

## **CRHB 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2010 – Spotlight on the SHMA**

**Author:** Trevor Baker, Cambs County Council Research Group

**Date:** 2/09/10

### **Purpose**

This report is intended to give CRHB a broad overview of the work of the SHMA Project Team over the previous year, current work and future planned work.

### **Structure**

The following aspects of the work will be covered in turn:

- Annual SHMA updates
- Restructuring to make the SHMA more useable
- Affordable housing need figures
- Ad hoc work
- New development surveys
- Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment (GTANA)
- Links to JSNA
- **Interactive mapping through Cambridgeshire Atlas**
- Budgets (Sue Beecroft)
- The future without the RSS

### **Annual SHMA updates**

The timetable for the annual update is dictated by when data updates become available. Work on individual chapters can take place throughout the year, but can only be brought together to calculate the affordable housing needs figures at the end of the calendar year.

Some chapters are not updated annually, notably the general context ones using Census data.

All chapters updated in 2010 use 2008/09 data or the latest available, which could be the Census in some cases. We are currently working on updating to 2009/10 figures. This is with a target to publish affordable housing needs figures in March 2011 and annually in March from then on.

### **Restructuring to make the SHMA more useable**

The SHMA has followed three broad phases:

- Produce a robust and credible SHMA
- Strengthen the SHMA to ensure the use of the most robust and relevant sources of data, unify the time periods of data used etc
- Improve user-friendliness and readability of the SHMA

We are currently in the third phase.

The restructuring has two parts; having a standard template structure for each chapter, and consolidating some chapters, cutting out unnecessary detail and so on.

The standard template as agreed by the SHMA Project Team is:

- A one - two page summary of key points
- A short chapter including key data tables (target 4 pages, maximum 8 pages)
- Appendix of data tables and other detail

This approach is intended to give easy access to the key information without losing the detail which is considered to be valuable. Polly has produced a sample chapter based on this new template (homelessness) and others will follow soon.

A page of FAQs will be added to the SHMA page on the Horizons website to help with making the SHMA more useable

### **Affordable housing need figures**

Considerable work has gone in to reworking the model of affordable housing needs figures. This was necessitated by the move to CBL, but also had an aim to remove the need to run a household survey by using published source. We have also published the figures in the exact format as in the CLG guidance. This is to minimize challenge, though that does not reflect any lack of confidence in our previous presentation format.

The use of CBL data necessitated a rethink because of the banding involved. The SHMA Project Team took a decision that on average the wait should be five years (in line with the guidance) but that bands A – C should be cleared within 3 years. The effect of this is that those on Band D may wait longer than 5 years. Our modeling shows this could be up to 7 years in some cases.

The overall effect of the methodological changes is that overall need figures for affordable housing in the districts tends to be lower, though they all show a need considerably above 40% for affordable housing.

The move to secondary sources has covered:

- Overcrowding – using the Survey of English Housing (regional level) rather than a survey
- Concealed households – CLG estimates at district level.

Even the largest housing needs survey will include a very small sample of people in these two categories.

Our modeling is designed to produce a conservative estimate of affordable housing need.

This is the first year for which data for Forest Heath and St Edmundsbury will be published.

### **Ad hoc work**

Papers are produced on ad hoc subjects to inform CRHB and others, to explore areas that may need to be included in the SHMA and to provide background information that is to be used in the SHMA. Papers produced for CRHB in the previous year were:

- Homelessness
- LHA changes

Other ad hoc work has included:

- Older Peoples JSNA, particularly on fuel poverty
- Monitoring of house prices and sales for the Great Cambridge Partnership (GCP) quarterly monitoring. Also used by Cambridgeshire Together.
- Planning appeals for Huntingdonshire (Upwood) and Forest Heath

### **New development surveys**

New development surveys have been carried out in Fenland and East Cambridgeshire working in partnership with those districts and Cambs Horizons. Fenland is complete and will be published shortly, results for East Cambs are being analysed.

Polly has begun to make a comparison of results for different areas, such as whether factors are specific to districts or common across new developments in all areas.

Surveys in Forest Heath and St Edmundsbury are planned (before the 2011 Census) with Cambridge City after that.

### **Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment (GTANA)**

Work on this is underway, with data collection, discussions with key parties such as Travellers Liaison Officers and planners to ensure everything practical is taken into consideration. The data and other information will feed into a demographic model and the report is due end of October.

### **Links to JSNA**

JSNA in the previous year which have involved housing work include:

- Homelessness
- Older people
- New developments
- Travellers

There are increasingly strong links between the JSNA process and the SHMA, although the move to GP commissioning in the health white paper will almost

certainly require a rethink. Duplication is largely avoided and cross-reference used between the two assessments.

A JSNA website is on target to be in place at the end of September. Following that the Research Group has a 6 month project to develop that website into an 'information portal' which will include links to the SHMA and other needs assessments, core data sets such as demography and Instant Atlases including housing and others such as Indexes of Multiple Deprivation.

### **Interactive mapping through Instant Atlas**

An interactive mapping facility is being developed, whereby data such as average house prices for a district or ward can be seen by hovering the cursor over that area. The target for completion is end of September 2010. This will be available through links from the SHMA page on Horizons website, the County Council webpage and, later, the Information Portal.

### **Budgets (Sue Beecroft)**

The SHMA Project Team has considered the budget situation. There is a need for the SHMA information, and even more so with the loss of the RSS, but the obvious budget constraints. The use of secondary data for the affordable needs calculation negates the need for a household survey at a cost of £70,000 - £100,000 across the sub-Region every 5 years.

### **The future without the RSS**

The SHMA will have to change and probably to include making estimates of overall housing need. The SHMA Project Team have this in hand, though there are no concrete plans as yet, and the demography team at the CCC Research Group will be involved in discussions about estimating overall housing need.

### **A note on Hometrack**

The Research Group is working to see whether data needs to be purchased from CACI (used in the affordability chapter) or whether the CACI-sourced information available on the Hometrack system is sufficient. In general, the subscription to Hometrack allows the work to be carried out more efficiently, quicker and in some cases at a lower level than without using Hometrack.

### **Conclusion**

The SHMA is a changing and live document which we strive to improve continually. The need for regular updating identified in the CLG guidance is demonstrated by the changing figures in for affordable housing need in line with wider economic and policy changes. The future is likely to bring more changes, especially around the loss of the RSS. The SHMA Project Team take a strategic view of the changing role of the SHMA.