

**Panel meeting**

21 June 2022, 10-12 (9-9.50am Members pre-meeting) *via Zoom*

**Present**: Dinah Roake (Chair)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| * Sophie Delamothe (Generation Rent) * Chris Bailey (Action on Empty Homes) * Melanie Sirinathsingh (Kineara) * Mikey Erhardt (Young private renters group, Toynbee Hall) * Samanthi Theminimulle (Young private renters group, Toynbee Hall) * Marcin Brajta (Camden Community Law Centre) * Elsa Corry-Roake (Just for Kids Law / Children’s Rights Alliance for England), | * Ilinca Diaconescu (London Gypsies and Travellers) * Greg Robbins (London Federation of Housing Co-operatives) * Pat Turnbull (London Tenants Federation) * Fiona Colley (Homeless Link) * Hugh O’Keefe (Tonic Housing Association) * Nigel Long (in a personal capacity) |

**In attendance**: Susie Dye, Manny Hothi (Trust for London), Jonathan Schifferes (GLA), Sam Hurst (GLA), Mariana Schiller (GLA), Tom Copley (Deputy Mayor for Housing and Residential Development), Leila Baker and Mary Carter (Panel Secretariat).

**Apologies**: Erin Mansell (Solace Women’s Aid), Sebastian O’Kelly (Leasehold Knowledge Partnership), Anna Kear (Tonic Housing Association), Sam Ashton (London Councils).

**Members pre-meeting, 9-9.50am**

1. Manny Hothi, Trust for London CEO, congratulated members on their work to secure future funding for the Panel and described it as testimony to their and the outgoing chair’s skills and hard work. He thanked the Secretariat and GLA officers for their work to keep the Panel going while future finding was being negotiated. He welcomed Dinah Roake as the incoming chair, building on the work of two great chairs and bringing a wealth of experience and a strong reputation to the Panel.
2. Dinah Roake, incoming chair, introduced herself and spoke of her enthusiasm for joining the Panel at such a positive time with secure funding, new working groups, new members and a clear set of priorities. She would like to arrange 1:1s with all members between now and the September Panel and would like to use that opportunity to discuss with members ways that that they can help her feed into Homes for Londoners Board meetings (she had attended her first Board the previous day). Dinah also welcomed Marcin to his first meeting representing Camden Community Law Centre.
3. Susie Dye, Trust for London, confirmed that a final agreement with the GLA for three-year funding was almost finalised. There is a lot of continuity, including with the Secretariat.
4. Working groups. The descriptions were reviewed and adjusted. Final version below. Susie Dye offered to connect/signpost working groups to other relevant groups/experience. In the meantime, there have been two meetings with GLA:
   1. London Gypsies and Travellers met with GLA and shared some observations of the Affordable Homes Programme in relation to Gypsy and Traveller accommodation and what could work better; and some best practice of housing associations outside London. They discussed intersectionality and how this is reflected for Gypsy and Traveller communities and heard from the GLA team about their plans to review the funding guide, potentially provide some case studies and also heard some reflections on how/why funding bids for specialist housing are fewer than expected. The team plans to raise ambition of delivery partners to apply for funding to deliver more specialist accommodation. They also want to build an evidence base to use in conversations with central government.
   2. Generation Rent met with GLA and discussed the application of the Decent Homes Standard and what it means to renters, especially around whether costs are passed to them through higher rents. They emphasised the need for minimum standards in the PRS which are easy to understand; and the importance of ensuring resources for enforcement.
5. The chair invited members to briefly share what’s on your mind or a hot topic for your organisation right now and might benefit from a short discussion at the main meeting. It was agreed to take into the meeting that many members are very occupied understanding what the Renters Reform White Paper means for their work and the people they support; and that the Panel remains very concerned about the loss of social rented homes.
6. Planning for London. Members welcomed the focus on Planning for London. Key is to discuss and influence how the GLA works with the sector on this and the London Plan; and how the Panel pursues its role as expert witnesses to influence the process. Also to continue to pursue data on net gains/losses within estate regeneration.

**Main meeting, 10-12**

1. **Chair’s welcome, introductions and updates**

The chair formally welcomed the meeting and talked about her experience in housing since the 1980s across many institutions in the sector – as an architect, in English Partnerships and the HCA, in housing associations and in community housing and community groups. She felt it a huge honour to have been appointed as chair of the Panel bringing important groups together to influence housing policy.

Advert and process for new member recruitment (race and housing, disability and housing) will be circulated for comment and then released at the beginning of July with interviews late summer with the hope that they can attend September panel.

The chair formally thanked Nigel Long at his last meeting, for the thoughtful and positive contribution he’s made to the Panel’s work. Nigel kindly continued to attend the Panel as a guest in order to share his insights and expertise around housing and disability pending recruitment of a permanent replacement.

The chair also welcomed Jack Maizels, Team Leader, Planning for London who is attending today to begin a conversation with the Panel about Planning for London.

1. **Minutes of the last meeting**

The notes from the last meeting held on 8 March 2022 were approved by Panel and GLA.

1. **Working Groups – Sign off the planned working groups and next steps**

The planned working groups including next steps were formally agreed. The GLA will field two officers to the first meeting of each working group and will include other colleagues from Housing and Land. The chair has asked the Secretariat to prepare terms of reference for the working groups and these will be circulated with a briefing note for each group that brings together Panel activities to date. Secretariat or Trust will support with coordinating the date of each working group first meeting.

1. **Planning for London**

The questions that GLA has put forward were:

* What issues on housing and development should the programme be considering and prioritising?
* Which housing issues would it be most valuable to better understand Londoners’ perspectives on?
* Is there any particularly valuable evidence published recently that we should be considering as we design our process for engagement?
* What could the London Housing Panel do to help the programme reach more Londoners, particularly those who might find it difficult to engage with the planning system?

Provisional timeline is: June-September is a development stage. Mid-late Autumn plan to start having first conversations with Londoners. Then in parallel or early 2023, have follow on conversations with stakeholder organisations.

Key themes and issues raised during the discussion:

* Understood that this process is about looking ahead and engaging widely with communities. It is not about rewriting the London Plan. Having said that all were in agreement that it is a chance to really step back and look at some big issues.
* Deputy Mayor said that in the new Affordable Homes Programme, there will be no London Affordable Rents. All low cost rent will be social rents. Data on Affordable Housing in Planning Applications Referred to the Mayor of London are available [here](https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/affordable_housing_in_planning_applications_referred_to_the_mayor_2011-2021.pdf).
* GLA is thinking about how to have the conversations (engagement gets skewed because of actual or perceived ability to engage with planning) and finding the right balance between breadth and depth. The Panel noted that
  + community engagement to develop the Recovery Missions was a good practice example that could help here.
  + Panel wants to see more inclusive and equitable engagement
  + Hopes the GLA will take an expansive view of what is evidence (stories as well as numbers)
* Panel asked a number of questions:
  + How will the Panel (and others) be involved in processing what you receive?
  + What are the levers of change that could be explored?
* Panel raised a number of points:
  + Implementation: Can we unpick why some community-led housing projects don’t go ahead? Projects find they are pushing at an open door when they speak to GLA but they get blocked when they get to local authority level/stage. Discussed potential for research (with GLA support to collect some case studies). Action: Panel to make a proposal to GLA for research.
  + Implementation and unintended consequences of policy implementation: There hasn’t been work to look at how the Opportunity Areas are affecting people (and markets?) already in the area.
  + It is the Planning Inspectorate that signs off the plan. So what more can be done to provide the evidence that would persuade the Planning Inspectorate?
  + Discussed viability. The Deputy Mayor noted that City Hall has a strong viability team with expertise in getting the most out of developers.
  + Housing market: Have a holistic understanding of cumulative impact of the housing system. Look at interaction of different aspects of the housing system/markets and other elements of the Plan.
  + Various PRS issues raised: PRS is used as temporary accommodation and move on from emergency and temporary accommodation (including S21s to flip to TA); LHA rates not covering costs of housing for single people; landlords moving to short lets (GLA research [here](https://www.london.gov.uk/talk-london/short-term-lettings-london)).
  + Disabled people and access to housing. Lack of data and lack of standardised data across boroughs around PRS use. Also an example of the lack of adapted homes and how the London Plan intersects with other parts of council planning: prioritisation given to relocation not adaptation but they’re in very limited supply. GLA signposted to research on people [trapped waiting for adaptations](https://www.thebureauinvestigates.com/stories/2022-04-05/disabled-people-trapped-waiting-years-for-vital-home-adaptations).
  + Devolving social housing regulation to mayors. It would require statute but it’s an important debate that sits alongside these discussions.
* Planning is about people. We have Panel members whose work is so far removed from a conversation about planning: ‘All we see all day is people who we can’t find accommodation for’ and finding adapted properties in inner London boroughs is nigh on impossible. The housing system is broken. All housing should be affordable including general needs.

Next steps:

* Secretariat to share minutes of the discussion
* Panel to make a proposal to GLA for research (LFHC, Secretariat, Chair, Sam Hurst, Jack Maizels)
* Direct officers to people’s stories of what is happening now (Kineara)
* Arrange working group meeting (5) to discuss potential for event/other ways the Panel can shape and influence how the GLA works with the sector on this. (Secretariat)
* Explore Panel engagement with GLA’s viability team (Chair, Secretariat, Deputy Mayor)
* Explore potential to assist in providing evidence that might persuade the Planning Inspectorate. (Chair, Secretariat, Deputy Mayor)

1. **Open Space**

**#1 – Renters Reform White Paper**

The White Paper is long awaited and generally welcomed.

* The property portal/register will provide data on landlords and properties and have potential to connect with tenants
* Removal of S21 ‘no fault’ evictions, although there’s lots to unpick around replacement terms and potential loopholes.
* Other things to unpick include: concerns around the impact on landlords’ willingness to accept benefit claimants; specialist possession grounds for specialist providers; issues around enforcement and ombudsman regulation and resources.
* First response from Generation Rent [here](https://www.generationrent.org/white_paper_generation_rent_s_verdict)

**#2 – Right to buy from housing associations**

A resurgence of a policy announced several times and not fully worked through, with currently little expectation it will be widely taken up. GLA focus on ensuring no net loss of housing, how discounts would be funded and pushing for replacement homes.

**#3 – Capture estate regeneration losses/gains to social housing**

Dinah raised the issue of data on net gains/losses within estate regeneration. GLA will come back to the Panel on this, including whether there is information on the datahub. (See [here](https://www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/planning/digital-planning/planning-london-datahub)  for a link to the Hub and [here](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TVxxOLmgrCc) for a YouTube video about how to build a dashboard.)

Action points:

* #1 - Generation Rent is preparing a briefing on the Renters Reform White Paper and will circulate this. Mikey Erhardt who represents Young Private Renters Group, Toynbee Hall is also drawing up a short briefing for Disability Rights UK and can circulate.
* #3 – GLA to follow up request for data on net gains/losses through estate regeneration

1. **Next steps**

The next London Housing Panel meeting will be at **10am-12pm on 20 September 2022** (with a **members pre-meeting 9-10am**)

**Dates of other future meetings:**

10am-12pm 8 Dec 22 (9-10 Members pre-meeting)

3pm-5pm 7 March 23 (2-3 Members pre-meeting)

Homes for Londoners Board meetings – 19 Sept 22, 6 Dec 22

****

**Panel meeting held on 21 June 2022**

**Key actions and decisions (draft pending preparation of full minutes)**

* Chair will use 1:1s with members (to be held between now and September Panel) to discuss ways to feed into the Homes for Londoners board meetings. Secretariat or Trust will be in touch to arrange.
* Advert and process for new member recruitment (race and housing, disability and housing) will be circulated for comment and then released at the beginning of July with interviews late summer with the hope that they can attend September panel.
* Working groups terms of reference and briefing notes will be prepared and circulated by the secretariat. All working groups to meet at least once before September Panel meeting. Secretariat or Trust will be in touch to coordinate dates.
* Next steps from the Planning for London discussion:
  + Panel to make a proposal to GLA for research (LFHC, Secretariat, Chair, Sam Hurst, Jack Maizels)
  + Direct officers to people’s stories of what is happening now (Kineara)
  + Arrange working group meeting (5) to discuss potential for event/other ways the Panel can shape and influence how the GLA works with the sector on this. (Secretariat)
  + Explore Panel engagement with GLA’s viability team (Chair, Secretariat, Deputy Mayor)
  + Explore potential to assist in providing evidence that might persuade the Planning Inspectorate. (Chair, Secretariat, Deputy Mayor)
* Generation Rent is preparing a briefing on the Renters Reform White Paper and will circulate this. Mikey Erhardt who represents Young Private Renters Group, Toynbee Hall is also drawing up a short briefing for Disability Rights UK and can circulate.
* GLA to follow up issue of data on net gains/losses through estate regeneration.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Name and description** | **Notes** | **Next step** | **Initial lists of attendees** |
| 1 | **Holding developers and others to account for the number and proportion of social rented homes across all sites including Opportunity Areas (through improved community access to data and information).** This aligns with Panel priority: Massively increase social housing supply. | This is a major area of interest for the Panel and it is likely therefore that this working group will continue to convene throughout the 2022-2025 funding period. | Convene and agree what practical actions need to happen (e.g. familiarisation with the datahub); and whether there is consensus about the key focus of the group to put back to the Panel as a whole. | * LFHC * London Tenants Federation * Leasehold Knowledge Partnership * Solace Women’s Aid * Action on Empty Homes * (Chair) |
| 2 | **Getting a platform for the different and diverse voices of different housing experiences.**This aligns with Panel priority: Support all Londoners to be heard and thrive. | What is the ask bearing in mind the funding over three years and beyond the next Mayoral election? | Convene a Task & Finish group to work through purpose, focus and approach that the Panel wants to take | * London Gypsies and Travellers * Tonic Housing Association * Young Private Renters Group, Toynbee Hall * London Tenants Federation * LFHC |
| **3** | **Maintain Panel’s involvement in work to take forward the six areas identified by the Roundtable on Temporary Accommodation (see separate summary report).**This aligns with Panel priority: Take action on temporary accommodation. | To date the Secretariat has attended these meetings and can brief the Panel members that come forward and support with how to position members as part of the group. | Identify (suggest) 2 panel members with capacity to attend bi-monthly meetings   with GLA and London Councils and decide on wider engagement (e.g. Capital Letters, Shelter) | * Generation Rent * Kineara * Camden Community Law Centre |
| **4** | **Conversation about the intersection between race and access to housing, that will help inform the development of future Mayoral housing and planning policies.**This aligns with all three Panel priorities. | The next round of member recruitment will include seeking members that can bring housing and race equality focus/insights. | NB Additional members will be joining the Panel in September. The next step is to clarify what other structures/ processes within GLA are addressing parts of this, identify opportunities and points of alignment. Begin to identify gaps in evidence. | * Homeless Link * Generation Rent |
| **5** | **Project/Reach and Influence group**To work on four process matters (visibility; skills/capacity/knowledge around power structures; ensuring panel processes enable bringing in voice of communities; event linked to Planning for London). | This group will include Trust personnel, Secretariat and min. one member (can vary) and min. one officer. It will do its work in ‘sprints’ (short bursts of activity) | The next step is to meet and scope and work out the sequencing of tasks and activities. | * Generation Rent * Homeless Link * London Gypsies and Travellers * Young Private Renters Group, Toynbee Hall |