

News from around the sector

Thursday 8 November 2018

In the headlines

League tables could 'further stigmatise social housing residents'

The Housing Ombudsman has called for a different approach to publishing Key Performance Indicators.

[24 Housing](#)

Universal Credit: Claimants 'to get more time to switch'

Work and Pensions Secretary Esther McVey said claimants would not have to wait as long for their money and debt repayments would be reduced.

[BBC](#)

Housing association model of delivering social housing 'not working'

A study by the public sector procurement specialist Scape Group has found the average council in England would like to build 1,800 homes for social rent every year.

[Local Gov](#)

Target of building 300,000 new homes a year in England under threat

The OBR does not forecast as far as the mid 2020s, but it predicts no major increase beyond 250,000 in the next five years, well below the number needed to meet the much flaunted target of 300,000 a year.

[Property Wire](#)

Policy, regulation and legislation

£2m for councils to crackdown on rogue landlords

Councils will be able to bid for funding to step up enforcement action against irresponsible landlords.

[MHCLG](#)

Tax rules for second-homes to be reviewed by ministers

A business rates 'loophole' which could be costing English councils millions in lost Council Tax is to be reviewed by ministers with a consultation.

[MHCLG](#)

Homes England Framework Document

The Framework Document is the core governance document for Homes England.

[Homes England](#)

Combustible building materials: letter of response to Steve Reed MP and others - 7 November 2018

Letter from the Secretary of State on delivering building safety through the announced ban on combustible materials in the external walls of high-rise residential buildings.

[MHCLG](#)

Housing associations must change the way they fill in accounts, regulator says

It plans to align its requirements with the Value for Money Standard introduced in April, which judges whether social landlords are delivering value for money.

[Inside Housing](#) (register)

Housing statistics and intelligence

UK house price indicator drops to six-year low - RICS

British house prices are falling on the broadest basis in more than six years, though the steepest declines remain focused in London and South East England, a monthly survey of property valuers showed on Thursday.

[Reuters](#)

Housing market in London sees modest price growth and big drop in sales

London's housing market has been in a lull, with modest growth in average house prices and a large drop in transaction volumes, according to a new quarterly industry analysis report.

[Property Wire](#)

Construction firms battle rising costs

The latest pan industry quarterly survey paints a picture of reasonable activity but deteriorating profit margins in the face of rising costs.

[Construction Index](#)

Welfare reform and benefits

Universal credit leading to rise in food bank use, charity says

Trussell Trust says benefits system is failing to protect claimants from hunger.

[The Guardian](#)

At least 1 in 10 properties online likely to be advertised unlawfully

At least 1 in 10 rental properties in England are likely to be advertised unlawfully by explicitly discriminating against people who rely on housing benefit, new research from the National Housing Federation and Shelter shows.

[NHF](#)

Universal Credit's 'devastating impact' in Flintshire

Flintshire's head of revenue collection David Barnes said average rent arrears have risen four-fold since the money is now paid to claimants, not landlords.

[BBC](#)

Government open to 'data share' between housing associations and DWP

Response to Social Security Advisory Committee (SSAC) report on Universal Credit commits to "further discussions" on data sharing to help manage claimant migration.

[24 Housing](#)

Finance

PF poll: nearly all councils to borrow more after HRA cap lifted

A *PF* snapshot survey has revealed 93% of councils across England are planning to borrow more against their housing revenue account now the cap has been lifted.

[Public Finance](#)

Thrive secures £50m for major homebuilding programme

Hertfordshire based provider set to grow its portfolio by a quarter by 2021.

[24 Housing](#)

Human Resources

Over 5,000 young people homeless or at risk of homelessness in Greater Manchester

Centrepoint collected the data through Freedom of Information Requests (FOI). All 10 local authorities in Greater Manchester provided data on the number of young people who approached them because they were homeless, or at risk, meaning the figure of 5,044 is exact.

[Rochdale Online](#)

Half of female prisoners being released to homelessness, report warns

'The desperate shortage of housing leaving so many vulnerable women homeless is of great and increasing concern,' says Chair of the IMB at Bronzefield prison.

[The Independent](#)

Energy and environment

More landlords to be forced to improve energy efficiency

Partial climbdown means help for more tenants in coldest homes in England and Wales.

[The Guardian](#)

Energy price cap promises to save households £1bn

The government's cap on energy prices will probably have to be raised in the spring, only three months after being introduced, the regulator has admitted.

[The Times](#) (register)

Learning from the energy sector on consumer regulation

As the Social Housing Green Paper consultation closes, David Pilling of Ombudsman Services argues it is good news the government is looking at the energy sector for ideas on improving consumer regulation in housing.

[Inside Housing](#) (register)

Useful reports

Could the government have done more to enable people to escape poverty?

The Chancellor's announcement on Universal Credit Work Allowances in Monday's Budget was positive, but more is needed for a social security system that genuinely gives people a springboard to improve their lives.

[Joseph Rowntree Foundation](#)

Calculating a Living Wage for London and the rest of the UK

This report sets out the method through which the Living Wage rates in London and the rest of the UK are calculated by the Resolution Foundation on behalf of the Living Wage Foundation.

[The Resolution Foundation](#)

Blogs and opinion

Tenant voice and power: should mutuality be part of the future?

Over the past couple of weeks I have attended a couple of sessions on mutuality run by Trowers and Hamlins and HQN. These sessions were exploring what a modern 'mutual' organisation might look like and the positive impact it could have on the services residents receive. In particular the session I was part of was asking the question “ Is mutuality a good way of ensuring tenant engagement and empowerment?”

[tpas](#)

‘A new deal for social housing’ green paper - LGA response

Councils are proud of their housing and the families that call it home, they are committed to improving standards, to empowering and supporting tenants, and to expanding the stock of social housing for those in need of a secure, quality, affordable home.

[LGA](#)

The government is dealing out gagging clauses – and stifling the truth

From Brexit experts to Grenfell inspectors, non-government organisations are being told not to create ‘adverse publicity.’

[The Guardian](#)

The sky's the limit: Solving the housing crisis involves unlocking the UK's air rights

Skyscrapers are the hallmark of bustling and healthy cities – a sign that a lot of people want to live and work within a few square miles.

[City A.M](#)

Other news

Regulator should be widened ‘to cover all landlords of social housing’

The National Federation of ALMOs has told government it needs to strengthen the regulator and widen its remit.

[24 Housing](#)

FCA says lending industry needs to be creative to deal with mortgage prisoners

Home owners in the UK who are ‘mortgage prisoners’ need urgent help with up to 10,000 people in the UK potentially requiring a creative solution to their situation, according to the financial regulator.

[Property Wire](#)

New president and vice president take the helm at CIH

Vice president Jim Strang steps up to become president – taking over from Alison Inman – while Aileen Evans becomes vice president.

[CIH](#)

One holiday park exposed trying to mis-sell caravans as homes

The BBC filmed undercover at a Park Holidays site, where it was suggested to a potential "buyer" that caravans could be permanent homes - which would have been in breach of its own licence.

[BBC](#)

Refugee builds new life building homes

Calico Group found Ammar Hussein a week’s work experience. Now he has a fulltime role – starting on the Group’s latest development scheme.

[24 Housing](#)