# Report to the Housing Board on

# Covid-19 recovery plans

## Date of meeting

31 July 2020

## Author(s)

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## Why is the report coming to the Housing Board?

The RCG is a sub-group of the Strategic Coordinating Group (SCG). We currently remain in the response phase of the Coronavirus pandemic, led by the SCG. There will be a time when we move from the response phase, led by the SCG, into the recovery phase led by the RCG. This handover will not take place until the lockdown and any second peak had elapsed.

This paper outlines some thoughts on the themes which might be relevant to consider by that RCG and gives Housing Board members a chance to highlight which are felt most important for the Recovery Group and which least – or better dealt with elsewhere.

## Decision(s) required from the Housing Board

* Do the points below cover all the areas Housing Board members think need to be considered by the Recovery CG?
* Can we suggest working groups already involved or considering these issues?
* How can we ensure a strong connection between the housing recovery cell and the Hosing Board?

## Background

There are several tactical subgroups established within the RCG. The focus of the RCG is not to identify specific tasks for the subgroups, but to facilitate plans identified by them. This means that when the subgroups produce their impact assessments and their action plans, the RCG can assist the coordination of those plans.

This is a list of all the subgroups, contact details for those who are leading them can be found in Appendix 1.

## Report

In the Housing Board’s temporary terms of reference, a list of thoughts was added to help us remember all the areas we might need to work on, under or after covid, using our four priorities as a structure.

These form a basis for the following page, for Housing Board members to consider and prioritize so we can suggest to the Recovery Groups the areas we could work on together.

We could categorize according to the recovery group themes to help “fit in” with the processes being set up.

* New homes & communities
	+ Delays to new homes being completed and how to overcome and practical issues on construction sites.
	+ Rush on inspections and removals post lockdown.
	+ Health and safety where sites are left uncompleted.
	+ Effect on building trade (developers shutting up shop?)
	+ Effect on home sales and possibly housing affordability in future.
	+ Continuing to develop new homes of all kinds, but particularly affordable, to continue the supply of relets. Affordable may be affordable housing products, but may also include affordable warmth and water etc.
	+ Ensure all housing is configured to be covid secure in future, designs should enable self-isolation if needed.
	+ Continued need for homes which support good mental health, including design, space standards and layout, along with access to open / green spaces.
	+ How best to develop new housing, for example can general needs homes be delivered which accommodate higher levels of support than would but “usual”, as we are thinking there will be more people housed now who need support, possibly coming via the homelessness route. But also if it fits with the individual needs, a shared scheme of housing may be less secure than individual pods with an optional shared area…?
* Homes for wellbeing
	+ Extra care issues and staff needs.
	+ ‘Poorer standard’ housing e.g. HMOs, hostels, migrant workers, design of homes and ability to self-isolate.
	+ Hospital discharge to keep the flow of people moving while minimising risks in supported, sheltered, extra care etc.
	+ Overlap with other work on DV, drugs and alcohol, mental health etc.
	+ Creating new supported housing schemes which can be covid secure (thinking about design and layout of shared areas etc).
* Existing homes
	+ Repairs and gas servicing within covid regulations.
	+ Reletting empty homes within covid regulations, and effect on housing turnover and ability to house people form the housing register (for social housing).
	+ Difficulties securing affordable / charitable furnishings, and general hardship for people moving into a new home
	+ Helping people get the help they need – maybe financially (UC) to keep paying the rent / mortgage.
	+ Support for people whose mental health has suffered under lockdown, and possibly increased levels of DV and drug/alcohol use.
* Housing need & homelessness
	+ Stronger links with health and social care teams to help deal with issues particularly of rough sleepers in emergency accommodation
	+ Effect of covid on choice based lettings schemes Encouraging continued relets.
	+ Meeting the needs of rough sleepers temporarily placed in hotels etc.
	+ Predicting housing need as lockdown is reduced / removed e.g. people falling into arrears as the eviction embargo and furlough scheme ends.
	+ Overlap with work on G&Ts, DV, PWNRTPF and prison release.
	+ Working together on housing plans leading into recovery, track and trace stages.
	+ Ensure housing is configured to be covid secure in future, especially temp we used to use including winter provision which used to be often in church halls etc.
	+ Helping recovery when covid has led to an increase in domestic abuse and possibly relationship breakdown and respond to the increased need.

Appendix A – Recovery Groups and Chairs

* Health
	+ Jan Thomas - Jan.Thomas@nhs.net
* Public Health
	+ Emmeline Watkins - Emmeline.Watkins@cambridgeshire.gov.uk
* Finance
	+ Claire Edwards - Claire.Edwards2@huntingdonshire.gov.uk
* Vulnerable people
	+ Wendi Ogle-Welbourn - Wendi.Ogle-Welbourn@peterborough.gov.uk
* Community
	+ Emily Forbes - EForbes@redcross.org.uk
* Criminal justice
	+ Ian Simmons - Ian.Simmons@cambs.pnn.police.uk
* Environment
	+ Steve Cox - Steve.Cox@cambridgeshire.gov.uk
* Business and economic recovery
	+ John Hill - johnt.hill@cambridgeshirepeterborough-ca.gov.uk
* Multi-agency information cell
	+ Amanda Askham - Amanda.Askham@cambridgeshire.gov.uk
* Transport
	+ Paul Raynes - paul.raynes@cambridgeshirepeterborough-ca.gov.uk
* Communication
	+ Interim representative: Tom Horn,