

**East of England Rural Forum  
c/o EERA Housing Team  
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East of England Rural Forum

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**EERF Rural housing Sub-group  
Minutes of meeting: 2.00pm, 10 March 2009**

**Hastoe offices, Little Chesterford, Cambridge**

**Present:**

Graham Hedger (Chair), Martin Aust, Joanne Webb (minutes), John Lefever, Louise Wilby, Becky Ashley, Tim Lucas, Mark Gaynor EEDA (for item 3)

**Apologies:**

Tim Isaac, Moira Groborz, Susanne Ringham, Richard Lloyd

**1. Introduction**

Graham Hedger welcomed members.

**2. Minutes from the last meeting (3 December 2008) and matters arising**

Accepted as a true record.

Matters arising:

- response to Matthew Taylor report- Graham Hedger to discuss with John Yates
- letter to sub-regions describing idea for funding renewable energy additions to properties- MA and JL to progress.
- JW has informed the Regional Housing Advisory Group and Sustainable Construction East of representatives from the EERF housing sub-group.

**3. EEDA's proposed study into Community Land Trusts**

Mark Gaynor came to talk about EEDA's proposed study into Community Land Trusts (CLTs). The CLT model has produced 71 units so far across the country. The study would look at whether setting up CLTs could be made easier, how they could be made more effective, and whether there is merit in super-CLTs so that everytime a rural area wants to use the CLT framework, they would not have to establish one of their own.

The study will be co-ordinated by EERA and HCA. The EERF sub-group were asked for their suggestions on the scope of the research. It was suggested it should include:

- reasons for low numbers of units produced so far
- how CLTs elsewhere could be more effective

#### **4. CRC Call for evidence**

The CRC are coordinating monthly reports for the National Economic Council meetings. They had asked for any information on the impact of the recession on rural areas. Susanne Ringham had suggested replying about the demise of the Rural Housing Trust and that many rural exceptions sites were progressing. There were no other suggestions.

**Action: JW to send in comments, copying to the group**

#### **5. RHS Action Plan**

The current Regional Housing Strategy (RHS) was published in summer 2005 and covers the period up to 2010. The main purpose of the RHS is to set out the strategic context and the housing priorities for the region, as well as provide recommendations for housing investment split between existing stock and new, affordable housing.

It is supported by an action plan which is currently being reviewed and refreshed for the final year of the strategy.

The group were asked to consider some proposed actions for the new action plan, actions were suggested around:

- Rolling out new method of funding RHE service and investigate using CBL information instead of a housing needs survey in some circumstances
- Continue to identify blockages and promote solutions to increase the supply of affordable housing
- Increase affordability for tenants, including renewable energy sources and design of rural schemes and resulting service charges
- Investigate best practise in exceptions sites

The group agreed to be treated as a Regional Housing Advisory Group sub-group (while remaining a sub-group of the Rural Forum). This would enable them to be included in the action plan, and attend the sub-group chairs meetings.

**Action: Martin Aust to draft actions for the action plan**

#### **6. HCA Update**

Report tabled and distributed.

## **7. Secretariat**

Jo Webb is leaving her current role to take up a post as manager of the Greater Haven Gateway choice based lettings scheme. Unfortunately, she will be unable to continue with the secretariat role.

**Action: LW to approach a colleague at RCCE who may be interested.**

## **8. Any other business**

The Regional Housing Advisory Group meeting featured a report on plans for a retro-fit programme, to be distributed.

**Action: JW to distribute with minutes**

## **9. Date of future meetings**

2.00pm, 3 June - to be confirmed  
2.00pm, 3 September )  
2.00pm, 3 December )

## **10. To note - future EERF event dates**

2009: 10 June EERF meeting  
16 September EERF meeting  
8 December EERF meeting  
2010: 3 March EERF Conference

**Joanne Webb**  
**Secretary, East of England Rural Forum's Housing Sub-group.**  
**13 March 2009**