

What's New? Policy Summary



Ministry of Housing,
Communities &
Local Government

The government has now released information on how and when First Homes will be implemented. This will have an impact on all development programmes. Planning Policy has been amended so that from **28 June 2021** sites should deliver First Homes as **25% of on-site developer contributions for affordable homes**. In relation to existing planning applications, sites with full or outline planning permissions already in place or determined before **28 December 2021** will not be required to comply with First Homes policy.

First Homes go on the market for first time with 50% discounts for new homeowners.

The scheme, which was a pre-election pledge by the Conservatives in **2019**, will normally see first-time buyers offered homes at a discount of **"at least" 30% compared** with the open market price. After the discount has been applied, the price must be **no higher than £250,000, or £420,000 in Greater London**, the government said. However, local authorities will be able to set a discount of **either 40% or 50%** if they can show evidence that it is needed. Councils will also be able to impose lower price caps than those under the standard scheme. **The same discount will also be passed on if a home is sold on to another first-time buyer**, the government said. These discounts will be funded through developer contributions used to deliver affordable housing.

Property Market Insight (Savills)

- May completions were just short of 115,000, a figure -15% below the average of the preceding 6 months but +15% above a normal pre-pandemic market.
- In the first three weeks of June, the number of agreed sales were around +11% higher than in a normal market, still buoyant but down from the average of +44% seen in the first five months of the year.
- The strongest activity is now in the market over £1mil, when previously it was in the market between £500,000 and £1mil. The greatest drops in activity are in the price brackets that have benefited most from the stamp duty holiday which has now ended.
- In the prime regional housing market, price growth of 3.2% in Q2 2021 has pushed annual price growth up to 8.5%—the highest figure in well over a decade.
- Coastal properties and £2mil+ country houses have been the strongest performers, experiencing +14.6% and +12.9% annual growth respectively.



How well is the planning system responding to the climate crisis? Savills explore the different targets in place across the UK, and whether national ambition is translating to local action. **Click on the image to watch the report in full.**

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Private renters are facing the threat of eviction now the ban has been lifted.

The Joseph Rowntree Foundation reports that **400,000 renting households** have either been served an eviction notice or have been told they will be evicted. As the ban on evictions ended **31 May 2021**, they have been calling on the Government to address rent arrears by increasing support through the discretionary housing payment system and providing grants to people who have fallen into arrears.

The Housing Ombudsman has launched a Building Information Modelling toolkit.

Building Information Modelling (BIM) is a process for creating and managing digital information throughout the lifetime of a building which can help housing associations to **digitise their development and asset information**. BIM provides a digitised record of information about every component of a building in one place, enabling everyone involved to view updated and accurate information at key stages of a project, including when a building is occupied. It is also an effective way of building in safety upfront into a building's design and construction, as well as enabling an evidence base to support safety while a building is occupied. BIM can therefore support the construction, handover and management of safer, higher quality buildings, leading to efficiencies for housing associations developing and maintaining homes, and potentially **greater satisfaction among residents living in them**.

BIM for Housing Associations (**BIM4HAs**) is a joint project between HA's and industry specialists, supported by the NHF. They have developed a free toolkit to deliver safe, high-quality and well-managed buildings. There is also a forum where users can share their experiences, ask questions and provide feedback.

BIM4HAs is also a participant in the **MHCLG Golden Thread Initiative**, a government initiative bringing together industry professionals who will collaborate to demonstrate that it is possible to provide a standardised digital golden thread of building safety information to the satisfaction of the Building Safety Regulator.

ITV's investigation into cases of disrepair in social housing



Kate Henderson, CEO of the National Housing Federation appeared on national news to apologise on behalf on their members for the **squalid conditions filmed inside housing association homes**, occupied by residents who feel ignored by their landlords.

The Housing Ombudsman revealed that the number of complaints it received in the first three months of 2021 were **up 73%** on the same period last year – with the service warning that this higher level "may be the new normal".

In addition to this, Inside Housing's annual Biggest Builders survey has identified a **15% drop** in completions by housing associations, similar to figures published by Homes England as a combination of the pandemic, brexit and fire safety costs have impacted works. **July 2021**

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RSH announces tenant satisfaction measures sounding board

Draft tenant satisfaction measures were set out by the Government in the Social Housing White Paper. Before RSH consult on the measures, they need to develop detailed proposals about how they could be implemented in practice. To help them with this, they have created a sounding board with representatives from across the sector. Representatives from the following organisations will be included:

ARCH, CIH, Councils with ALMOs, **G15**, G320, Housing Ombudsman Service, PlaceShapers, Local Government Association, National Federation of ALMOs, NHF, **Northern Housing Consortium**, TAROE and Tpas. **BuildEast have an opportunity to be involved.**

A new Affordable Housing Committee has been launched by the leading real estate industry body for the UK.

The committee's agenda will be "to maximise the real estate industry's investment in affordable housing, and ensure better understanding within central and regional governments of the opportunities that the industry can offer to expand its provision of affordable homes", the **British Property Federation** said.

It will also focus on how the industry can complement the work of housing associations and local authorities in the delivery of affordable housing and improve the industry's engagement with institutions such as Homes England, the Greater London Authority and the Regulator of Social Housing.

New Social Investment Pilot

Rough Sleeping and Housing Minister Eddie Hughes MP announced a new social investment pilot that will create over 200 move-on homes. The 3-year pilot, which will run until 2024 will fund homes across England, with a particular focus in London, Greater Manchester and in Teesside. It comprises of :

- £15 million government grant to help deliver over 200 homes for rough sleepers
- Social investor Big Society Capital to match grant with £15 million of its own funding

New CEO of Homes England



Peter Denton, Chief Executive of the Hyde Group, has been confirmed as the new Chief Executive of Homes England.