Where the full text article is freely available, please click on the headline for further information. Alternatively, please contact the Business and Legal Intelligence Team for further details.

If you would like advice or assistance with any issues covered in this bulletin, please contact Alan Aisbett or Anne Bowden, Partners at Pinsent Masons in the housing team or Ian Roberts, Partner, or Sarah Whitty, Senior Associate, at Pinsent Masons in the housing finance team.

NEWS

1. Revealed: royal estates failing on affordable home building targets
The Observer
9 February 2014
Two of Britain’s largest landowning bodies, which between them generate millions of £ a year for the Queen and Prince Charles, are regularly failing to meet affordable housing targets when building new homes on their land.

2. The bedroom tax loophole: a guide for councils and housing associations
The Guardian
6 February 2014
A step-by-step guide for identifying cases, challenging decisions and dealing with discretionary housing payments.

3. UN housing report dismissed as ‘Marxist’
The Guardian
4 February 2014
A United Nations report on UK housing conditions calling for the suspension of the bedroom tax was dismissed by the government yesterday as partisan, discredited and a “misleading Marxist diatribe”.

4. House price inflation slowed in January, the Halifax says
BBC News
6 February 2014
The rate of house price inflation has fallen for the second month running, according to the UK’s largest mortgage lender, the Halifax.

PRESS RELEASES & OFFICIAL INFORMATION

5. HCA opens discussion on fees for regulation
Homes and Communities Agency
10 February 2014
The Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) has today published a discussion paper seeking views from providers, tenants, lenders and others on introducing a fee charging scheme for regulation. The move would bring social housing providers into line with organisations in other sectors where fee charging is common.
To view the consultation paper click here

6. **Help to Buy extended to include ‘Islamic Mortgages’**
**HM Treasury**
11 February 2014
The government’s Help to Buy mortgage guarantee scheme can now also be used by providers of Home Purchase Plans, the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, Sajid Javid, announced today (11 February 2014). Home Purchase Plans (HPPs) are a Sharia law compliant alternative to mortgages and are often known as ‘Islamic Mortgages’.

7. **Fears mount for flood hit areas as government plans to exclude millions of homes and businesses from affordable flood insurance scheme**
**British Property Federation**
7 February 2014
The property industry has welcomed David Cameron's £130m pledge to help flood operations across Britain but said that flood-hit areas would face long term misery if the government pressed ahead with plans to exclude millions of homes and businesses from its new affordable flood insurance scheme.

8. **Former forces to get help with housing**
**Ministry of Defence and HM Treasury**
4 February 2014
Ex-armed forces personnel in need of housing will be able to benefit from funding for life-changing accommodation initiatives across the country, Defence Minister Anna Soubry has announced today, 4 February.

9. **A helping hand on the property ladder**
**Scotland Office**
4 February 2014
Scottish Secretary Alistair Carmichael welcomed figures showing that a UK Government scheme has helped nearly 200 families in Scotland purchase new homes.

10. **Scrap ‘Bedroom Tax’ help cap**
**Scottish Government**
3 February 2014
Legal limits imposed by the UK Government on the help the Scottish Government can give to mitigate the effects of the ‘Bedroom Tax’ should be lifted, Deputy First Minister Nicola Sturgeon said today.

11. **New benefit cap statistics released**
**Department for Work & Pensions**
6 February 2014
Over 8,000 households who had their benefits capped have found jobs, reduced their benefit claim, or had another change of circumstance.

See also:
- DWP: '8,000 have moved out of benefit cap' – Inside Housing, 6 February
ARTICLES

Legal

12. **ASB bill amended to provide separate regime for residential settings**
   Inside Housing
   4 February 2014
   New anti-social behaviour legislation will be amended to allow injunctions to be gained for behaviour causing 'nuisance and annoyance' in residential settings only.

13. **Date confirmed for bedroom tax loophole to close**
   Inside Housing
   6 February 2014
   An error in bedroom tax regulations will be fixed from 3 March, the Department for Work and Pensions has confirmed.

14. **Grayling announces new Planning Court for major developments**
   Out-Law
   6 February 2014
   An estimated 400 planning cases per year will be fast-tracked for hearings by specialist judges in a new Planning Court under plans announced by Justice Secretary Chris Grayling yesterday.

15. **Flooding bill would require developers to pay for sewer improvements**
   Inside Housing
   5 February 2014
   A new bill which would force developers to stump up the cost for improving sewers to prevent floods was introduced to the House of Commons yesterday.

Government policies

16. **Welsh Government makes further push for ‘bedroom tax’ exemptions**
   Localgov.co.uk
   7 February 2014
   Wales has renewed calls for ‘bedroom tax’ exemptions, while announcing a further £1.3m of funding to support those affected.

17. **Affordable homes programme bidding ‘riskier’ than previous round, says chief exec**
   Inside Housing
   7 February 2014
   The bidding environment for the 2015/18 affordable homes programme is ‘much riskier’ than in the previous funding round due to increasing costs in a rising housing market, a housing association chief executive has warned.

18. **Hopkins announces more than £900m New Homes Bonus allocations**
   Out-Law
   4 February 2014
   Councils across England will be allocated a total of £917 million in the 2014/2015 financial year under the Government's New Homes Bonus scheme, Housing Minister Kris Hopkins has announced.

19. **Cameron announces £100 million for flooding repairs and home maintenance**
   Inside Housing
   5 February 2014
David Cameron has announced today in prime minister’s questions that the government will make an extra £100 million available for ‘essential’ flooding repairs and home maintenance.

See also:

- **Additional £30m for flood repairs and maintenance** - Inside Housing, 6 February

20. **Social housing review ‘needs to address councils’ financial freedom’**
Public Finance
4 February 2014
A government review of social housing should give councils greater financial freedoms to boost development, the National Federation of Almos has said today.

21. **Planning policy ‘does not do enough for new homes’**
Inside Housing
5 February 2014
A new national planning policy document for Northern Ireland does not provide enough support for the building of new homes, the body representing housing associations has said.

Finance and data

22. **Bond issue raises £200m for EMH**
Inside Housing
7 February 2014
A housing association in the east midlands has raised £200 million through a public bond issue.

23. **Lenders ‘relaxed’ about implications of accounting regulations for landlords**
Inside Housing
7 February 2014
Lenders appear to be ‘relaxed’ about the potential impact of new accounting regulations on housing association balance sheets, a consultant has said.

24. **HCA investigates social landlord surplus slowdown**
Inside Housing
6 February 2014
The overall annual surplus for England’s largest housing associations will not break £2 billion as had been expected, ending a trend of successive rapid increases.

Housing management

25. **Council to insulate up to 3,300 homes**
Inside Housing
6 February 2014
A local authority has given the go-ahead to fit external wall insulation on up to 3,300 homes, in a project worth up to £45 million.

26. **Social landlords announce repairs and maintenance partnership**
Inside Housing
5 February 2014
Two Worcestershire housing associations have announced a repairs and maintenance partnership, which they predict could save £7 million over the next ten years.
Housing associations

27. Around 200 homes sold in £19m transaction
   Inside Housing
   10 February 2014
   Housing group Green Square has taken over 189 homes from The Guinness Partnership in a £19 million transaction.

28. HCA outlines regulatory fees proposals
   Inside Housing
   10 February 2014
   English housing associations will be charged an annual regulatory fee based on the number of homes they own, under proposals outlined by the Homes and Communities Agency today.

29. Majority of associations to hike rents by maximum
   Inside Housing
   7 February 2014
   More than 95 per cent of housing associations will increase their rents up to the maximum allowed, an exclusive Inside Housing survey has revealed.

30. Housing association placed on HCA watch list
   Inside Housing
   6 February 2014
   Your Housing Group is facing non-compliance with the regulator’s standards due to a breach of gas safety rules.

Local authorities

31. Councils fail to prioritise disabled bedroom tax-hit tenants
   Inside Housing
   11 February 2014
   Councils are ignoring government guidance and failing to prioritise disabled people for payments to help cope with the bedroom tax, a study has claimed.

32. Councils resist retirement housing
   Inside Housing
   7 February 2014
   Councils have been accused of resisting development plans for retirement housing because they are concerned about the mounting cost of care.

Construction

33. Fairview submits proposals for 105-home Ilford scheme
   Out-Law
   10 February 2014
   Fairview New Homes has submitted a planning application to Redbridge Council for a residential and commercial redevelopment of a Vauxhall car showroom site in Ilford in Essex.

34. East London set for housing boost from West Ham stadium sale
   Construction News
   10 February 2014
   West Ham United will sell its Boleyn Ground stadium to developer Galliard Group in a move that will see hundreds of homes created in east London.
35. **Housing estates on royal-owned land failing affordable targets**  
*Inside Housing*  
10 February 2014  
Housing developments built on estates owned by the Queen and Prince Charles are routinely missing targets for affordable homes, an investigation has revealed.

36. **Hackney approves revised Woodberry Down masterplan**  
*Out-Law*  
7 February 2014  
Hackney Council's planning committee this week resolved to grant planning permission to developer Berkeley Homes for a seven-phase 3.7 million square feet development at the Woodberry Down Estate in east London.

37. **Housebuilder Countryside looks to double profits within five years**  
*Construction News*  
6 February 2014  
Housebuilder Countryside is looking to possible acquisitions to double its profits over the next five years.

38. **Southwark approves detailed first phase of Heygate masterplan**  
*Out-Law*  
6 February 2014  
The London Borough of Southwark's planning committee this week approved reserved matters for the first phase of Lend Lease's Heygate Estate masterplan as part of its £1.5 billion transformation of SE1’s Elephant and Castle.

39. **Extra 1,000 homes approved for London regeneration scheme**  
*Inside Housing*  
6 February 2014  
A London borough has approved the building of nearly a 1,000 extra homes for one of London's biggest regeneration programmes.

40. **£100m Canning Town scheme to be delivered by Cathedral Group and Galliard Home**  
*Out-Law*  
5 February 2014  
Developer Cathedral Group has formed a joint venture with Galliard Homes to deliver its Royal Gateway scheme in east London's Canning Town.

41. **Hammersmith and Fulham approve affordable homes under Rational House project**  
*Out-Law*  
4 February 2014  
The London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham's planning applications committee last week gave green light to proposals for a three storey building at the Barclay Close Estate, with half of the new homes to be aimed at first time buyers.

42. **Charity calls for ‘major’ social house building drive for families**  
*Inside Housing*  
4 February 2014  
A charity has called for a ‘major’ building programme of social and affordable homes, as part of a new report published today.