

form a consensus about the way forward in the context of the emerging financial environment.

- 4.3.7 Members of the Regional Housing Advisory Forum are asked to support the Kick Start Partnership during this period of transition by promoting the many successes that have been achieved by the Partnership and its programme when appropriate to key internal and external stakeholders. During this time it is also important that pertinent links are maintained between the Kick Start Partnership and any regional or sub-regional housing groups established as successor bodies to the Regional Housing Executive.

**Contact Details**

Susan Dawson

Programme Director

West Midlands Kick Start Partnership

Email [Susan.dawson@birmingham.gov.uk](mailto:Susan.dawson@birmingham.gov.uk)

T. 0121 303 6154

**Regional Housing Advisory Forum**

**Monday 21 June 2010**

**Housing and sub regional working**

**1. Purpose of the Report**

- 1.1 To inform RHAF of the progress to date on bringing together the work of the Sub Regional Housing Market Area Partnerships with the new six sub regions.
- 1.2 To invite RHAF members to update the Forum on the latest position in their sub region.

**2. Recommendation**

- 2.1 That RHAF note the report and update colleagues at the meeting on further progress on sub regional working.

**3. Background information to sub regional housing work**

- 3.1 The Regional Housing Strategy 2005 was submitted to GOWM/ODPM on 30 June 2005. The work undertaken by Sheffield University on the identification of sub regional housing market areas demonstrated a set of functional housing market areas which the then Regional Housing Board and Regional Housing Partnership found were reasonable to use as a basis for developing the Regional Housing Strategy. These were derived from a clear set of economically defined principles and tested a wide range of variables against house prices and incorporated as appropriate evidence from journey to work patterns.

The four sub regional Housing Market Areas (HMAs) were:-

- The North HMA (North Staffordshire)
- The West HMA (Herefordshire and Shropshire)
- The South HMA (Worcestershire and Stratford and Warwick)
- The Central HMA (the Conurbation of the Seven Mets plus South Staffordshire and North Warwickshire)

- 3.2 Within the Housing Market Areas, Partnerships were set up to implement the Regional Housing Strategy and co-ordinate activity on related and timely tasks. A series of briefing notes (6) were produced to steer the work of the Partnerships on key activities, such as:

1. Development of Sub Regional Housing Investment Strategies for the purposes of the Comprehensive Spending Review 2007

2. Commission and oversee the production of Strategic Housing Market Assessments
  3. Steer and co-ordinate cross LA working on a number of housing and housing related policy themes, i.e. choice based lettings, vulnerable groups issues, etc
  4. Monitor the delivery of the National Affordable Housing Programme and address any barriers to delivery as appropriate
  5. Support the submission of bids to the Gypsy and Traveller Site Grant Programme
  6. Undertake work to move towards the development of Sub Regional Housing Strategies
- 3.3 It is important to note that whilst the briefing notes produced by the then WMRA Secretariat steered the work of the Sub Regional HMA Partnerships, they operated independently in terms of structures, membership, both officer and member and frequency of meetings. For example, the West HMA had a well established joint member and officer Executive overseeing a larger Partnership.

#### **4. New Sub regional arrangements**

- 4.1 The West Midlands Leaders Board meeting of 19 January 2010 agreed on a set of sub regions for the purposes of nominating WMLB representatives to the Joint Strategy and Investment Board. These are:

Birmingham  
Black Country  
Coventry, Solihull and Warwickshire  
Staffordshire and Stoke  
Herefordshire, Shropshire and Telford  
Worcestershire

Subsequently at the Joint Strategy and Investment Board Away Day 31st Jan / 1 Feb 2010 it was agreed that the six sub regions would be used as the basic building blocks for economic investment planning.

- 4.2 In order to provide a further steer to Housing colleagues in local authorities, a joint WMLB and HCA letter was sent to all LA Chief Executives and Directors of Housing in March 2010 (see appendix A) setting out the expectation that the existing Sub Regional Housing Market Area Partnerships will be subsumed into the new sub regional arrangements.
- 4.3 WMLB action to progress the new sub regional arrangements has been inhibited by the changing and uncertain position nationally. Many RHAF members are facing the same or similar uncertainties. Nevertheless, it is judged important to take stock on the current sub regional situation and to consider what progress can be made.

## **5. Progress to date by each new Sub Region**

### **5.1 Birmingham**

5.1.1 Birmingham continues to work with key LA partners as appropriate, for example, on research commissioned through the Regional Housing Research Programme. Also as part of the City Region, joint work is also underway with the Black Country local authorities.

### **5.2 Black Country**

5.2.1 As detailed above the Black Country authorities are working with Birmingham as part of the City Region and also work across the four Black Country authorities through the Black Country Consortium and in particular the Joint Core Strategy, which is at public inquiry stage in July 2010.

### **5.3 Coventry, Solihull and Warwickshire (CSW)**

5.3.1 As with the Black Country Consortium, the Coventry, Solihull and Warwickshire Partnership is a pre existing partnership arrangement which has extended its remit beyond economic development to include housing and regeneration. This Partnership has already submitted a Growth Strategy to the Homes and Communities Agency.

### **5.4 Staffordshire and Stoke**

5.4.1 The North Housing Market Area meetings are currently on hold whilst further national and regional guidance is awaited. Discussions are currently underway regarding the possibility of the Staffordshire Housing Policy Officers Group becoming a Stoke / Staffordshire group

### **5.5 Herefordshire, Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin**

5.5.1 The current members of the West HMA (Herefordshire and Shropshire) have met with officers from Telford and Wrekin to discuss initial arrangements. Following this meeting Telford & Wrekin have formally been invited to join the West Housing Partnership at its Executive meeting on 23rd July 2010. At this meeting further discussion on future arrangements will take place with a view to agreeing an approach going forward.

### **5.6 Worcestershire**

5.6.1 Prior to the development of the new sub regional arrangements, Warwick DC and Stratford on Avon DC had decided to withdraw from the South Housing Market Area Partnership, mainly to strengthen their working relationship with the CSW Partnership. The Worcestershire authorities had also begun work on a Worcestershire Sub Regional

Housing Strategy and are working with the HCA on their Single Conversation.

## 6. Future working

- 6.1 Whilst there are undoubtedly a number of uncertainties currently regarding the housing priorities of the new coalition Government, it is clear that local authorities benefit from sub regional working and see the value in developing strong sub regional relationships. RHAF therefore wishes to encourage housing colleagues in local authorities to continue to contribute to the sub regional working of their authority to ensure the full range of housing needs are fully considered and understood alongside, economic, environmental and other social priorities.
- 6.2 There are currently 17 Single Conversation areas in the West Midlands and it is anticipated that all Local Investment Plans (LIP) will be completed by January 2011. It is important that these Single Conversations between local authorities and the Homes and Communities Agency and the subsequent Local Investment Plans are aggregated up to the sub regional level in order to highlight the key investment priorities and implications for sub regions. The Single Conversation areas are:

Worcestershire	– LIP to be agreed by January 2011
Warwickshire	– LIP to be agreed by November 2010
Southern Staffordshire	– LIP to be agreed by January 2011
Staffordshire Moorlands	– LIP to be agreed by December 2010
Stoke on Trent	– LIP to be agreed by December 2010
Newcastle Under Lyme	– LIP to be agreed by November 2010
Growth in Staffordshire	– LIP to be agreed by January 2011
<b>Telford</b>	<b>– LIP agreed March 2010</b>
Shropshire	– LIP to be agreed by December 2010
Herefordshire	– LIP to be agreed by January 2011
Wolverhampton	– LIP to be agreed by June 2010
<b>Walsall</b>	<b>– LIP agreed March 2010</b>
Sandwell	– LIP to be agreed by September 2010
Dudley	– LIP to be agreed by September 2010
Coventry	– LIP to be agreed by September 2010
<b>Solihull</b>	<b>– LIP agreed March 2010</b>
<b>Birmingham</b>	<b>– LIP agreed March 2010</b>

### Contact Details:

Emma Kiteley  
Tel: 0121 678 1037  
e.kiteley@wmleadersboard.gov.uk

John Pattinson  
Tel: 0121 678 1041  
j.pattinson@wmleadersboard.gov.uk