

## New sub-regional housing strategy

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### Purpose of report

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On the basis of discussions at and since the CRHB away-day in February, to suggest a plan for a new sub-regional housing strategy for 2008, to be reviewed and republished in 2011.

### Decision / Action

To discuss the approach set out and suggest any improvements.

If overall approval, to suggest best time and process to involve Councillors

### Introduction

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It is important we fit the sub regional strategy in with other changes across the region as seamlessly as possible. This will save a lot of wasted time and effort having to repeatedly update the strategy, or having to revise it after other key documents are changed. However there will never be a "perfect moment" and we will need to agree the timing and go for it otherwise we'll end up never producing a new strategy.

However it is clear that our existing strategy is now well out of date and we need a new focus and direction for the sub region, building on its clear and agreed principles. We also need to respond to the outcomes of our SHMA, have a new set of investment priorities to use in future, reassess and re-state our sub regional resources of all kinds, and agree a new action plan to progress our sub regional plans.

## Timeline

		2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013+	End date
Regional	RSS				Adopt Summer. Review starts Autumn.				2011			2031
	RES	2004										2021
	IRS				End 2007							
	HC bid rounds	2004	2006	2006	2008	2008		2011				
	RHS											
County	Suffolk LAA											
	Cambs LAA											
	Extended LAAs for each county											
	Suffolk CAA <sup>1</sup>											
	Cambs CAA											
	Suffolk SP											
	Cambs SP											
Sustainable Community Strat	City SCS	2004										
	SCDC SCS	2004										
	ECDC SCS	2004				New one						
	Hunts SCS											
	Fenland SCS											
	West Suffolk SCS (includes St Ed's and Forest Heath) – rolling review											2016
Local housing strategies	City Housing strategy	2004										
	SCDC Housing strategy	2004										
	ECDC Housing strategy	2003										
	Hunts Housing strategy											
	Fenland Housing strategy	2004										
	St Ed's Housing strategy	2004										
	Forest Heath Housing strategy											
Local Development Frameworks	City Core Strategy					Submit Oct 08	Adopt Dec 09					
	SCDC											
	ECDC Core Strategy					Submit Apr 08	Adopt June 09					
	Hunts Core Strategy					Submit Apr 08	Adopt June 09					
	Fenland Core Strategy					Adopt June 08						
	St Ed's Forest Heath											
S-R hsg work	Existing (2004-2008/9)											
	First new one (2008-11)											
	Second new one (2011-13+)											
	HMA first outcomes											

<sup>1</sup> The Local Government White Paper and the subsequent Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Bill set out a new performance framework for local services. The White Paper signalled a new stage in reforming local services with a new performance framework including Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA) at its heart.

CAA will focus on place rather than the individual bodies responsible for local services. It will look across local government, housing, health, education and community safety. It will be in place from April 2009, covering all local public services and replaces CPA.

Next virtually completely “clear” year is **2011**:

- RSS review starts in Autumn 2007 inform the new 2011-2031 RSS
- RHS runs to 2010 as it stands.
- 2008-11 HC bid round over, new round launching.
- Most current housing strategies over by then, and all Cambridgeshire sustainable community strategies (West Suffolk has a rolling programme of review so no specific end date).
- Cambs and Suffolk SP strategies run to 2010.
- County LAA's run to different dates (Cambs ends 2009, Suffolk 2008)
- All LDFs run to different dates, 3 being adopted in 2009.

So 2011 represents a “clear break” in all strategies. Suggest we aim to prepare a new sub regional strategy then. However, we need to get from 2007 to 2011. All the Cambridgeshire authorities will want a new sub regional strategy to support their district work. If this were prepared for 2008, this would fit with the Cambridgeshire local housing strategies and “roughly” with St Ed's and Forest Heath, who can link as they see fit. Also in 2008, the sub regional strategy can use the evidence provided by the 2007 initial SHMA as its needs base, and can support our bids in 2008-11 HC bid round.

So propose we devise a new three-year sub regional housing strategy to be effective from **April 2008** and next one to be published **2011**.

## Structure

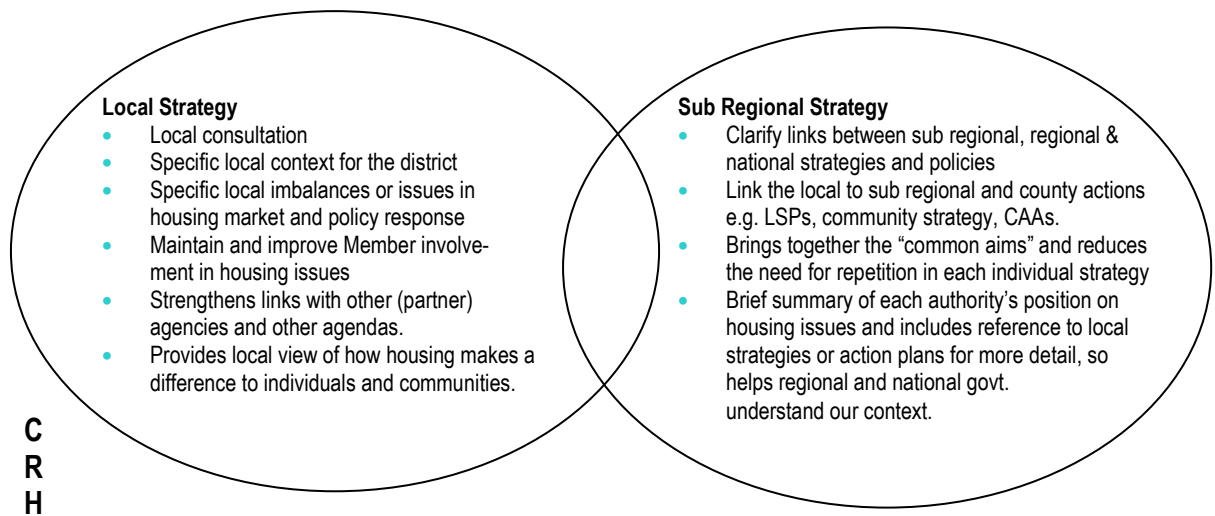
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One succinct strategy summarising a range of housing topics for the sub region, with 30 page limit and following the “fit for purpose” criteria. Our overall aims are to:

- Provide a foundation stone for local housing strategies and/or action plans, which enable districts to consult on specific issues and actions for each district.
- Enable broad consultation on shared housing issues across the sub region, e.g. through existing fora such as planners, developers, Supporting People, Housing Corporation etc. So the sub regional strategy gives us an agreed approach to housing issues with our partners, underpinning local projects and actions.
- Support districts in understanding and applying current thinking in housing, changes, partnerships, funding and links to agendas such as LAAs, LSPs, CAAs and MAAs, to strengthen housing's input.
- Gather resources together across the sub region, share information and finance, innovations and partnerships to resolve issues and draw resources into our sub region to meet our residents housing needs, and using the SHMA as our evidence base.
- Draw together an action plan for work on sub regional housing issues (incorporating the CHRB action plan) which provides a framework for the local actions to be developed by each district.

## What can local and sub regional strategies do?

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Highlights of what CRHB said the S-R strategy needs to do:

- Identify strategic / headline issues for the sub region. Can become a list of "5 big issues". Need to focus over the next 5 years – 3 or 4 big things – priorities from a long list.
- Recognise differences and strengths. Don't want it general or bland. Linkages with wider strategies.
- Identify risks – what could go wrong? Good way to prioritise.
- Encapsulate national and regional agendas
- LAs contribute through the action plan (possibly separate for each LA?) with sub groups and task teams set up to work on specific issues and feed back into steering group.
- Can also clarify links to LAAs/ CAAs/ MAAs and target figures for these, so we incorporate monitoring outcomes into the sub regional strategy's action plan and help support the County and local documents and targets.

## Principles of our new approach

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- A strong sub regional approach, strategy, image and plan.
- Set out our long-term and cross-tenure approach to housing – setting a vision for 15 or 20 years in the future.
- Accessible and readable by "normal" people, while still aiming to demonstrate to partners and government agencies our clear and focussed, needs-based approach to housing issues.
- Highlight our achievements in sub regional working, and examples of good practice.
- Create strong link to local housing strategies for consultation, input, information, monitoring and local variations in policy, context.
- Need to key into Local Strategic Partnerships and their Sustainable Community Strategies, Local Area Agreements and funding related to them, along with forthcoming Comprehensive Area Assessments replacing CPA from April 2009 and possibly MAAs (as per Green Paper).

- Highlight and strengthen links with other professions, particularly planners and economic development. It can look broader geographically and make the links with other agencies who cover different areas such as PCTs, police forces, social care agencies etc. Explain links between different strategies and agendas and how we can help achieve each other's visions by working together.
- Promote efficiency and reduce repetition - work together to get max value from each LA and each person's time, and from each housing resource available to us.

## **Suggested structure for 2008-11**

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Suggest we want a snappy, accessible document that summarises and signposts, but does not replicate other documents (e.g. the HMA, local strategies, SP strategy, BV reviews etc) but probably needs to quote from them to show the links. Within each "topic" section, there needs to be some text on:

- Needs - mainly for SHMA.
- Resources of all types – money, partnerships, land, projects.
- Vision and priorities – where are we trying to get to by 5/ 10/ 15 years in the future? What national, regional and local targets have been set? (link to LAA/CAA etc).
- Options – are there choices to be made, do we need to set out the options selected, for each area.
- Risks – optional section which tackle major risks if we do not achieve our priorities, links to the new approach to CAAs which is "risk-based" so supports links to the Audit Commission's agenda.
- Action plan – key actions for the sub-region (via champions and task groups), remembering LAs will still have their own action plans and the S-R strategy needs to focus on sub regional working as much as possible. Can use CRHB action plan as appropriate.

Then we need a SMART action plan, our investment priorities and an investment plan for the next 3 years minimum.

CSHG suggests we start work on the strategy from this "end" i.e. we start bringing together existing action plans and creating a new action plan to provide a foundation for the text. This means we can crack on with the actions (and document actions already under way) rather than waiting for publication before we can start to make a real difference.

Given an overall target of 30 pages (based on the old FFP criteria – not a "fixed" target but a useful guide), suggest the following guideline layout:

<b>Section</b>	<b>Outline</b>	<b>Pages</b>
Context	What is the sub regional strategy for? Who is it aimed at? Lifecycle and purpose	1
Partnership and stakeholder involvement	Importance of partnership working, Consultation on sub regional strategy, Link to local strategies and local consultation	2
Strategic links	National housing strategies and consultations (CLG, HC/EP, GoEast etc) Regional spatial, economic and housing strategies New planning systems, LDFs Supporting People strategies in Suffolk and Cambs	4

Briefing Note for CRHB  
Subject: New sub-regional housing strategy

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<b>Section</b>	<b>Outline</b>	<b>Pages</b>
	Sub regional homelessness strategy, local homelessness strategies Sustainable Community Plans, LAAs, change to CAAs, possible MAAs	
Defining our housing market(s)		1
Economic and demographic context		1
Dwelling profile and stock condition		1
House prices and trends	Includes hot- & cold-spots in housing market, & affordability	1
Social rented housing, housing registers, homelessness		2
Intermediate tenures including key worker housing		1
The private rented and buy-to-let markets		1
Overall housing need and demand across the whole market		1
Specific housing needs	Including BME; migrant worker issues; Gypsy and Traveller; housing for young and older people, and housing for people with support or specialist needs	4
Track record of affordable housing delivery in the past		1
Current and future supply of all homes and of affordable homes, link to land availability		1
How healthy is our market?		2
SMART action table (summary?)		4
Investment priorities and investment plan (from EERA consultation June 2007)		2
<b>Total</b>		<b>30</b>

So it has to be snappy!

Also, hoping to meet with Go-East to confirm our approach, but no success yet.

S Beecroft, 23 January 2009