

**Minutes of HomesWest RSL/LA Meeting
Held on Monday 14 April 2008
at Somer Housing Group, The Maltings, Bath 2.00 pm**

		Action
1.	Welcome and Introductions	
1.	Present:	
1.1	Jane Alderman JA Somer (meeting Chair)	
	Maggie Waller MMW (Minutes)	
	Geoff Fox GF Ark Consultancy (part of meeting)	
	Caroline Hughes CH Arcadia	
	Mike Day MD Arcadia	
	Stephen Lodge SL Aster	
	Nikki Tillett NT Aster	
	Mischi Wilk MW B&NES	
	Tim Southall TS Bristol City Council	
	Barry Wallen BW Bristol City Council	
	Asad Butt AB Housing Corporation	
	Trevor Ives TI Housing Corporation	
	Nick Bacon NB Inscape	
	Simon Wade SW Knightstone	
	Simon Smedley SS Somer (part of meeting)	
	Karen Ross KR South Gloucester	
	Simon Parks SP Sovereign	
	Phil Stephens PS Sovereign	
2.	Apologies:	
2.1	Mike Grist MAG Somer (Chair)	
	Marcia Gillings MVG Somer	
	James Gibson JG Sovereign	
	Monira Chowdhury MC Bristol City Council	
	Kay Topazio KT North Somerset	
	Will Bryant WB North Somerset	
	Lynn Collingbourne LC South Gloucester	
3	Affordable Home Ownership paper	
3.1	Geoff Fox of Ark Consultancy presented a study prepared for the WOE Partnership which addressed issues of affordability in the intermediate housing market. .	
3.2	The purpose of the brief was to study affordability in the intermediate housing market. It looked at levels of income on schemes current and recently completed schemes and the diversity of products on offer. However the main thrust of the report looks at how affordability should be measured for S106 sites in particular in the future..	
3.4	New Build Home Buy (NBHB) rent impacts significant on affordability. The affordability measure used is based on housing costs amounting to no more than 25% of a households gross income in line with Housing Market Assessment requirements. It also works on the basis that if a household can afford a market rent they can provide for themselves within the market. Thus those people housed should not be able to afford a market rent.	
3.5	TS asked if data to is to be used by Glen Bramley for SHMA report. GF to take this up with the Project Manager of the HMA.	GF
3.6	MD asked what happens next once the report is published. TS advised	

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	that it would be used to form the basis of the new Supplementary Planning Document in Bristol..	
3.7	KR advised that it would be used on New Futures website with appropriate salary scales.	
3.8	MW said that B&NES are using the figures in the report as it reflects the requirements of PPS3, they are using them in relation to all new S106 agreements.	
3.9	KR stated that South Gloucestershire will review market rents every quarter.	
3.10	PS asked what LA's are going to do to get the correct and consistent wording in the S106 Agreements and how they are going to monitor the outcomes . A draft Heads of Terms for the S106 to be circulated to the LA's and RSL's for comment.	LA's
3.11	The issue of service charges in relation to affordability was raised and this led to a discussion regarding the use of a service charge cap and its implementation.	
3.12	It was agreed that Service Charges would be a future agenda item (Joint LA/RSL).	MMW
3.13	KHA and Sovereign stated that they are not happy with the findings of the Opening Doors report, but are willing to move on and work with the four LA's on this basis of defining the affordability of intermediate home ownership for S.106 schemes.	
4	HomesWest Review	
4.1	KR advised that 'Housing Vision' had been selected to carry out the review and a draft flyer circulated. On the reverse of the flyer is list of dates where each organisation puts aside time (½ day) to discuss (CE/Development Director level) contact John Cresswell directly. Draft project plan circulated with tight timetable.	
4.2	TS the lead contact in relation to the review.	
4.3	TS to circulate timetable electronically when finalised.	TS
4.4	PS requested proforma type questionnaire for the ½ day to enable proper preparation and a focused approach.	TS/KR
5	New Growth Points Funding	
5.1	MW introduced Nick Bacon of Inscape who B&NES (who are the accountable body for the drawn down of the grant and have to ensure that that the grant conditions were met) instructed to help them with the project. As part of his brief, Nick was asked to prepare an independent report on lessons learned on the 2007/2008 Growth Points funding process. Final report to be circulated separately.	MW
5.2	SP provided some context to the 2007/2008 bid, £1.1m was secured. CLG provided a presentation on how the money should be spent and the parameters that must be met for the bid in terms of mix of tenure and amount of funding per unit. Keith Cooper of Cooper Simons was appointed to advise the RSL's on their submission. A number of sites were identified as potential opportunities.	
5.3	Nick Bacon provided the following key points: 1. HW bid was a very low amount of funding per unit – other consortia got more per unit. 2. Lack of clarity about accountable body role (ie B&NES had different roles in the Growth Points funding process.).	

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	<p>3. Regular Reports on sites found and progress made did not seem to happen.</p> <p>4. Lack of understanding about B&NES role and requirement to carry out due diligence.</p> <p>5. There did not seem to be a culture of collaboration in the process.</p> <p>6. Question about whether single HomesWest legal entity would have been more successful in bidding and may have been able to access larger funding opportunities.</p> <p>7. Need to consider putting these learning points in to practice.</p> <p>It was felt by the RSL's that one of the main causes for difficulty was that B&NES came to their role very late in the day and therefore it was difficult to know who to report to and who to engage effectively with through the process.</p> <p>It was also noted that the amount of grant per unit had been set by the bid with CLG.</p>	
5.4	SS requested that the 2008/9 NGPF would be a future agenda item.	MMW
5.5	TS advised £21.8m available over the next 3 years, had been awarded to the WOE area, but it was unclear whether any of this was available for land acquisition. SS said that he had spoken to Simon Birch at the CX of the WOE Partnership and he had advised that there is £7.8m available in the first year for unspecified spend and this could be available for landbanking.	
	Need to try and access this money now and clarify how it is to be used.	
5.6	MW will find out details of funding award and its conditions as B&NES will continue to be the accountable body for the funding.	MW
5.7	RSL to write stating their interest in the funding being used for landbanking and seeking to discover what it may be used for.	SS
6	Regional Spatial Strategy and urban extensions	
6.1	MD asked how progress could be monitored in the key growth areas identified within the RSS so that the Partnership can co-ordinate to ensure that HomesWest have input and can promote the issue of affordable housing.	
6.2	MW advised that B&NES had had internal workshops to look at urban extensions but nothing is available as yet.	
6.3	KR advised that South Gloucestershire Issues and Options document had been issued which highlights pockets of land available. This document still to be adopted.	
6.4	MD suggested having a separate monitor to check progress on the urban extensions. This was agreed.. MW to build urban extension tracking monitor similar to the sites monitor.	MW
6.5	Urban extensions to be regular agenda item.	MMW
7	Update on HC allocations	
7.1	AB advised that 2006/8 best ever year yet. On National front 33% more homes 15% more funding. Investment statement on the SW status to follow. £140m regional spend gone up to £177m. RME £177m allocated to 08/11. RME's bid windows will be different, but on	

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	average approximately 4 weeks. Zero grant schemes are still needed. needed.	
7.2	Clarification from HC is required on the recent statement from HBF regarding the purchase of off the shelf units and how flexible they are prepared to be regarding standards.	AB
8	HomesWest Action Plan	
8.1	Plan reviewed and agreed. No amendments.	
9	Design Champions Network Event	
9.1	SL advised that he had given HC addresses of LA's for attendance at the event on 10 September.	
10	New Futures	
10.1	KR advised that all New Build Homebuy properties should go through the New Futures website which is not currently happening.	
11	Sites Monitor	
11.1	At the LA meeting this morning it was agreed that the number of headings would be reduced. MW to amend spreadsheet circulate to LA's for agreement then circulate to the wider team.	MW
12	Treasury Report	
12.1	Noted.	
13	Minutes of meeting held 11 February	
3	Bristol parks and open space - It was agreed that SP and JG would liaise with Phil Spooner/Peter Wilkinson on behalf of HomesWest to discuss how we might progress potential opportunities for the partners. Phil Spooner to provide a contact point in enabling team to take this forward. SP advised that he was waiting for feedback from PS following telephone conversation.	SP
4.2	Savills Land Agent Review - KR stated that South Gloucestershire were not happy that a member of staff employed on the HomesWest land finding project by Savills is also via Savills is representing those appealing against planning decision in South Gloucestershire as a professional witness.	
	Agreed that Savills should be written to and advised of concerns regarding conflicts of interests.	SP
14	Any other business	
14.1	None.	
	Dates of futures meetings:	

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<u>Date</u>	<u>Attendees</u>	<u>Comments</u>	Action
16 June 2008	RSL's		
04 August 2008	RSL/LA's		
13 October 2008	RSL's		
01 December 2008	RSL/LA's		

All meetings held at Somer, The Maltings, Bath
Enablers Managers meeting to be held at 10am on the morning of the
joint RSL/LA HomesWest meeting