

Consultation Publications Websites Oct 2009

Consultations

Title **Invitation to Submit Priorities for Regional Housing Statement 2010-2014**
Outline Arup with Addison Associates have been commissioned by EERA, HCA, EEFA and GO-East to produce a Regional Housing Statement to cover the period 2010-2014. An email has been sent to Heads of Housing, LSP co-ordinators/managers, Chairs of housing sub-regions, Co-ordinators of housing sub-regions, SP leads, Directors of Social Services, NHF, Space East, Shelter, DH Social Care, RSLs/Development partners. This included:
 * a letter of introduction from Graham Tomlinson at EERA;
 * an Invitation to Submit Priorities;
 * details of the three stakeholder workshops to be held around the region
 * an RSVP to confirm your attendance at the workshops.
Launch date 23rd September
Deadline date Invitation to Submit Priorities and RSVP to the stakeholder events requested by Monday **12th Oct**
Link to any further info Briefing note for CRHB meeting 2 Oct 09

Title **Community Infrastructure Levy**
Outline CLG have published detailed proposals and draft regulations for the introduction of the Community Infrastructure Levy. Horizons is coordinating a county-wide response. Anna Keyes is gathering responses from districts via Variable Tariff steering group (mainly planners). Note for CRHB prepared to enable discussion and provoke responses to Anna coming to CRHB Oct meeting. Deadline for Anna is today's date but can be a little flexible to allow further responses provided received by **12th Oct**. Heads of planning to sign off County response by 15 Oct 09.
Launch date 30 July 2009
Deadline date 23 October (govt deadline)
Link to any further info <http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/planningandbuilding/pdf/communitylevyconsultation.pdf>
 Briefing note for CRHB meeting 2 Oct 09

Title **Improving Access to Social Housing for Service Personnel**
Outline This Ministry of Defence consultation paper seeks views on the level of support offered to service personnel, their families and veterans, including help for forces leavers to get onto the housing ladder and fairer access to social housing.
Launch date July 2009
Deadline date 31 October
Link to further info <http://www.mod.uk/DefenceInternet/DefenceNews/DefencePolicyAndBusiness/PriorityHousingForInjuredServicePersonnel.htm>

Title **Shaping the Future of Care Together**
Outline Shaping the Future of Care Together sets out a vision for a new care and support system. The Green Paper highlights the challenges faced by the current system and the need for radical reform, to develop a National Care Service that is fair, simple and affordable for everyone.
Launch date 14 July 2009
Deadline date 13 November
Link to any further info http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH_102338

Title **Cambridgeshire County Council Community Engagement Strategy**
Outline Over the last few months the County Council has been developing a new strategy for Community Engagement which sets out our ambitions for ensuring that people in Cambridgeshire have the skills and confidence to take part in decision-making, and to be able to shape their local area and the services they receive, whether they live in a rural community, a market town or in our cities. Our proposed objectives are to:
 Keep communities informed
 Support people to be involved in their local communities
 Promote local democracy
 Support community involvement in shaping places
 Support community involvement in shaping services
 Improve our understanding of how our communities work
 Coordinate our community engagement activity

	<p>We now need to test out the strategy and its underpinning action plan with you and all our partners. Will this strategy and action plan successfully achieve the above objectives? It is important that as many people as possible have the opportunity to take part in the consultation, so I would be grateful if you could please pass on the information to all relevant colleagues or contacts to ensure they are able to respond. (Mike Davey)</p>
Launch date.....	1 September 2009
Deadline date.....	24 November 2009
Link to any further info	www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/communityengagementconsultation

Title	Government Allocations Review
Outline	The government has announced a review into the allocations system which in addition to ensuring that those in greatest need are the first priority, also gives local authorities more flexibility. It proposes allowing councils to include extra criteria in their allocations process, e.g. attracting people with particular skills into an area or giving priority to those who have been on the waiting list for a particularly long time. Alongside, the government are looking at ways to prevent people from abusing their tenancies by illegally subletting their homes. CIH are writing the guidance for CLG on preventing and detecting illegal subletting and would be interested to hear from organisations about the strategies they use to avoid this.
Launch date.....	31 July 2009
Deadline date.....	23 October 2009
Link to any further info	http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/housing/pdf/1301299.pdf

Title	Reform of Council Housing Finance
Outline	CLG has published the consultation paper heralded by Housing Minister John Healey when he promised last month to "dismantle" the council housing finance system. Supplemented by several background reports, the consultation paper proposes that: * the government moves to implement a self-financing model for councils with a start date of April 2012 debt is redistributed by assessing the value of the existing stock as a business and either making a payment to each local authority, or requiring a payment from each local authority depending whether its current debt is higher or lower than the assessed value * management and maintenance costs should be 5% higher than current levels and major repairs costs should be based on an uplift of 24% for newly arising need. The report concludes that the ongoing post-decent homes backlog of works is 6 billion and the non-decency backlog is between 1.4 billion and 2.9 billion the ring-fence be retained receipts be retained locally, with 75% having to be spent on housing. * CIH will be producing a detailed response before the consultation closes on 27 October and welcomes input from members
Launch date.....	21 July 2009
Deadline date.....	27 October 2009
Link to any further info	http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/housing/pdf/1290620.pdf

Title	Draft housing market bulletin
Outline	Update on Nov 2008 first sub-regional housing market bulletin
Launch date.....	Aiming for 9 Oct, but await responses for sub-regional colleagues
Deadline date.....	7 Oct 09
Link to any further info	First bulletin available at: http://www.cambridgeshirehorizons.co.uk/documents/publications/horizons/november_2008_bulletin_1.pdf
Action agreed by CRHB.....	CSHG, SHMA project team and enablers all contributing – <i>included on list for awareness</i>

Title	Consultation on development of SP floating support services
Outline	Joe Keegan has sent round a short questionnaire relating to the development of Supporting People floating support services.
Launch date.....	28 Sept
Deadline date.....	16 October
Link to any further info	N/A
Action agreed by CRHB.....	Have sent to enablers and CSHG to respond as individual districts. (Paper copies for CRHB)

Publications and announcements

Title	Homelessness JSNA for Cambridgeshire
Outline	Executive summary and full JSNA was circulated for comment in September, with deadline for comments late Sept.
Gauge of housing relevance.....	Very relevant
Web link	Not yet finalised

Date published.....	Not yet finalised
Title.....	John Healey: Housing associations must raise their game in the downturn
Outline	Housing Minister John Healey called on housing associations to raise their game and do more to create new apprenticeship opportunities and help people get on the housing ladder and stay in their homes during the downturn. He confirmed that any housing association bidding for a share of the £7.5bn available for affordable housing will for the first time now be required to offer apprenticeship and local job opportunities. This is set to create 1,500 apprenticeship places over the next two years, on top of the 1,300 places expected through the Prime Minister's £1.5bn Housing Pledge - which could take the total of new apprenticeship places to nearly 3,000 over the next two years. Mr Healey also called on housing associations to do more to fulfil their social role during the downturn, and help more of those struggling to pay their mortgages to stay in their homes by going through the Mortgage Rescue Scheme. Between April and June this year, 605 households applied to sell and rent back their homes through the Government's Mortgage Rescue Scheme - but only 46 received an offer from an RSL. Having this month put in place a new specialist team to help fast-track applications, the minister today confirmed that the HCA has been given greater leeway to offer higher grants to housing associations looking to buy and rent back properties to struggling homeowners - these grants will be raised from 55% to 65% of the property purchase price with immediate effect.
Web link	http://www.communities.gov.uk/news/corporate/1343118
Date published.....	24 September 2009
Title.....	HCA's East of England regional investment statement
Outline	The Homes and Communities Agency has published information on it's priorities and activities in the East of England. The regional investment statement and scheme listing for July 2009 have been added
Gauge of housing relevance.....	Very
Web link	http://www.homesandcommunities.co.uk/eastengland
Date published.....	18 September 2009
Title.....	Room for innovation, says Audit Commission
Outline	Today the Commission is publishing a detailed guide to how councils can manage their assets better. It is based on the experience of six case study councils that are using their land and property assets in innovative and creative ways to maximise their value to the public. The guide follows the recent Audit Commission study Room for improvement which found that councils in England could make much better use of their £250 billion worth of land and property. As Room for Improvement showed, local authorities and other local public bodies, could take a more rigorous and strategic view of their property portfolios. For example: Lancashire County Council: uses an annual property performance report to help rationalise how it uses land and buildings. The Council saves £450,000 a year in maintenance costs and has improved the quality of its buildings, and cut emissions of CO2. Sevenoaks District Council: secured higher savings than comparable local authorities by getting councillors and officers to work more closely to scrutinise assets. By disposing of surplus property the council cut its maintenance backlog by £221,000 and made revenue savings of £304,000 a year. Wandsworth Borough Council: gave its assets rental values so managers knew how much it costs the council to occupy property; as a result they have been more creative, made savings and maximised capital receipts.
Gauge of housing relevance.....	Fair to good
Web link	http://www.audit-commission.gov.uk/localgov/goodpractice/useofresources/Pages/goodpracticeassetmanagent.aspx
Date published.....	22 September 2009
Title.....	Refugees and Migration
Outline	CIH and hact have launched the materials from their project <i>Opening Doors</i> , which worked with eleven housing associations to develop services for refugees and new migrants. A range of material is now on the website and it is also the subject of <i>Housing Practice</i> magazine, distributed in August.
Web link.....	http://www.cih.org/policy/openingdoors
Date published.....	29 Sept 2009
Title.....	Strategy for Sustainable Construction
Outline	Department for Business, Innovation and Skills has published a progress report on the strategy. The strategy itself is a joint industry and Government initiative intended to promote leadership and behavioural change, as well as delivering benefits to both the construction industry and the wider economy.
Gauge of housing relevance.....	Fairly relevant
Web link	http://www.berr.gov.uk/whatwedo/sectors/construction/sustainability/page13691.html
Date published.....	15 Sept 2009

Title	Changes to Repossession Rules
Outline	Housing Minister John Healey has announced a change to the court rules coming into effect on 1 October. Lenders will have to inform local authorities when they commence repossession action against homeowners in their area. The change will mean that local authorities can take action to help those at risk of losing their home rather than waiting for homeowners to make contact. The government has written to all council leaders to say that when they hear from a lender that a resident is facing repossession they should make contact and offer help and advice. Help could include referring them to free debt and legal advice, offering assistance with making benefit claims for Support for Mortgage Interest or assessing them for the mortgage rescue scheme.
Web link	http://www.communities.gov.uk/news/corporate/1346541 http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/housing/lendernotificationrepossession
Date published	29 Sept 2009

Title	Further Funding for Council Housing
Outline	John Healey has launched a second round of funding for council house building. To obtain funding councils will have to demonstrate that they will be creating new apprenticeship schemes as part of their bid. The £180m of investment should provide around 1200 new homes and safeguard jobs in the construction industry.
Web link	http://www.communities.gov.uk/news/corporate/1346486
Date published	29 Sept 2009

Title	Housing in England
Outline	The latest data from the Survey of English Housing has been published, revealing that home ownership is the most common tenure although it has fallen slightly, and the number of people renting social homes is unchanged however there is a small increase in the number of private renters.
Web link	http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/corporate/statistics/housingengland200708 http://www.cih.org/events/seminars/affordablehomes09/
Date published	29 Sept 2009

Title	Domestic Violence Protection Orders
Outline	Domestic Violence Protection Orders are to be introduced which will enable police to force perpetrators of domestic violence to leave their homes for up to a fortnight. During this time advisors will help victims to make decisions about their future.
Web link	http://press.homeoffice.gov.uk/press-releases/tough-new-powers http://www.cih.org/training/courses/event.php?ID=480
Date published	29 Sept 2009

Title	Homes For Old Age Need A Radical Rethink
Outline	Housing in the future needs to give older people more independence, better choice and the ability to maintain friendships and community networks, according to <i>Homes For Our Old Age</i> , a new report published by CABE.
Web link	http://www.cabe.org.uk/publications/homes-for-our-old-age
Date published	4 Sept 2009

Title	Community Empowerment
Outline	A new report looking in depth at community empowerment has been published by CLG. It looks at how empowered people feel, levels of civic involvement and ability to influence.
Web link	http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/corporate/statistics/citizenshipsurvey200708empower
Date published	29 Sept 2009

Title	Making Money Easier
Outline	A set of accessible guides to help people with learning disabilities with budgeting and accessing banking has been published by United Response and the Association for Real Change. The guides are all available on the website or to order free of charge from info@unitedresponse.org.uk
Web link	http://www.making-money-easier.info/
Date published	29 Sept 2009

Title	Mind the Gap
Outline	A new discussion paper published by TCPA on behalf of the Smith Institute and Price Waterhouse Coopers LLP looks at housing supply and predicts a shortage of up to 1 million homes by the end of 2010.
Web link	http://www.tcpa.org.uk/resources.php?action=resource&id=639
Date published	29 Sept 2009

Title	HCA Corporate Plan
Outline	About half of the 260,000 new homes predicted to be built in England over this year and next will be directly funded by the HCA. The HCA corporate plan published this week details how the agency will directly fund some 117,000 homes and unlock further funding for others.
Web link	http://www.homesandcommunities.co.uk/half-of-new-homes-directly-funded-by-hca.htm http://www.cih.org/events/conferences/developmentregeneration09/
Date published	29 Sept 2009

Title	Tenant Satisfaction Up Across the Housing Association Sector
Outline	Housing association tenants are more satisfied with their homes, their neighbourhoods, and their landlords than they were ten years ago, according to findings from the Existing Tenants Survey 2008, carried out by the Tenants Services Authority (TSA). The survey showed only 12% of housing association tenants want to own their own home, down from 32% a decade ago. The TSA attributed this to tenants' greater satisfaction with their current housing situation, along with high house prices and the unpredictability of the housing market. A CIH-commissioned YouGov survey in May 2009 reflects a similar trend. The survey revealed that although 70% of respondents said they still believed homeownership to be a good long term investment, many people are looking again at the issue of home ownership. Our survey also showed that people aged between 18 and 24 years are less preoccupied with homeownership and probably more realistic in their housing aspirations. Just 37% of them said they believed homeownership was their ideal living situation. However, whilst the overall satisfaction levels are high across the housing association sector, TSA Chief Executive Peter Marsh cautioned that there was no room for complacency, as the survey showed one in five tenants felt their landlord does not listen to their views, and 18% of supported housing tenants want to move because of poor services.
Web link	http://www.tenantservicesauthority.org/server/show/nav.14348
Press release	http://www.tenantservicesauthority.org/server/show/ConWebDoc.19418/changeNav/13640
Date published	21 Sept 2009

Title	OFT Fines Building Industry For Bid Rigging
Outline	The Office of Fair Trading (OFT) has fined 103 building firms a total of 129.5 million for rigging bids for building contracts. Building firms penalised include major players such as Kier Group, Galliford Try, Connaught, Balfour Beatty and Carillion. The ruling follows a five-year investigation by OFT.
Web link	http://www.oft.gov.uk/news/press/2009/114-09
Date published	21 Sept 2009

Title	Lib Dems Propose New 'Mansion Tax'
Outline	At the Liberal Democrats' annual conference Acting Leader Vince Cable outlined the party's plans to introduce a new tax on anyone owning a home worth more than 1m. The new tax would form part of a plan to cut taxes for people on low and middle incomes but has been criticised as "unworkable" by the Conservatives.
Web link	http://www.guardian.co.uk/politics/2009/sep/21/cable-1m-home-tax-lib-dems
Date published	21 Sept 2009

New websites

Website	Mortgage Help – "it's your home, let's keep it that way"
Purpose	Having problems with your mortgage payments? Facing the prospect of repossession can be frightening, but it's important to remember that you are not alone. There is a lot of help available from government, from lenders and from advice agencies. The information here will give you the tools you need to prevent your home being repossessed. You'll also find stories from some of the 300,000 homeowners who have already received help and advice. Your action plan By selecting the option below that is closest to your own situation, you can see some simple steps you can take to help you keep your home, and find out the help that's available to you. You'll also be able to read the real stories of people who have been in a similar situation to you.
Agency	Directgov
Web link	http://mortgagehelp.direct.gov.uk/default.aspx