

Hastings Housing Strategy – Sub-Group Summary

Name of Subgroup	New housing supply and related infrastructure to create sustainable neighbourhoods
Lead Officer	Chris Hancock / Susan Hanson
Subgroup members (full names & Organisations)	<p>Chris Hancock – Hastings Borough Council (HBC) Susan Hanson – Hastings Borough Council Yasmeen Hussein – Foundations Brian Horton – Developers East Sussex (DES) /Sout East Housing and Development Group (HDG) Andy Seddon – Resident / Landlord / Housing professional Ken Davis - Hastings Urban Design Group, The Bohemia Design Studio, Transition Towns Hastings, Green Party, Energise Sussex Coast Neil Purvis – Resident Sarah Harris – Hastings Rental Health Housing Coop & Hastings Housing Alliance Simon Basey – Hastings Commons & Hastings Housing Alliance</p>

Thinking about the Strategy Vision for Everyone in Hastings to have a decent home to live in...

<p>Challenges <i>What are the challenges in meeting the Vision? What isn't working? How do we know? Add bullet points</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Affordability: what is actually the definition of affordable in reality when compared to local wages and the amount of housing benefit support people are entitled to? • Lack of suitable sites to develop new homes at scale, especially a lack of affordable land. • Getting the infrastructure in place so that new homes can be built quickly: current focus is on additional infrastructure at the end of a development; funding does not come upfront. • Too many empty homes. • Too much existing poor-quality stock, particularly Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs). • Challenging to secure site density: likely to need taller buildings; can be green; difficulties with car parking which needs to be balanced with access to public transport. Can be challenges with high rises and what people aspire to live in; often informed by issues to do with quality and management. • There is a lot of enthusiasm and potential for community led housing, but it needs council support. • Perception that affordable housing built locally is not allocated to local people; leads to suspicion and resistance to affordable homes being developed. • Article 4 direction for HMOs counterproductive to meeting housing need. • Increasing impact of climate change. • Making best use of housing stock: considerable amount of under-occupation in social homes. • Challenges on financial capacity of council. • Funding: Homes England capital grant spending, not enough and not flexible enough? • Housing Associations (HAs) are reluctant to develop given viability concerns. • Four Courts redevelopment should create more homes in the longer term but how do we manage short and intermediate term challenge of decanting homes, supporting tenants, but also managing reduction in allocations for people needing to leave Temporary Accommodation?
<p>What are the opportunities for us to meet the Vision? Add bullet points</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasing housing density on development sites and tapping into a wider pool of sites; conversion of ex-commercial buildings. • Live/work developments. • Modern Methods of Construction to speed up delivery and give access to 'trickier' sites. • Maximising housing on council and government owned land. • HBC could make more use of its Registered Provider (RP) status to access further capital grant from Homes England (note the new unitary council replacing HBC will probably have a Housing Revenue Account [HRA] enabling new council housing but this may be some years off) so that HBC's own RP could be a useful step in developing small /infill sites and possibly partnering with housing coops/community groups. • Working across HAs, Councils and Community Led Housing groups. • More joined up working between planning and housing – how can we create the capacity to be more proactive? • Upskilling local people to meet climate change ambitions. • Cost effective eco-retrofitting to existing housing (when void) by a fabric first approach following an internal strip out to the structure e.g. using timber frame or light steel rather than by costly external insulation- possibly grant funding could be sought for demonstration projects say involving RPs or private landlords working with local colleges and trainees. • Making best use of existing housing stock by incentivising moves for people under-occupying or with potential to provide lodgings.

- Encouraging accessibility across developments.
- Bringing empty homes back into use.
- Opportunities in the private rented sector as landlords leaving on the back of the Renters' Rights Bill. Can we provide the reassurances needed for them to stay in the market or to hand over management of homes to let at more affordable rents?
- Need to collectively identify sites for development, especially those owned by the council; opportunities for new build on infill sites; maximise opportunities for development on council owned and government land – develop a public land register.
- We need to work collectively to support local skills development to help get homes built, to retrofit existing homes and meet climate challenge.
- There is potential to explore and test alternative homes and community management approaches, e.g. self-governing groups; HAs could build and get local groups to manage.
- Real opportunity to champion the wider benefits of getting housing right; move away from solely looking at financial return; social value should be key measure.

What questions does the strategy need to answer? Add bullet points

- What is affordable?
- Who are key workers?
- How do we encourage someone to move from a larger home that they're under-occupying?
- How do we reduce the prevalence of Air BnB and second homes?
- How do we support Housing Associations to develop infill sites?
- How do we support developments to come forward at pace?
- How can planning support additional new development?
- How do we further enable and support community led housing?
- How do we maximise opportunities in the private rented sector as landlords exit the market?
- How do we support empty homes to be brought back into use?
- How do we ensure we can respond to climate change ambitions?

What are the non-negotiables? (What must be in the Strategy) Add bullet points

- Tackling Empty homes and other empty properties which could produce homes.
- Filling infill sites – where viable to do so; need to be mindful of land stability and flooding risks.
- Not being fearful of densification and using the strategy to show where that has worked well.
- Can't put all of our eggs in one basket – community led development but where can there be support from HAs to achieve this.
- Providing residents with truly affordable homes.
- Strong collaboration between housing and planning.
- Support and an open mind for different delivery models for both development and management across HAs, Councils and community led housing groups.
- Giving residents a voice in the management of their home.
- New homes must be delivered at Nationally Described Space Standards.
- Taking into account and prioritising the social value of proposals.

Areas for negotiation / development – what do we not agree on at this stage, or we don't know enough about it yet...?

What are the priorities? Add bullet points

- Not assuming one answer.
- Being open to share knowledge between all partners; we need to better understand the constraints and opportunities from all perspectives.

Are there any Cross Cutting Themes which apply right across the Strategy? – e.g., Climate Change / Inequalities / Community

- Climate change – housing supply as both cause and remedy; consider opportunities for new eco-housing plus training that tackles unemployment and reduces social inequality
- Links to employment opportunities
- Prioritising Social Value over financial return

Good Practice

Add any examples of good practice – links/ evidence/ data etc

- Bristol Housing Festival <https://www.housingfestival.org.uk/>
- www.latch.org.uk in Leeds, tackling empty homes
- An example of a secondary housing cooperative is Coop Homes (part of Richmond Housing Partnership Group) – an RP that promotes primary housing cooperatives <https://www.coophomes.coop/about-us/about-us/>
- Infill developments on former council housing estate green spaces/former garage blocks in Elmbridge Surrey (using Homes England capital grant funding & private finance raised by the RP)