

**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING April 2011 – March 2016 FOR THE HARA  
H PARTNERSHIP**

**This document details the memorandum of understanding of the Hampshire Alliance for Rural Affordable Housing (HARAH) and does not form a legal contract or a partnership within the meaning of the Partnership Act 1890.**

**Glossary: Appendix 1 provides a list of abbreviations used in this document**

**The HARAH Partnership Members**

Hampshire County Council (HCC)  
Basingstoke & Deane Borough Council (BDBC)  
East Hampshire District Council (EHDC)  
Hart District Council (HDC)  
New Forest District Council (NFDC)  
Test Valley Borough Council (TVBC)  
Winchester City Council (WCC)  
The Homes and Communities Agency (HCA)  
Community Action Hampshire (CAH)  
New Forest National Park Authority (NFNPA)  
The Affordable Housing Provider, Hyde Housing Association

**Selected Affordable Housing Provider (AHP)**

The Registered Provider (RP) development partner was selected through a robust process in 2010. The RP is Hyde Housing Association.

**Definition of Rural Housing**

For the purpose of this MoU rural housing is defined as affordable housing built on 'exceptions sites' in settlements of a population of 3,000 people or fewer. In addition exceptions sites in settlements with a population of 3000 -10,000 may be included at the discretion of the relevant Local Authority and as a result of their inclusion in the Rural Gazetteer and Statutory Instrument.

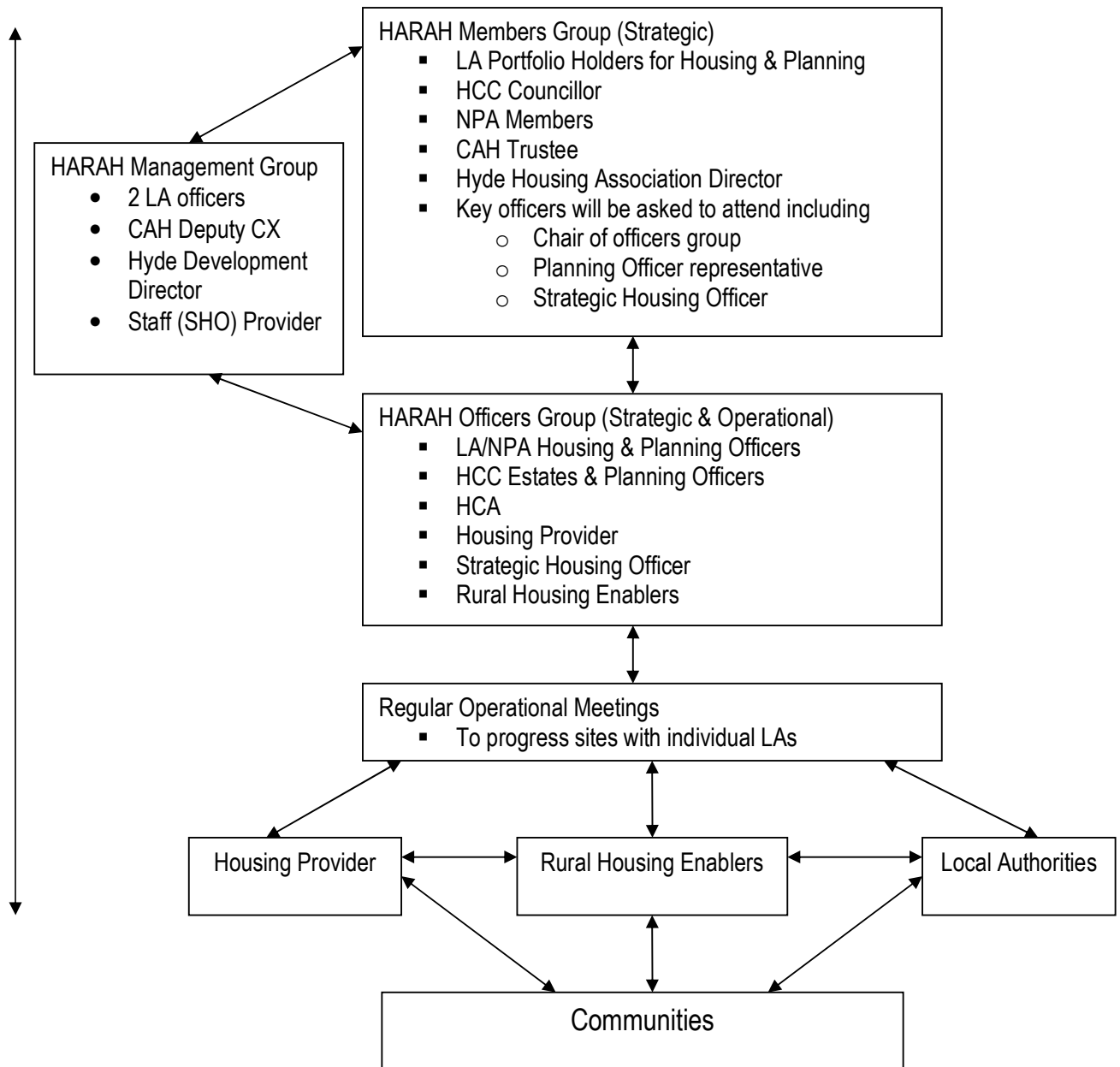
**Purposes of the HARAH partnership**

The primary purpose of HARAH is to ensure that rural communities are sustainable and inclusive by enabling an increase in the supply of affordable housing to meet local needs in the rural villages of Hampshire. This is achieved through the following:

1. To optimise investment in affordable housing in rural villages across Hampshire
2. To facilitate a strategic approach to the delivery of affordable rural housing schemes
3. To provide consistency in housing needs information collected
4. To ensure funding and effective utilisation of the Hampshire Rural Housing Enablers and Strategic Housing Officer
5. To benefit from economies of scale
6. To achieve high standards of design, development, management and community involvement by having a specialist affordable housing provider who understands rural issues

7. To provide consistency in the information provided to Parish Councils and local people, and develop appropriate consultation mechanisms
8. To assess the impact & implications of providing additional affordable housing in rural villages.
9. To improve the deliverability of rural affordable housing schemes in Hampshire to reflect the HCA's support for rural affordable housing.
10. To influence and respond to national and local agendas on rural housing issues
11. To influence relevant planning and housing policies and their co-ordination
12. To set and meet achievable, deliverable targets focused on the needs of rural communities

### HARAH groups and reporting mechanisms



## **Structure of HARAH**

HARAH is an operational and strategic partnership which comprises:

- HARAH Partnership Group (made up of Officers) – co-ordinating the work of HARAH (both operational and strategic) with the affordable housing provider, the HCA, the Rural Housing Enablers and Strategic Housing Officer. (Terms of reference Annex A1)
- Member Group (terms of reference attached at Annex A2)
- HARAH Management Group (Terms of Reference Annex A3)
- Decision making is set out in Annex A4
- Targets of the HARAH partnership are set out in Annex A5
- Review panel (process attached at Annex E)

## **Terms of Arrangement**

- The term of the arrangement is until 31.03.16.
- A minimum of five HARAH Officers Group meetings to which all parties are invited to attend will be held annually.
- The Chair of the HARAH Officers Group will be held on an annual rotational basis amongst the HARAH officer group members. A Vice-chair will also be appointed on this basis. During that period the Chair's authority will be the Lead Authority in all communication. The secretariat function will be the responsibility of the Strategic Housing Officer
- The agreed policies and procedures of HARAH are published on the website [www.harrah.org.uk](http://www.harrah.org.uk) and all parties to this arrangement agree to abide by these.
- The entire arrangement is subject to an annual review by all parties against the objectives and targets as set out in the Business Plan appended to this document, and as stated in the Review Process (attached at Annex E).
- Changes to the arrangement can be made through a formal approach to the HARAH Officers Group via the Chair and are subject to agreement of all parties.

## **Terms of Arrangement for the Affordable Housing Provider and the HARAH staffing provider(s)**

- The Affordable Housing Provider (AHP) is HARAH's development partner, Hyde Housing Association.
- The HARAH Staffing Providers (HSPs) are CAH for the Rural Housing Enablers and East Hants District Council for the Strategic Housing Officer
- The arrangement with the Affordable Housing Provider and the HARAH staffing providers is subject to a six monthly Performance review (see 'Monitoring and Review')
- In consultation with the HARAH Management Group, the HSP may be changed from time to time by mutual agreement of relevant HSP and any other HARAH partner who wishes to take on that role.
- The Affordable Housing Provider warrants the accuracy and completeness of information provided in their bid for selection and undertakes to exert best efforts to fulfil the commitments made at that time.

### **Termination of the arrangement**

- This arrangement can be terminated with not less than six months notice on the agreement of all parties.
- If one party wishes to terminate their role in this agreement then a minimum of twelve months notice must be given to the Chair in writing. The party giving notice will be responsible for their agreed financial contribution for the entire financial year in which their twelve month's notice expires.

### **Monitoring and Review**

- The AHP will provide a development report against forecast two weeks prior to each HARAH officers' meeting and to the Management Group on request
- The Rural Housing Enablers will provide a work update two weeks prior to each HARAH officers' meeting and to the Management Group on request
- The Strategic Housing Officer will provide a work update two weeks prior to each HARAH officers' meeting and to the Management Group on request
- The HARAH Management Group will meet at least 3 times a year. Partners will provide reports for them on request
- A 6 monthly review of performance will be undertaken at a meeting of the Management Group. The Chairman of the HARAH Members Group will be invited to attend.
- An annual 360 degree review of the whole partnership will be called by the Chair of HARAH. The details are set out in Annex E
- If performance is unsatisfactory, the AHP or HSP will have the opportunity for recourse/improvement over a period of up to 4 months, the period being determined by the partners in relation to the severity of the performance breach. If a dispute arises, a Members panel will be convened by the Chair of the Members Group.
- The HSPs will produce and circulate a financial report ahead of each Management Group meeting

### **Financial arrangement to support the Rural Housing Enablers and Strategic Housing Officer** (the roles of the rural housing enablers and strategic housing officer are defined on subsequent pages of this document)

- All financial contributions are payable annually to the employer
- The HARAH Management Group will agree, in consultation with the Chair of the HARAH Members Group, how to apportion HARAH resources prior to the commencement of each financial year. The decision will take account of the HARAH objective to maintain staffing levels of at least 2.0 FTE RHEs and 0.4 FTE SHO over the period of the agreement. Account will be taken of the level of reserves held by HSPs in determining how resources for the forthcoming financial year should be apportioned. Invoices will be raised annually by the respective HSPs in accordance with the agreement made by the Management Group.
- The use of any surplus shown by the employer in relation to the RHE and SHO employment, at the end of each financial year, will be determined by the HARAH Management Group in consultation with partners.
- At the end of the contract period, any surplus will be returned to the partners unless otherwise agreed by them.
- The contribution to be made by each of the six district and borough councils in the HARAH partnership will be held at £6,333 for 2011/12 and increased by the rate of the Consumer Price Index in subsequent years subject to budget arrangements, to be invoiced annually.
- As the National Park Authority is a planning but not a housing authority, it is agreed that the Authority will pay half the contribution of the Local Authorities, being £3166.50 for 2011/12 and increased by the rate of the Consumer Price Index in subsequent years subject to budget arrangements, to be invoiced annually.

- The contribution by the affordable housing provider will be increased by the rate of the Consumer Price Index and will be £39,140 in 2011/12.
- Hampshire County Council will contribute £40,000 per annum, for 3 years until 2014, to be invoiced annually.
- The annual contribution should be payable in the first month of each financial year commencing on the 1<sup>st</sup> April.
- The contributions will be paid to the employer on receipt of the invoice, and used for the employment of the HARAHA staff and associated costs.
- Should HARAHA terminate the contract with the affordable housing provider, any monies will be refunded apportioned to the outstanding period for which pre-payment has been made, including interest.
- A separate restricted HARAHA Redundancy fund will be set up at the start of the MOU period using a proportion of the surpluses carried forward from the previous MOU period, the sum agreed by the Management Group, in consultation with the Chair of the Members Group. This will be used for any redundancy costs and pension costs required to manage the agreed reduction in staff. The Management Group will determine how much funding should be transferred back to the main restricted HARAHA reserve at any subsequent date..
- Provided that any action has been agreed by the HARAHA Management Group, in consultation with the Chair of the Members Group, any future redundancy payments for the SHO and RHEs will be shared amongst the partners, provided that this shall not exceed the annual level of contributions required of each partner.

**The following annexes provide more information on the Affordable Housing Provider; the HARAHA staff (Rural Housing Enablers and Strategic Housing Officer); and the roles of the other partners**

- Annex B1 Functions and Selection of the Affordable Housing Provider
- Annex B2 Exception arrangements for using an alternative provider
- Annex B3 Required performance standards of the Affordable Housing Provider
- Annex C1 Functions and Employment of the Rural Housing Enablers
- Annex C2 The roles of the Rural Housing Enablers and Strategic Housing Officer
- Annex D Roles of the other partners

**Signature of parties**

Hampshire County Council

East Hampshire District Council

Basingstoke & Deane Borough Council

New Forest District Council

Hart District Council

New Forest National Park Authority

Test Valley Borough Council

Winchester City Council

The Homes and Communities Agency

Hyde Housing Association

CAH

**Date:**

## **ANNEX A1**

### **TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE HARAH OFFICERS GROUP**

1. To maximise the investment in affordable housing in rural villages across Hampshire
2. To enable a strategic approach to the delivery of affordable rural housing schemes including consistency of the housing needs information collected
3. To ensure funding and effective utilisation of the Hampshire Rural Housing Enablers & Strategic Housing Officer
4. To benefit from potential economies of scale
5. To achieve high standards of design, development, management and community involvement by having a specialist affordable housing provider that understands rural issues
6. To provide consistency in the information provided to Parish Councils and local people, and develop appropriate consultation mechanisms
7. To assess the impact & implications of providing additional affordable housing in rural villages.
8. To improve the deliverability of rural affordable housing schemes to meet the national priority for rural housing
9. To ensure local affordability of rural schemes with particular reference to intermediate housing
10. To influence and respond to the national and local agenda on rural housing issues
11. To influence planning and housing policy with regard to rural housing
12. To promote construction that reduces CO2 emissions.
13. To carry out the tasks set out in the HARAH Business Plan
14. To focus on rural housing agenda and wider issues around Housing Markets Assessment and older people. The group will consider both those settlements below 3,000 but also those between 3,000 and 10,000.
15. To feed into, recommend and monitor Local Investment Plans (LIPs) and emerging priority schemes and local research projects.
16. To recommend and co-ordinate housing related responses to consultation from Government bodies and the Homes and Communities Agency.
17. To inform and influence debate on housing and related policy issues at local and national levels.
18. To work on parish and community engagement, particularly around work with Parish Councils, in order to bring more affordable housing sites forward.
19. To evaluate ways of joint working/shared resources within the 6 Local, National Park and County authorities to improve delivery and efficiency around planning, community planning and public owned land and affordable housing.
20. To establish effective links with key stakeholders.

## **ANNEX A2**

### **TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE MEMBERS' GROUP**

1. Members to be ambassadors of the HARAH partnership and champion rural affordable housing
2. To provide a single voice for rural housing representatives in Hampshire.
3. To provide a forum for housing and planning portfolio members to network.
4. To advocate cross party support for the delivery of affordable housing.
5. To approve and monitor key housing related policies and initiatives, including Local Investment plans and emerging priority schemes and local research projects
6. To monitor and respond to key Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) and other relevant programmes

7. To approve housing related responses to government bodies and the HCA
8. To work on community engagement, particularly around work with parish councils, in order to bring more affordable housing sites forward
9. To evaluate ways of joint working/shared resources within the local authorities to improve delivery and efficiency around planning, community planning, estates and affordable housing
10. To act as a decision making group where necessary. However Board Members are not able to commit their respective organisation to financial expenditure other than that which is allocated on a sub regional basis.
11. The Members Group will be chaired by a Local Authority Portfolio Holder for Housing or Planning or a Local Authority Member in a similar senior position.

### **ANNEX A3 Terms of Reference of the HARAHA Management Group**

- To oversee the effective operation of the HARAHA partnership, in particular the management and allocation of staff and financial resources, and delivery of the functions of the HSPs and AHP.
- The Management Group will be chaired by a local authority representative

Note: Staffing issues will ultimately be the responsibility of the relevant HSP

### **Annex A4 Decision Making**

- Operational decisions are the responsibility of the officers group and where appropriate in consultation with the Chairman of the Members' Group
- Strategic decisions are the responsibility of the Members' Group, on the advice of officers.
- At all partnership group meetings, decisions will be made by way of majority voting, notwithstanding that in certain circumstances partners may have to refer to the body they represent before confirming their position,

### **ANNEX A5 Targets of the HARAHA Partnership**

#### **Targets are collective for the LA's, RHE's, Hyde, SHO**

1. To complete 200 new affordable rural homes in the period 2011 – 2015 (Each Local Authority may have their own District targets for completions)
2. To agree targets on completions for 2015 onwards in 2014
3. To meet the targets set out in the HARAHA Business Plan

### **ANNEX B1 Functions and selection of the Affordable Housing Provider**

- For the term of the arrangement the affordable housing provider will nominate a senior development officer whose task will be to support and co-ordinate the Partnership to achieve its objectives.
- The affordable housing provider will be the conduit for all grant funding of rural exception site schemes in the local authority areas that constitute HARAHA. The affordable housing provider will bid for grant on schemes that are agreed by the relevant Local Authority.
- The main role of the affordable housing provider will be that of development and ownership, including site acquisition, securing planning consents, funding and liaison with rural



communities. The affordable housing provider will contribute to creating a pipeline of schemes throughout Hampshire to ensure the objectives are met.

- The affordable housing provider will seek to minimise the amount of public subsidy required for developing rural affordable housing schemes by maximising private finance and efficiencies of scale and build form, without sacrificing good design
- The affordable housing provider will be responsible for the appointment of architects and construction firms and for compliance with their own internal procurement procedures.
- The affordable housing provider will explore and adopt (and where appropriate may develop) modern methods of construction and energy efficiency suitable for the rural environment wherever practicable and financially viable. This is with the aim of delivering efficiencies in the cost of provision but also with the aim of tackling fuel poverty, responding to national and local climate change policies and reducing CO2 emissions.
- The affordable housing provider will deliver rural affordable housing at the HCA's minimum standards and where practicable exceed these standards.

### **ANNEX B2 Exception arrangements for using an alternative provider**

- By exception, and with the agreement of the Members Group, the affordable housing provider will consider developing on behalf of another Registered Provider or Local Authority and offer ownership & management to that local provider or will facilitate that RP to develop directly. These circumstances include where a Parish, Local Authority, or landowner has expressed a strong desire to work with a different RP owing to current ownership of the agreed site or access to the site or other distinct benefits; or there are specific performance issues regarding an individual site
- If the affordable housing provider considers a scheme to be unviable due its size, complexity or other reason, another RP or Local Authority may be invited to develop the scheme, with the agreement of the Members Group and the Affordable Housing Provider.
- In the circumstances in which it is agreed that another RP will develop a scheme, that RP will be required to contribute towards the enabling work, at a cost of £1000 per unit, payable to the Affordable Housing Provider.
- HARAHA will carefully monitor the number of schemes developed by other RPs to ensure this does not unduly affect the main rural provider programme.

### **ANNEX B3 Required Performance Standards of the Affordable Housing Provider**

1. The affordable housing provider is required to maintain four green lights on their HCA Assessment throughout the period of this agreement
2. The affordable housing provider should agree all bids, for the HCA's 2011-15 bid round and beyond with each partner LA and the HARAHA Officers Group prior to submission
3. Prior to any agreement with the HCA, the affordable housing provider should agree with each partner LA and the HARAHA Officers Group the approach it is proposing to take in response to the Government's Fairer Futures paper in particular in respect of rent setting, including conversions and tenancies.
4. The affordable housing provider is required to meet their agreed milestones on grant funded schemes with the HCA and report to the HARAHA meetings any deviations with reasons.
5. The affordable housing provider will advise and co-operate with the Local Authority in the formulation of project plans (issued by the Local Authority) for each scheme to be agreed between themselves, the relevant local authority and the RHE. The affordable

housing provider is required to meet their agreed milestones in project plans. Compliance with these will be monitored in the performance review meetings.

6. The affordable housing provider is required to meet the HARA objectives in relation to affordability of the homes built.
7. The affordable housing provider is required to produce designs that are appropriate for its setting and respect the local distinctiveness of the village in which it is located.
8. The affordable housing provider is required to ensure that pre-planning meetings are carried out on all schemes with the relevant stakeholders prior to the submission of a planning application.
9. The affordable housing provider will produce a performance report to be circulated one week in advance of each HARA officers' meeting. This report is to include development and management performance, the latter on all rural schemes in Hampshire that are managed by the affordable housing provider in an agreed format, and performance against the objectives and targets.
10. The affordable housing provider is required to comply with management standards/expectations of the partner local authorities.

### **Targets of the affordable housing provider**

- To meet the milestones on the project plans
- To meet the targets set out in the HARA Business Plan

### **ANNEX C1 Functions and Employment of the Hampshire Rural Housing Enablers and Strategic Housing Officer**

- The role and responsibilities of the Rural Housing Enablers (RHEs) and the Strategic Housing Officers (SHO) to the HARA partnership are deemed to be embodied in those aims, objectives, target outputs and activities that are set out in the Business Plan and on the job descriptions attached in the appendices.
- The workplan and priorities for the RHEs and SHO are as set out in the Business Plan.
- CAH will be the HARA partner which employs the RHEs under CAH's terms and conditions.
- The SHO will be employed by East Hants District Council under its terms and conditions
- Rural Housing Enablers and Strategic Housing Officers will be deemed to be all those personnel employed by CAH or EHDC respectively to carry out the role and responsibilities as set out in the Business Plan whether employed on a full-time, part-time or temporary basis.
- The RHEs or SHO should not undertake any paid or voluntary activities, or promote such activities, that may be perceived as being in conflict with their HARA role without the written consent of the HSP who shall first consult with the HARA Management Group.
- The employers will deploy sufficient personnel as RHEs or SHO of appropriate qualifications, competence and experience to perform the requirements for which HARA funding is given and will ensure that those personnel are properly managed, evaluated, supervised, annually appraised and address any training requirements. Personnel levels will be a minimum of 2.0 Full Time Equivalent posts for the RHEs and 0.4 FTE for the SHO. Any proposed changes in relation to budgetary constraints will be referred to the Management Group for consideration..

- Any proposed changes to the terms and conditions of employment of the RHE's or the SHO by their employer should be discussed in advance with the Management Group
- RHEs will be appointed by CAH with another HARAHA partner being involved in the selection process.
- The SHO will be appointed by the HSP on behalf of the HARAHA partnership with another HARAHA partner being involved in the selection process
- To monitor the use of the financial contributions of the HARAHA partners and the affordable housing provider to the HARAHA budget, CAH and EHDC will provide budget progress reviews to the Management Group, prior to each meeting, and an annual report to the HARAHA partnership.
- In addition to providing progress updates and feedback at scheduled HARAHA meetings the RHEs and SHO will provide an annual report to the HARAHA partners which will include an indication of measurement of outputs and outcomes against the requirements of the workplan.
- Complaints about any aspect of the performance of RHEs or the SHO, including concerns about an imbalance of resources provided across the partnership should be made in the first instance to the Management Group
- The employers will consult the Management Group on any changes within their organisation that may materially affect how RHEs or SHO duties are discharged.

## **ANNEX C2 Roles of the Rural Housing Enablers and Strategic Housing Officer**

### **RHEs**

#### **Aim**

To undertake a programme of fieldwork with rural communities in six rural districts and boroughs in Hampshire to enable and facilitate HARAHA priorities to increase the supply of affordable housing in rural parishes in line with the HARAHA Memorandum of Understanding.

With the agreement of the Management Group to undertake related activities that may have a broader strategic impact

#### **Targets**

To meet the targets set out in the HARAHA Business Plan

### **Strategic Housing Officer**

#### **Aim**

To undertake a strategic role across the HARAHA partnership and to apply strategic changes to operational activities to increase affordable housing delivery in rural Hampshire.

### **Communication**

- The Strategic Housing Officer will be responsible for the secretariat, communication and publicity for HARAHA.
- The Strategic Housing Officer will be responsible for drafting press releases on the partnership selection and scheme publicity in consultation with the communications group. Copies of such drafts must be approved by the Chair of HARAHA and Chairman of the Members Group prior to release..
- The Strategic Housing Officer will be responsible for keeping the website up to date with current schemes and news items.

## **Targets**

To meet the targets set out in the HARAHA Business Plan

## **ANNEX D Roles of the other partners**

### **Role of the Local Authorities and National Park Authorities**

- The Local Authorities have responsibility for both strategic housing (with the exception of Hampshire County Council) and planning.
- The National Park Authorities have responsibility for planning in their areas
- Each Local Authority will support the Homes and Communities Agency grant bids agreed and made on behalf of HARAHA
- Hampshire County Council is responsible for the production of a countywide Rural Strategy and facilitating County Council owned land release for exception site development.
- Local authorities will take a leadership role in encouraging and supporting community planning and working with parishes with the aim of facilitating the provision of more rural affordable housing
- The Local Authorities will ensure that relevant planning and other policies are directed to optimise the delivery of rural affordable housing.
- Local Authorities may have their own land holdings, which they may wish to develop or which they can bring forward for affordable housing based on their own property policies.
- To provide representation to partnership groups
- To ensure that HARAHA responsibilities are shared between partner LAs

### **Role of the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA)**

- The Homes and Communities Agency will monitor the grant funded development programme of the affordable housing provider.
- The Homes and Communities Agency will advise on national priorities and required standards to obtain grant funding.
- The Homes and Communities Agency will influence the Local Investment Plans for the HARAHA area

The affordable housing provider, the local authorities, the Strategic Housing Officer and the Rural Housing Enablers will be jointly responsible for advising Parish Councils about HARAHA to ensure that the partnership arrangement is understood

## **ANNEX E THE REVIEW PROCESS**

The annual review of the Partnership will take the form of a 360 degree appraisal to assist with the aim for continuous improvement and measurement against the objectives. This will include the following:

1. A report on outcomes against objectives by AHP and HSPs
2. Performance against targets of the affordable housing provider as set out in the HARAHA Business Plan
3. Compliance with project plans by all parties.
4. Responsiveness/availability of staff employed by AHP and HSPs

5. Design and quality of scheme submissions
6. Affordability of schemes in perpetuity
7. Deliverability include meeting deadlines for completion
8. Relationships with other RPs (e.g. as managers) including peer review.
9. Relationship between all parties
10. Use of agreed policies and standard documentation including s106 agreements and the planning protocol
11. Responsiveness of Local Authorities planning services
12. Review of County Council land made available
13. Co-ordination and success of funding bids
14. Satisfaction/impact evaluation survey results
15. Management issues
16. Any other issues agreed by the HARA Management Group

The review will be conducted by the Management Group, who will invite the following to attend:

- Chair of HARA officers group
- Affordable housing provider – senior development officer
- Senior RHE
- Representative of the HCA
- Strategic Housing Officer
- Chairman or delegated representative of the Members' Group

## Appendix 1

### Glossary of Abbreviations

AHP	Affordable Housing provider
BDBC	Basingstoke & Deane Borough Council
CAH	Community Action Hampshire
EHDC	East Hampshire District Council
FTE	Full time equivalent
HA	Housing Association
HARAH	Hampshire Alliance for Rural Affordable Housing
HCA	Homes and Communities Agency
HCC	Hampshire County Council
HDC	Hart District Council
HNS	Housing Needs Survey
HSP	HARAH Staff Provider
LA	Local Authority
LEP	Local Economic Partnership
LIP	Local Investment Plan
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
NFDC	New Forest District Council
NFNPA	New Forest National Park Authority
NPA	National Park Authority
PC	Parish Council
RHE	Rural Housing Enabler
RP	Registered Provider
RSL	Registered Social Landlord
SDNP	South Downs National Park
SHO	Strategic Housing Officer
TVBC	Test Valley Borough Council
WCC	Winchester City Council

## **Job Description**

### **Job title: Rural Housing Enabler**

#### **JOB CONTEXT**

Community Action Hampshire (CAH) is the countywide Council for Voluntary Service (CVS) and Hampshire's Rural Community Council (RCC). CAH has over 50 years' experience of working with and supporting Hampshire's voluntary and community organisations and rural communities. It is our aim to strengthen their contribution to the quality of life of people living in Hampshire. We do this by providing specialist advice and information services together with practical help, encouraging equal partnership between the voluntary, public and private sectors, and providing a voice for Hampshire's voluntary and community sector and rural communities.

The Rural Housing Enabler Project has developed from a national scheme which sought to address the shortage of affordable housing for local people in rural areas. In Hampshire the Rural Housing Enablers (RHEs) work on behalf of the Hampshire Alliance for Rural Affordable Housing known as HARAHA. The other members of the partnership are six district councils (Basingstoke & Deane, East Hampshire, Hart, New Forest, Test Valley and Winchester), Hampshire County Council, the Homes & Communities Agency, New Forest National Park Authority and the Affordable Housing provider.

The posts are funded by the six district and borough councils, the County Council, the national park and Hyde Housing Association (the preferred partner for building and managing the homes). As the RHEs are not directly employed by a local authority or a housing association, they have an impartial role in the process for developing affordable housing and are able to act as 'honest brokers' between all parties.

#### **JOB PURPOSE**

- To work with parish councils and district and borough councils in determining levels of need for affordable housing in rural areas
- To work with the housing and planning departments of the six HARAHA local authorities to develop rural housing schemes to meet those local needs
- To provide information to HARAHA, regional and national bodies on rural housing in Hampshire

The following are the main responsibilities and tasks of the RHE team who will be trained and mentored towards performing this role.

#### **MAIN RESPONSIBILITIES AND TASKS**

**To promote rural affordable housing to parish and local authority councillors and rural communities including:**

- a) Working with parish and local authority councils to assess housing needs by carrying out either housing need surveys or holding housing surgeries;
- b) Analysing the data received, preparing reports and presenting to the parish council and community;
- c) Ensuring that the needs of households identified in surveys are reflected in local authority housing registers and feedback into housing strategies;
- d) Providing information and advice to parishes on housing and planning policies, housing need and proposals for housing projects. This could be in the form of newsletters, correspondence, attending parish council meetings and holding public consultations.

**To enable the provision of affordable rural housing in six local authorities in Hampshire including:**

- e) Working with parish councillors, community organisations, the affordable housing provider, planners and landowners to identify suitable sites/buildings to meet the need for affordable housing;
- f) Investigating and developing innovative ways of providing affordable housing;
- g) Being aware of new models of affordable housing schemes nationally and disseminating such information to the HARA group;
- h) Being aware of sustainable and environmental innovations of affordable housing developments;
- i) Attending monthly meetings with local authority officers and the AHP officers to plan future developments and check progress on current schemes;

**To influence local strategies that impact on affordable housing, including:**

- j) Participating in HARA officer group meetings and providing progress updates;
- k) Representing the Rural Housing Enabler team by participating in local and county forums relevant to affordable housing in rural areas;
- l) Building effective partnerships and networks to address affordable housing and undertaking, where appropriate, research which contributes to more effective solutions to meet rural affordable housing needs;
- m) Working with other Rural Community staff e.g. who have responsibility for Parish Plans and whose work is related to the provision and sustainability of affordable housing;
- n) To produce information for statistical returns and other reporting information which might be required;
- o) To ensure that up to date information on rural affordable housing is added to CAH's publications and website.

**To provide information on affordable housing to policy makers, to influence national policy on affordable housing in rural areas, including:**

- p) Commenting on consultations from national organisations such as the Homes and Communities Agency, Department of Communities and Local Government and Action with Communities in Rural England.

**Professional Updating:**

- q) To keep up to date with legislation and developments relating to rural housing, and undertake appropriate training and skills development;



- r) To attend meetings of peers and colleagues including meetings of the Rural Housing Enablers in the south east. This may occasionally involve travel outside Hampshire;
- s) To pursue further professional training and development where appropriate;

**General Duties:**

- t) To attend and participate in CAH's internal meetings where appropriate;
- u) To liaise with other staff members to ensure effective exchange of information;
- v) To comply with CAH's monitoring and recording requirements;
- w) To represent and promote the organisation's work positively;
- x) To carry out all work with due regard to CAH's policies and procedures;
- y) Any reasonable additional tasks as requested by the line manager or other senior staff.

Some administrative support is available to the Rural Housing Enablers, although it is expected that the post holder will be largely self-servicing. Some work outside office hours will be required, as parish councils often meet in the evening. This post involves travelling around some very rural areas in Hampshire.

.

**March 2011**

## EAST HAMPSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

### JOB DESCRIPTION

<b>JOB TITLE:</b>	<b>HARAH Strategic Housing Officer</b>
<b>SERVICE TEAM:</b>	Housing and Property Services
<b>SECTION:</b>	Housing Development
<b>POST NUMBER:</b>	<b>HS401T</b>
<b>REPORTS TO:</b>	Head of Housing and Property Services
<b>RESPONSIBLE TO:</b>	Chairman of HARAH representing the 7 Local Authorities

### JOB PURPOSE

To act as a Strategic Housing Officer across the HARAH partnership. The postholder will work closely with the housing and planning authorities in Hampshire to increase the number of affordable homes built in rural areas by:

- Improving land supply by working with the private and public sector.
- By working with a range of housing agencies to deliver rural housing targets.
- To build capacity training/education and providing technical expertise.

### PRINCIPAL ACCOUNTABILITIES

Generic -

1. To comply with statutory requirements and regulations, policies and procedures, particularly in relation to equal opportunities and health & safety.
2. To contribute to Risk Management activity within the remit of the post.
3. Contribute to and uphold good Financial Management practices.
4. It is the responsibility of all staff that input, store, retrieve, or otherwise manage data to ensure that it is of the highest quality.

Post Specific

1. To provide the link between the Members Group and HARAHA Officer Group. Provide secretariat and support to the Chairman of the Members Group.
2. To provide training opportunities to Parish Councils across the 7 authorities.
3. To hold an annual stakeholder event for HARAHA to promote and share best practice.
4. To be responsible for the publicity and promotion of HARAHA including website.
5. Ensuring policies are up-to-date and consistent. To be responsible HARAHA's rural housing strategy.
6. To develop and implement a Communications Strategy for HARAHA.
7. Work with the HCA and other bodies to promote HARAHA and ensure rural issues are considered at a county level.
8. To introduce formal performance monitoring arrangements for the affordable housing provider and local authorities in relation to HARAHA.
9. The post holder will work very closely in partnership with the RHE's and their employer – the RHE's will be operational, working up schemes whilst this post is strategic. There will be a clear division of duties and responsibilities. The post holder will introduce a Service Level Agreement with the RHEs' employer and monitor their performance in delivering HARAHA priorities.
10. Research good practice and work up new initiatives such as new models of rural housing delivery.
11. Ensuring rural housing issues are addressed through the Community Planning process.
12. To monitor the delivery of rural housing developed through HARAHA and ensure targets are met.
13. To co-ordinate responses on behalf of HARAHA to policy consultations.
14. Identify barriers to delivery of rural affordable housing in the local authorities and report to the Members Group.
15. Work with planning policy officers to increase the supply of rural affordable housing for example through policies such as CPO, allocating sites and providing the necessary evidence base for such policies.
16. Share experiences/offer mentoring support to other authorities who wish to establish rural partnerships.

**SPECIAL FEATURES (inc. Key Contacts)**

This job involves, or is accountable for, the processing of personal data. As such the postholder will need to have, or develop a satisfactory understanding of data protection principles and ensure that corporate procedures in respect to this area are applied at all times.

The postholder must be aware of their responsibilities under the Freedom of Information legislation.