



CLARION
HOUSING GROUP



Chief Executive Forum held in Cambridge on 21 June 2017
by Clarion Housing Group and The Housing Forum

“The Post-Election Housing Issues for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough”

KEY WORDS: Devolution, shared skills sets, strategic sites, economic hubs

This Forum considered the prospects for housing in the post general election period and the new Mayor’s priorities for housing growth.



Keith Exford opened with his perspective on the post- election housing situation. The 2017 White Paper had signalled some progress. But would the range of initiatives announced form a workable housing strategy with a minority government? The emphasis has to shift from a preoccupation with home ownership which is becoming increasingly unaffordable towards subsidy for sub market homes for the lowest income groups.

The overarching issues are:

- Partnerships and devolution settlements
- New borrowing approvals and opportunities for local authorities
- Whilst house builders should build more, housing associations can lead on many long term partnerships to build more homes
- Housing association consolidation creates opportunities for more delivery from a stronger base.

Devolution is evolving across the country and different models are developing to meet local needs. **Alan Lewin** considered how the Combined Authority for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough is approaching its housing strategy for new homes and sustainable communities. Housing delivery is a key part of a challenging devolution programme for a fast growing region. £170m will support the delivery of up to 100,000 additional homes over the next 20 years with £70m identified for new social housing provision in Cambridge City. The combined authority will

focus on communities and infrastructure with housing provision the core element which joins the strategy together. One of the Mayor's first 100 day tasks is a feasibility study into accelerated supply through MMC.

Anita Goddard set out the local context in Cambridge City and surrounding South Cambridgeshire which is one of an acute shortage of affordable housing. It is also an area undergoing extensive development. The majority of growth is around the fringes of Cambridge City. The Council's in the combined authority have worked together to form a Housing Development Agency to bring forward exception sites. Northstowe, South Cambridgeshire District Councils first town, is under development. South Cambridgeshire surrounds Cambridge City and when taken together, they are very expensive places to live. There is an increase in rough sleeping and the demography shows a fast growing older population. Taking these factors together, there is a clear need to care and support for a growing number of vulnerable people and potential incoming workers will struggle to afford to live in the area.

Andy Hill set the housing growth of Cambridge in a national economic context. The pace has been fast, with 7% growth per annum over the past six years due to employment opportunities. Cambridge has national importance for the economy. It is crucial to make to make plans for the future and an adopted local plan is critical to this. New homes in Cambridge have developed out across several quarters with national and regional builders and Hill are developing on many opportunity areas including Ninewells (Southern fringe) and in partnership with Cambridge University at North West Cambridge. For Hill, joint venture developments are at the heart of the business. This approach has worked very well and has helped Cambridge City Council bring forward its Affordable Housing Programme by a combination of complementary skills sets, enabling both partners to take on larger projects and deliver them within a shorter timescale to higher standards.

David McQuade set out Flagship's approach. By expanding development into Cambridge, the group will strengthen. Demand is high for property in Cambridge with around 200 'bids' for many rented homes. New build development generally occurs on site capable of 40-80 homes Flagship are keen to collaborate with developers and housing associations and work through Build East – an informal alliance of the largest housing associations in the East of England.

Host and guests attending:

Hosts

- 🏠 Keith Exford, Chief Executive, Clarion Housing Group Co-Host)
- 🏠 Shelagh Grant, CEO, The Housing Forum (Co-Host)

Guests

- 🏠 Alan Lewin, Chief Executive, Axiom Housing Association
- 🏠 Kim Vernau, Chief Executive, BLP
- 🏠 Ben Furr, Partner, calfordseaden
- 🏠 Anita Goddard, Interim Joint Head of Housing, City and South Cambs, South Cambridgeshire District Council
- 🏠 Mark Pigram, Interim Head, Cambs & County Developments
- 🏠 Paul Hartfree, Director, Conisbee
- 🏠 Sarah Ireland, Executive Director of Development and Sales, Cross Keys Homes
- 🏠 David McQuade, Chief Executive, Flagship Housing Group
- 🏠 Aileen Evans, Operations Director, Grand Union Housing Group

- 🏠 Andy Hill, Chief Executive, Hill Group
- 🏠 Phil Murton, Managing Director, Icen
- 🏠 David Mawson, Managing Director, Kier
- 🏠 Chris Callaghan, Managing Director, Kingswater Lindum
- 🏠 Brendan Kilpatrick, Senior Partner, PRP
- 🏠 Sue Coulson, Director of Partnerships, Rent Plus
- 🏠 Sarah Brind, Senior Development Manager (South East), Sanctuary