



eBriefing

HDN News P.1

E&D News and Publications P.3

HDN News

HDN Mentoring Celebration Conference 2017

Last month we held our annual celebration of our mentoring programme, with inspiring presentations from participants and a key note speech from Alison Inman. It was so inspiring to hear first hand the value and impact of this programme. Huge thanks to all our generous mentors and supporters, and to the commitment from participants, which continue to make this an award winning development programme.



We will look forward to meeting colleagues old and new at our refreshed Regional Diversity Leadership and Networking events, which have been focussing on Inclusive Leadership and Change. We also have events on the benefits of Mentoring and Coaching, and our regular EDI Train the Trainer events, to find out more click [here](#).

We are delighted to welcome new members – Alpha Homes, Mears, One Manchester and Severn Vale.



We are still taking applications for our Board Mentoring Programme, click [here](#) for more information and to see some great short blogs from former participants and Lisa Pickard – a real champion of the programme.

We are also working with our Board Mentoring Steering Groups, NHF, Leadership 2025, Young Leaders and others to explore how we can increase diversity on Boards – please get in touch if you would like more information on these exciting plans.

We are continuing to develop our online self assessment tool with members and with Salford University. We are now looking for further volunteers to test the tool and contribute to its development. Please get in touch if you would be willing to be one of our guinea pigs!

Helping journalists portray social housing tenants fairly

A group of housing associations are working to produce a guide for journalists on how to avoid stereotyping tenants, find out more [here](#).

Check out our website [here](#) for the latest jobs with Orbit Group, London & Quadrant Housing Trust, Riverside Group, Karbon Homes, Leeds & Yorkshire Housing Association and many more.

Upcoming Event

[NHF Annual Conference and Housing Exhibition](#)

ICC, Birmingham - 19-20 September 2017

Thank you so much for your continued support – facing challenges and finding solutions together.

Enjoy the rest of the summer.

Best wishes

The HDN Team

CIPD | People Management
Awards 2016



Upcoming Notable Dates:



August

23rd International Day for the Remembrance of Slave Trade and its Abolition

25th Ganesh Chaturthi– Hindu

25th Samvastari– Jain

31st Waqf al Arafa (Hajj Day) - Islam

September

1st Eid al Adha - Islam

Eid-al-Adha is one of the most important Islamic holidays and commemorates Ibrahim's (Abraham's) willingness to sacrifice his son to God.

5th International Day of Charity

5th Kshamavani - Jain

8th International Literacy Day

10th World Suicide Prevention Day

11th Ethiopian New Year - Rastafari

Both Ethiopian New Year's Day and the Feast of Saint John the Baptist. The day is called 'Enkutatash' meaning the "gift of jewels."

20th – 22nd Rosh Hashanah – Jewish

Rosh Hashana is celebrated as the Jewish New Year among many Jewish communities worldwide. It starts 163 days after the first day of assover. Rosh Hashana lasts for up to two days in many communities. Rosh Hashana is a day of rest and prayer so Jewish people are limited from performing many activities that are regarded as "work".

21st International Day of Peace

21st World Alzheimer's Day

21st - 29th Navaratri - Hindu

22nd Autumn Equinox – Wicca

22nd Al-Hijra/Muharram - New Year - Islam

24th Fast of Gedaliah - Judaism

30th Yom Kippur – Jewish (may not work)

Yom Kippur, the most sacred and solemn day of the Jewish year brings the Days of repentance to a close. On Yom Kippur, God makes the final decision on what the next year will be like for each person.

Equality & Diversity News and Publications



Please note, to access articles from Inside Housing you will need a valid subscription.

Leadership and Recruitment

[CBI to urge UK businesses to place greater emphasis on gender, ethnic and social diversity](#)

24th April 2017

UK companies risk reducing the issue of diversity to a mere footnote of other priorities, even though it's a key driver of productivity and competitiveness, according to the leader of one of Britain's most powerful business lobby groups. In a speech on Tuesday, Carolyn Fairbairn, director-general of the Confederation of British Industry (CBI), will say that greater diversity in the workplace "is not just a matter of fairness, but a hard-nosed business case in the face of major changes in demographics and technology".

[How to Truly Promote Diversity In The Workplace](#)

23rd April 2017

Every business talks about the importance of inclusion and diversity, but the reality is that white men continue to dominate the upper echelons of major corporations. In fact, as Forbes writer [Kim Elsass](#) points out, diversity programs and training are all too often little more than a fig leaf for the leaders to convince themselves that they are not racist and to legally protect the company from discrimination lawsuits.

["Make work good for all" – CIPD publishes 'Manifesto for Work' ahead of General Election](#)

10th May 2017

CIPD is calling for publication of pay ratios, additional rights for zero-hours workers and increased investment in adult skills in new manifesto focused on 'good work'

The CIPD have today launched their 'Manifesto for Work', which urges the next Government to put 'good work' at the heart of its thinking in order to improve the economy, boost individual welfare and prosperity - creating the conditions for good work in organisations across the country. The manifesto contains a package of reforms including pay ratios, more rights for zero-hours workers and increased investment in skills and training, which aim to address the systemic problems in the UK economy by focusing on the positive influence the world of work can have on productivity and wellbeing.

[New diversity and inclusivity standard launched](#)

CIPD, 6th June 2017

Diversity and inclusivity should be values that employers pride themselves on, but for many organisations the incorporation of protected characteristics within a legal framework means a 'diverse' and 'inclusive' workforce has simply become a matter of protocol. Last month, a new British standard was launched, which seeks to go beyond legislation and encourage employers to recognize the intrinsic value of all people. Valuing people through diversity and inclusion (BS76005) stipulates that organisations seeking to meet the standard should improve internal practice, and extend the principles of diversity and inclusivity to encompass supply chains, customers and clients, and the wider community.

[What We Learned from Improving Diversity Rates at Pinterest](#)

Harvard Business Review, July 2017

In today's workplace, diversity is more than just a buzzword; it's a way to build a stronger business. At Pinterest, we understand that diverse teams yield smarter, more innovative results, which are essential in the competitive, dynamic tech industry. With over 175 million active users worldwide, Pinterest thrives on providing users with relevant ideas: what to wear, what to cook, how to furnish your home, and where to travel. Pinterest's fastest growing users are outside of the United States, and for current and future users, it's important that the people building our product make it relevant to people of different ethnic, social, physical, and geographic backgrounds.

[Bank of England tells insurers to better boardroom diversity](#)

British insurers should widen the range of people that sit on their boards in order to avoid the symptoms of 'groupthink', the Bank of England has warned.

The Bank takes the role of supervising insurers and wants to change the rules so that senior managers at insurance firms are more accountable for the decisions that they make.

Disability

[Local Plans should be overhauled if they fail on accessible housing, MPs say](#)

24th April – *Inside Housing*

The Women and Equalities Committee has recommended the Department for Communities and Local Government should carry out an audit of Local Plans to check they meet the new guidance set out in the Neighbourhood Planning Bill once it is brought into legislation. The committee heard evidence that the planning inspectorate may have approved Local Plans that show “insufficient regard to the needs of disabled people”. In its report it calls on the Equality and Human Rights Commission to investigate the planning inspectorate to see if it is compliant with the Equality Act 2010.

[Being Disabled in Britain: a journey less equal](#)

April – *Equality and Human rights Commission*

This report concludes that disabled people are still treated as second-class citizens, and that the road to disability equality was “littered with missed opportunities and failures.” The findings of the report include:

While the educational attainment gap between disabled and non-disabled children has reduced since 2009/10, the performance of disabled pupils in England, Wales and Scotland is still much lower. In England, the proportion of children with Special Educational Needs achieving at least 5 A*-C GCSEs is three times lower than for non-disabled children (20.0% and 64.2% respectively).

More disabled and non-disabled people overall are in work in Britain in 2015/16 compared to 2010/11. Despite this, less than half of disabled adults are in employment (47.6%), compared with almost 80% of non-disabled adults, and the gap between these groups has widened since 2010/11.

More disabled people than non-disabled are living in poverty or are materially deprived. Social security reforms have had a particularly disproportionate, cumulative impact on the rights to independent living and an adequate standard of living for disabled people. Families in the UK with a disabled member are more likely to live in relative poverty than non-disabled families.

Across the UK, 18.4% of disabled people aged 16-64 were considered to be in food poverty compared with 7.5% of non-disabled people. Disabled people over the age of 65 were twice as likely as non-disabled people in the same age group to be in food poverty. Disabled people continue to face problems in finding adequate housing, due to a shortage in accessible housing across Britain, and in Scotland the amount of wheelchair-adapted local authority housing for physically disabled people has decreased. Disabled people in Britain were also less likely to own their own home.

[Can multiple choice tests be discriminatory?](#)

2nd June 2017

Employers must take care when formulating recruitment tests, as a recent EAT ruling on indirect disability discrimination shows.

In *The Government Legal Service v Brookes*, Ms Brookes, a law graduate who has Asperger's syndrome, applied for a position with the Government Legal Service (GLS). Before being invited to interview, all applicants are required to pass a multiple choice situational judgement test. However, the multiple choice nature of the test put Ms Brookes at a disadvantage. She therefore asked if she could provide short narrative answers as an adjustment to the standard test, to take into account her disability. The GLS refused, stating that an alternative format was not available.

[The evidence on disabled people's housing issues from Scotland's Disabled People's Summit](#)

22nd June – *Our place, our space*

This report by Inclusion Scotland calls for the Scottish Government to seize the opportunity presented by their plan to build 50,000 new homes, by ensuring that they are built to be fully wheelchair accessible, or easily adapted to be so. The recommendations from this report include:

A national quota of 10% of all new housing to be wheelchair accessible; The impact of changes to Scottish building regulations on disabled people should be researched; Housing providers must ensure that disabled people are not disadvantaged by allocations policies; Disabled people should be involved in local authority decisions around housing need.

Age

[Council pilots modular technology to adapt vulnerable tenants' homes](#)

21st April – *Inside Housing*

The pilot, which aims to build modular extensions to the homes of older or disabled people to help them remain in their properties, is being run by Highland Council with modular builder Carbon Dynamic.

The idea behind the pilot is to build a modular extension that can be attached to multiple homes. It could be used on existing properties where, for example, the occupier becomes unable to access upstairs bedrooms or bathroom facilities. It can then be moved from one property to another if a resident's needs change or they die. It is the first time such a scheme has been used by Highland Council, although similar projects have operated elsewhere in the UK.

[Octopus returns to housing with retirement scheme](#)

5th April – *Inside Housing*

Octopus Healthcare, a subsidiary of Octopus Investments, has joined forces with property management and development company Places for People to launch Liberty Retirement Living, which aims to deliver 25 retirement villages and 2,700 units over five years. It already has planning permission for six retirement villages and plans to deliver seven, comprising 700 homes, in its first year.

[Up to 11,000 affected by under-21 benefit cap by 2021](#)

4th April - *Inside Housing*

According to the government's equality analysis, around 1,000 young people will be affected by the cut to housing benefit for under-21s this year, rising to 11,000 by 2020/21. The analysis said the government expected to save £105m with the cut through the life of this parliament, with set-up costs of £5m and running costs estimated at between £0.5m and £1m per year. It added that 23% of black and minority ethnic (BME) people in the age bracket are unemployed, compared with 19% of white British claimants – raising the chance that BME people would be impacted. However, it also noted 28% of white British young people live outside the family home, compared with 20% of BME youngsters, meaning there is “no clear evidence” to suggest black and minority ethnic claimants will be disproportionately affected.

[L&Q launches new supported housing subsidiary](#)

3rd April - *L&Q*

L&Q aims to meet the needs of growing numbers of older and vulnerable people as it launches its new care and support subsidiary, L&Q Living. The subsidiary brings together more than 6,600 supported and sheltered housing units from both L&Q and East Thames, following their merger in December last year.

The £47m per annum subsidiary will provide accommodation and support for older people, adults with learning disabilities, with mental health needs and young people across London and the South East. It aims to become a sector leader in dementia and autism care, expand mental health provision and develop a new model of accommodation and support for vulnerable young people, focussing on those who are leaving care or who have complex needs.

[Retirement Living Explained: A Guide for Design & Planning Professionals](#)

April - *Housing Lin*

This comprehensive guide provides a fresh perspective on exactly how retirement living should be defined, getting to the heart of the changing needs and expectations for this niche sector of development. Written by the School of Architecture, Planning and Landscape at Newcastle University, it sets out

some of the key research, planning, policy and practice issues that are relevant to the sector, and the key considerations that set this type of development apart.

Its key conclusions are that specialist retirement housing offers wide-reaching benefits that meet the three pillars of sustainable development – economic, environmental, and social – and that these benefits apply to individuals, communities and society as a whole.

According to the Office for National Statistics, over-65s account for a fifth of the UK's population. The real estate consultancy Knight Frank estimates that 25% of over-55s want to move to retirement housing in the future.

[Planning authorities are failing to prioritise housing for older people in their local plans](#)

20th July 2017, *Housing Lin*

Research conducted by law firm Irwin Mitchell exclusively for Property Week confirms that most planning authorities are not prioritising housing for older people in their local plans and supporting documents.

[Councils losing £6.7m in Universal Credit arrears](#)

25th July 2017, *Inside Housing*

Universal Credit rent arrears have reached £6.7m, representing 10% of total unpaid council rent despite roll-out to only 2.6% of tenants nationally. A new survey from the National Federation of Arm's-Length Management Organisations (NFA) and the Association of Retained Council Housing (ARCH) has revealed the total shortfall in rent from tenants claiming Universal Credit is £6.68m.

That represents a significant chunk of the £68.5m total value of council rent arrears from landlords surveyed, despite Universal Credit claimants only making up 2.6% of tenants. The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) is set to scale up the roll-out of Universal Credit across new areas this autumn. A report accompanying the survey, titled *Pause for Thought*, said this ambition should be stopped or slowed “to prevent further distress and financial hardship to many families, as well as unprecedented levels of rent arrears and demand for support from landlords”.

[Rural Housing for an Ageing Population: Policy Initiatives](#)

3rd July 2017, *Housing Lin*

To coincide with Rural Housing Week 2017, Lord Best announced a new APPG Housing and Care for Older People Inquiry, ‘Rural Housing for an Ageing Population: Policy Initiatives’ (or HAPPI 4) at the Rural Housing Summit on 5 July.

The aim of the inquiry, supported by Hastoe Housing Association, is to consider the obstacles to ensuring older people living in rural areas enjoy appropriate housing and have access to adequate at home care and support; and to make recommendations to Government, and those planning, commissioning and operating housing and care in rural areas. Jeremy Porteus from the Housing LIN will be Secretariat to the inquiry.

[Housing funds 'wasted' by councils, Shelter Cymru says](#)

4th July 2017, BBC News

Money which is supposed to help people struggling to pay their rent is being wasted by some councils, a housing charity has said. The UK government allocates Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP) to local authorities every year so they can be given to those whose housing benefit does not cover their rent. But Shelter Cymru said £100,000 of this "lifeline" money was returned to Westminster from Wales last year. Councils said they promoted the fund. But they admitted that despite their efforts, application numbers were still too low. Shelter said more than 15,000 people become homeless in Wales every year, including more than 2,800 children. It said the DHP fund was "incredibly important" to ensure people who received housing benefit were able to remain in their homes if they were struggling to pay their rent. But it said some councils were at "serious risk of under spending" their allocation and were returning thousands of pounds to the UK government each year, as was required for unallocated money.

[Government announces £80m 'Life Chances Fund'](#)

4th July 2017, www.gov.uk

The Cabinet Office has announced that as part of the Prime Minister's life chances strategy a new £80m Life Chances Fund has been opened and will continue for the next nine years.

The fund is described as a "top-up fund" for locally developed Social Impact Bond (SIB) projects. The aims of the fund are to increase the number and scale of SIBs in England and make it easier and quicker to set up a SIB.

Refugee

[University of Bath takes the lead in pioneering refugee housing research](#)

20th July 2017, Tech Spark

The University of Bath has announced its latest international research project, Healthy Housing for the Displaced, could dramatically improve the conditions in refugee camps based in parts of the world experiencing temperature extremes.

Partnering with Princess Sumaya University for Technology (Jordan), German Jordanian University (Jordan) and Mersin University (Turkey), the 3-year research programme will see to the design of low-cost and easy to construct housing based on the outcomes of what will be the largest ever global study investigating thermal, air quality and social conditions in camps housing displaced people.

Migrants

[Housing associations pledge to support migrants](#)

21st June – Inside Housing

Twenty-nine associations representing 87,000 homes signed up to the migrant support charter. The charter includes pledges to:

- Provide a safe and welcoming environment to migrants seeking someone they can trust;
- Train staff and board members so that they are able to be informed advocates for vulnerable migrants;
- Engage with staff, communities and partners to increase understanding of the issues facing migrants and to break down prejudice.

[Migrants are wrongly being made homeless. Housing associations must act](#)

20th June – The Guardian

For almost a quarter of a century there has been a steady growth in legal measures that restrict migrants' access to housing. The onus is now on landlords to check immigration status, welfare benefits and other public services are being denied to migrants, while land lords to check immigration status, welfare benefits and other public services are being denied to migrants, while Home Office guidance states that those found sleeping rough would be deemed to be in the UK unlawful and subject to removal. We need to obtain proper advice before making a decision; take a victim-centred approach rather than starting every case with scepticism; train staff in immigration and housing law; work in partnership with migrant and refugee organisations; ensure that tenants know what they and housing associations can do.

Low Income

[Kerslake: government should rethink welfare changes](#)

26th April – Inside Housing

Former civil service chief Lord Bob Kerslake has called on the government to look again at welfare changes in light of increasing homelessness and the rising cost of support. Kerslake made the recommendation as part of the Greenwich Fairness Commission, an investigation into

inequality in the London Borough of Greenwich, which he chaired. The report called for the establishment of a system that keeps the need for emergency support to a minimum. In particular, the shared accommodation rate of housing benefit should be reviewed in the context of risks to vulnerable young people, it recommended.

[Young people benefit cut to hit hardest in North](#)

13th April – Inside Housing

As of this month Universal Credit claimants aged 18 to 21 will no longer be able to claim benefits to support their housing costs, unless they can prove they fit into one of 11 exemptions. Figures obtained from English local authorities reveal more than 29,000 housing benefit claimants in the 18 to 21 age bracket, with the overwhelming majority in urban areas of the North of England.

[Manchester providers offer to pilot alternative to LHA cap](#)

12th April – Inside Housing

Social landlords in Greater Manchester have offered to run a regional pilot of an alternative to the controversial 'Local Housing Allowance (LHA) cap' in supported housing. In response to a government consultation on the proposals, the Greater Manchester Housing Providers (GMHP) group of 26 social landlords, has proposed using a national rate to set rents in supported housing, calculated based on typical costs of running schemes, instead of LHA. This would make providers in low-rent areas less reliant on council top-ups and would better reflect the cost of supported housing, which does not change greatly based on local market rents.

[On the Rise: Single parent sanctions in numbers](#)

April – Gingerbread

The benefit sanctions system has come under increased scrutiny in recent years – particularly since the introduction of a new system of rules for the key unemployment benefit, jobseeker's allowance, in October 2012. This report looks at the impact of jobseeker's allowance sanctions on single parent families, and focuses on the quantitative data available on single parent sanctions.

The report found that:

- The sanction regime is a significant part of the benefit system and cannot be dismissed as a minor element of welfare
- Sanctions have affected a large number of single parent families
- Single parents who are referred for a sanction are more likely to end up with a sanction imposed than a decade ago
- Single parents are still particularly at risk of being unfairly sanctioned

- Sanctions have had a significant financial cost for single parents
- Many more single parents are at risk from the extension of conditionality
- An overall monthly sanction rate, the DWP's preferred measure, of 6 per cent underestimates the risk of sanctioning for single parents – in the last five years, the estimated annual sanction rate was double this figure.

[Decline in living standards for social housing tenants, survey finds](#)

June – Human City

- A third of social housing tenants have seen their standard of living decline in recent years as above-inflation increases have hit food, fuel and transport.
- The thinktank surveyed 6,500 social housing tenants across England and nearly a third (31%) said their standard of living had worsened in the past two years. Meanwhile 49% said there had been no change and 20% reported improvement.
- The majority of tenants surveyed were on low incomes, with the net median income at £9,000 a year and two-fifths coping on less than £8,000. Only 24% are employed full time but 35% of these people are in short-term work or on zero-hour contracts.

[Briefing: Shut out](#)

June - Shelter

A growing number of low-income households are struggling to access private rented housing. This is fuelling homelessness, as increasing numbers of people are forced to seek help from their council. Meanwhile, growing numbers of families are trapped for years in temporary accommodation because local authorities struggle to secure housing for them. And many low-income tenants have no choice but to accept poor conditions and bad landlords.

The principle barriers to accessing private rented housing include:

- Housing market shifts, such as the inability of first-time buyers to purchase a home and the shortage of social rented housing, have led to an increasingly competitive private rental market;
- Government changes to Local Housing Allowance, particularly the four-year freeze on LHA rates, has caused benefit rates to become increasingly misaligned with local rents;
- There is significant reluctance among private landlords to let to LHA claimants;

- The upfront cost of private renting prohibits low-income households from accessing the PRS and means that many are forced to borrow, starting a tenancy in debt.
- competitive private rental market;
- Government changes to Local Housing Allowance, particularly the four-year freeze on LHA rates, has caused benefit rates to become increasingly misaligned with local rents;
- There is significant reluctance among private landlords to let to LHA claimants;
- The upfront cost of private renting prohibits low-income households from accessing the PRS and means that many are forced to borrow, starting a tenancy in debt.

Homelessness

[Liberal Democrats to pledge to end UK homelessness in general election manifesto](#)

21st April – *Independent*

Tim Farron has announced the Liberal Democrats will introduce a policy that will place long-term homeless people straight into independent homes rather than emergency shelters, in a bid to end rough sleeping in Britain. It will be funded by increasing grants to local authorities in order to fund homelessness prevention services more effectively.

[Homelessness prevention programme launched in North East](#)

12th April – *Inside Housing*

The North East's largest housing association has launched a homelessness prevention service aimed at helping people aged 18-34, for five councils in the Tees Valley, backed by £710,000 of government funding.

The funding was provided through the Department for Communities and Local Government's Homelessness Prevention Trailblazers scheme, which provides funding for local authorities ready to provide "new, innovative" approaches to preventing homelessness.

[Welsh Government considers Housing First scheme to tackle homelessness](#)

10th April – *Inside Housing*

The move comes despite Wales introducing a pioneering homelessness prevention programme as recently as 2015, a model which is set to be adopted in England.

A national rough sleeper count conducted across Wales in November 2016 found that the number of people bedding

down outside had increased dramatically despite the Welsh Government introducing its prevention programme the year before. prevention service aimed at helping people aged 18-34, for five councils in the Tees Valley, backed by £710,000 of government funding. The funding was provided through the Department for Communities and Local Government's Homelessness Prevention Trailblazers scheme, which provides funding for local authorities ready to provide "new, innovative" approaches to preventing homelessness.

[Councils welcome government's Universal Credit U-turn](#)

28th March – *Inside Housing*

The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) has confirmed it is looking at introducing an exemption for people who are made homeless and is working with councils to "fully support" anyone living in temporary accommodation who is on Universal Credit. Councils had warned of growing rent arrears because the first Universal Credit payment takes six weeks to arrive. This meant in some areas people in temporary accommodation had already left before their first Universal Credit payment, leaving the council to foot the bill. Labour-run Croydon Council is one of the few areas where Universal Credit has been fully rolled out. There are 1,250 of their 14,000 tenants on Universal Credit. The council's rent collection levels are at 98% but for Universal Credit tenants this drops to 72%.

[Cornwall Hospital Discharge Partnership Project](#)

24th April - *Housing Lin*

This Case Study describes a county-wide multi-agency approach to establish a Homeless Discharge project in Cornwall initially funded by an award of £65,000 from the Department of Health. Partners originally got together in 2013 in a bid to obtain grant funding to kick start the project. An official launch in March 2014 with sign up to a robust protocol was the start of an invaluable new service and lifeline for the homeless with health problems.

[Still more than 8,000 rough sleepers in London, figures reveal](#)

30th June – *Inside Housing*

More people slept rough in London last year than in any other since 2013 due to an increase in people sleeping rough over longer periods. A total of 8,108 Londoners slept rough in 2016/17, according to figures from the Greater London Authority. This was only a slight increase on the figure of 8,096 from the previous year, but the number of those who have been sleeping rough for at least two years rose from 1,828 to 1,978. Home Office guidance states that those found sleeping rough would be deemed to be in the UK unlawful and subject to removal.

[Homeless people are dying without dignity - they deserve better](#)

5th July 2017, *The Guardian*

The number of people sleeping on London's streets has doubled since 2010. Recently revealed figures show that 2,700 people were sleeping on London's streets in the last quarter. Rough sleeping is the side of homelessness seen on a daily basis, but homelessness extends far beyond this. It includes people who are living in hostels, squatting or sofa surfing. Research, released on 4 July, has, for the first time, explored in detail how terminally ill homeless people are supported when they are approaching the end of their lives.

[Rural campaigners lobby for boost in affordable homes](#)

6th July 2017, *Inside Housing*

A group of 12 campaign organisations and associations have warned rural areas could become "enclaves of the affluent" unless there is a meaningful increase in the number of affordable homes outside of towns and cities.

The Rural Coalition, a lobbying group that includes the National Housing Federation, the Campaign to Protect Rural England and the Royal Town Planning Institute, called on the government to introduce an "ambitious annual target" for new affordable homes in rural areas. It also called for a dedicated rural affordable housing funding programme. Just 8% of homes in rural areas are affordable, compared with nearly 20% in cities and towns.

[Social housebuilding in Northern Ireland threatened by benefit cuts](#)

6th July 2017, *Inside Housing*

Social housebuilding in Northern Ireland is being threatened by benefit cuts planned by the UK Government, according to a report. The Chartered Institute of Housing, Northern Ireland, warns that plans by the UK government to further cut housing benefit will make it harder for landlords to build new social housing. CIH NI said the government in Northern Ireland should review local housing allowance, looking at the potential impact of LHA rates on new social homes built. The NI executive should also commit to extend bedroom tax and benefit cap mitigation payments beyond 2020.

Nicola McCrudden, CIH director for Northern Ireland said: "The Conservative government is planning a raft of changes to housing benefit that will put people's homes at risk and threaten the ability to build new social housing in some areas.

[Universal Credit system is 'failing' people, says Citizens Advice](#)

6th July 2017, *Citizens Advice*

The rollout of Universal Credit should be paused until significant problems with it are fixed, says Citizens Advice. In

a major new report - Delivering on Universal Credit - the charity reveals that the requirement to wait for six weeks to receive any payment means people face serious financial insecurity, with many being forced into debt.

The research also identifies a wide range of administrative challenges, including problems with the online system and long waits to get help over the phone, which can make the initial six week wait even longer. By 2022 over 7 million households will receive Universal Credit and new Citizens Advice analysis reveals over half (54%) of these will be working households.

[Housing First is a step towards tackling homelessness, but we must demand more](#)

18th July 2017, *Left Foot Forward*

Research by Crisis into the potential of a Housing First approach to tackling homelessness in Liverpool has found the policy could be five times more effective at helping people out of homelessness than current strategies — and also nearly five times more cost effective.

This beautiful synergy of producing significant long-term results while also cutting costs has proved popular with government with Sajid Javid stating the report "underlines the importance of our manifesto commitment to pilot a Housing First approach".



[Homelessness among vulnerable groups being sidelined, says APPG](#)

18th July 2017, Inside Housing

The government and councils are failing to prevent homelessness among vulnerable groups of people, an all-party parliamentary group (APPG) has said. The APPG for Ending Homelessness published a report, funded by Crisis, focusing on preventing homelessness for domestic violence survivors, care leavers and prison leavers.

After hearing from a number of witnesses who have struggled to find accommodation after leaving a care setting, prison or an abusive relationship, the APPG came up with a number of recommendations for government and councils.

The Welsh Government introduced a pioneering homelessness prevention programme under the Housing Act (Wales) 2014 which came into effect in April 2015, requiring all councils in Wales to help anyone threatened with homelessness within 56 days.

A spokesperson for the Chartered Institute of Housing Cymru welcomed the rise in households helped by councils, but said the housing sector's ability to address homelessness is being "overshadowed by the impact of welfare reform".

[How Denmark has helped its homeless young people](#)

10th July 2017, The Guardian

Since 2009, the national Danish strategy for tackling homelessness has been the housing first approach. This article explores the effectiveness of Housing First and explores its impacts on young people.

[Homelessness in Wales rises 57%](#)

28th July 2017, Inside Housing

Homelessness soared 57% in Wales last year, despite more people receiving help under prevention measures introduced by the Welsh Government. Official statistics released yesterday show 10,884 households were assessed as homeless in 2016/17, up from 7,128 the previous year.

Councils managed to prevent 5,718 deemed at risk of homelessness from losing their homes for at least six months – an increase from 4,599 in 2015/16 but still a smaller proportion of the total, down from 65% to 62%. The Welsh Government introduced a pioneering homelessness prevention programme under the Housing Act (Wales) 2014 which came into effect in April 2015, requiring all councils in Wales to help anyone threatened with homelessness within 56 days. A spokesperson for the Chartered Institute of Housing Cymru welcomed the rise in households helped by councils, but said the housing sector's ability to address homelessness is being "overshadowed by the impact of welfare reform".

[Rural homelessness 'hidden crisis' needs attention, says thinktank](#)

10th July 2017, The Guardian

Research revealed the number of people sleeping rough in the countryside rose by up to 32% in the past five years. The "hidden crisis" of rural homelessness requires urgent attention from the government, a leading thinktank has said after research revealed a dramatic rise in the number of rough sleepers in countryside areas in the last five years. The Institute for Public Policy Research warned that it is particularly hard to prevent or relieve because of the difficulties in covering larger areas and the lack of specialist resources compared to cities. It said the number of people sleeping rough in barns, outhouses and parked cars in rural areas had risen by up to 32% between 2010 and 2016.

The report, Right to home? Rethinking homelessness in rural communities, finds the promotion of the countryside as a "rural idyll" where people go to escape the city and have a better life could "mask" the presence of households at risk of becoming homeless or already without a roof over their heads.

[64% of Welsh social homes fail Shelter Cymru standard](#)

11th July 2017, Inside Housing

Nearly two-thirds of social rented homes in Wales do not meet Shelter Cymru's new Living Home Standard largely as a result of concerns about affordability, the charity has revealed. A study found that 64% of social rented households do not meet the standard's criteria for a decent, affordable home – compared to 61% of private rented households. Affordability was the main reason for social rented homes to fail the test, with 51% of those managed by housing associations and 36% of those local authorities missing these criteria. The study, carried out by Ipsos Mori on behalf of Shelter Cymru and British Gas, was based on 344 interviews with adults in Wales about their homes. To meet the affordability criteria, interviewees needed to confirm they were able to meet the rent without regularly having to cut spending on household essentials or were not worried that rates could rise to a level that would be difficult to pay.

[Housing First could save £4m in Liverpool region](#)

12th July 2017, BBC News

Providing long-term rough-sleepers with a place of their own could save the Liverpool City Region (LCR) up to £4m a year, a study has found. The feasibility report, commissioned by the charity Crisis, looked at piloting the Housing First support system aimed at reducing homelessness.

Finding people a home "improves well-being" and is more cost-effective than hostel placements, it said. LCR Mayor Steve Rotherham said it could "change how we tackle homelessness".

The study, funded by the UK government and the charity Housing First, said the "current system is failing some of the most vulnerable homeless people, who often struggle with the rules and conditions, stress, and lack of security in hostels". It said they needed "higher levels of support as a result of poor mental health, substance misuse, physical or learning disabilities or a history of offending". Adopting the Housing First scheme could save LCR between £1.18m and £4.02m annually by 2023/24, the report claims.

Health & Housing

[More than half a million social homes in England do not meet basic health and safety standards](#)

17th July 2017, The Independent

New figures reveal hundreds of thousands of homes with serious safety hazards. More than half a million social homes in England fail to meet basic health and safety standards, an analysis of official government data by The Independent has revealed. Just weeks after the Grenfell Tower fire raised serious questions about the state of housing in the UK, new statistics show that 525,000 social homes currently do not meet the national Decent Homes Standard – almost one in seven of all social homes in England.

Of these, 244,000 properties are deemed to have a category one safety hazard – the highest category of risk – which includes potentially fatal hazards such as exposed wiring, overloaded electricity sockets, dangerous boilers, leaking roofs, vermin infestations or inadequate security.

[Top tips for strategic estates planning and extra care housing](#)

11th July 2017, Housing Lin

Sir Robert Naylor's report earlier this year estimated that selling unused NHS land or buildings could bring in up to £5.7 billion as a one-off capital gain. He made a number of recommendations to increase supply of housing.

This practice briefing from the Housing LIN provides practical information, examples and tips on how NHS estate teams can make best use of / dispose of surplus NHS land or buildings to develop extra care housing to meet local Sustainability Transformation Plan (STP) priorities.

[How councils can best use Disabled Facilities Grants](#)

7th July 2017, LocalGov.co.uk

This article outlines how councils can better use the Disabled Facilities Grant and offers useful tips and advice.

[The Lightbulb Project: Switched on to integration in Leicestershire](#)

18th July 2017, Housing Lin

This Housing LIN Case Study no 135 discusses this 'invest to save' project which brings together County and District Councils and other local partners in Leicestershire to help people stay safe and keep well in their homes for as long as possible.

[Rebooting health and social care integration: An agenda for more person-centred care](#)

6th July 2017, Housing Lin

This report by Localis argues that health and social care integration can create new value locally but needs to become more person-centred. It makes a number of recommendations, including greater investment in businesses that create products, which support assisted living such as investing in digital technology to support an increase in better health and care options at home.



[The Impact of Housing Problems on Mental Health](#)

19th April – Shelter and ComRes

The report explores common mental health presentations of patients attending GP practices, the types of housing problems mentioned by patients to their GPs, and the possible associations that GPs suggested between housing and mental health.

The report found that:

- General Practitioners (GPs) spontaneously identified housing issues when discussing factors involved in their patients' mental health presentations
- Where housing was seen as the sole cause of mental health conditions, the most commonly cited conditions were anxiety and depression
- Where patients presented with a mental health condition that was linked to problems with housing, the GPs self-identified a knowledge and support gap.

[Health and housing: building the evidence base](#)

April - Housing Lin

Housing and related services can promote integrated care, save the NHS money and improve the patient experience, an evidence review has concluded. Commissioned by Kent Surrey Sussex Academic Health Science Network (KSS AHSN) and undertaken by the Housing LIN, the report suggests that closer working between the NHS and the housing sector can help reduce hospital admissions and emergency department visits, speed up the discharge of older patients and maintain the independence of older people.

[Trailblazing firms lead the way on mental health](#)

New data from mental health charity Mind gives an insight into the mental health of 15,000 employees participating in Mind's first ever Workplace Wellbeing Index, a brand new benchmark of best policy and practice when it comes to staff mental health. Thirty organisations took part in the Index including Deloitte, HMRC, the Environment Agency, Jaguar Land Rover and PepsiCo. According to the survey results, of those staff who had disclosed poor mental health at work (2,200 employees), just over half said they felt supported, and 72 per cent said they'd been made aware of the support tools such as Employee Assistance Programmes, counselling, staff support.

informal buddying systems. Over half (56 per cent) were offered reasonable adjustments or support measures, such as changes to hours worked or the nature of some of their duties.

[A shared understanding: Localizing the integration of housing and health in Nottingham through a Memorandum of Understanding](#)

This Housing LIN case study 134 sets out the journey taken by Nottingham City to embed housing as the third vertex of local health and social care integration through the development of a local Memorandum of Understanding.

[Health Secretary suggests NHS could remove council house damp](#)

19th July 2017, Sky News

The NHS could pay to remove damp from council houses in order to improve the health of residents, Health Secretary Jeremy Hunt has suggested. Mr Hunt said that improving the quality of public housing could fall to the NHS in five years' time as part of an holistic approach to public health. Asked about the impact of housing on health outcomes, the Health Secretary told an audience at the King's Fund in London: "Our whole approach is because we believe that improving the nation's health is holistic.

"It is about providing green spaces in cities to help improve our mental health, providing cycle routes, a whole range of things, and housing is critical. There are very strong links between poor health and poor-quality housing.

However, the suggestion the NHS might take on additional costs may be met with scepticism by health service managers currently preparing for anticipated winter pressures, and grappling with local restructuring.

[Briefing on homelessness, health and equality](#)

The National Housing Federation has published a briefing on homelessness, health and equality. The Foundation contributed to the briefing, which covers mental health, race, criminal justice, age, gender and LGB&T communities.

[City of Well-being: A radical guide to planning](#)

July 2017, Routledge, Taylor and Francis

City of Well-being provides a radical and holistic introduction to the science and art of town planning. It starts from the premise that the purpose of planning is the health, well-being and sustainable quality of life of people. Drawing on current and historic examples it offers inspiration, information and an integrated perspective which challenges all professions and decision-makers that affect the urban environment. It is both authoritative and readable, designed for students, practitioners, politicians and civil society.

Pregnancy & Maternity

[Tribunal awards £25,000 to trainer who lost job over pregnancy](#)

2 June 2017

A woman has been awarded £25,000 in compensation after an employment tribunal ruled she had been unfairly dismissed after she became pregnant.

Daniella Lewandowski said she had suffered “a year of hell” after losing her job at the Bradford District Apprenticeship Training Agency, which she joined in 2015.

Lewandowski was initially employed on a year-long contract due to end in March 2016. She said her employer told her the contract would be extended for a year, but after the news of her pregnancy came to light she was informed this would no longer happen.

Supported Housing

[Sector calls on government to delay supported housing changes](#)

16th June – Inside Housing

Housing association leaders and trade bodies said ministers should put a halt to proposals to cap supported housing benefit payments at the level of the Local Housing Allowance (LHA). The government had planned to introduce this controversial cap from April 2019, with local authorities to provide top-ups for costs above the LHA rates through devolved ringfenced funding.

But with political uncertainty due to last week’s election, which saw the Conservative Party lose its outright majority in the House of Commons, senior industry figures have called for the April 2019 deadline to be abandoned, and for fresh work to be carried out to find a better solution for supported living rents.

Other

[The Social Value of Sheltered Housing](#)

3rd July – Demos

Demos reviewed 52 academic papers and policy reports related to the social value of sheltered housing.

[The Role of the Arts and Culture in Social Care Policy Briefing](#)

July 2017, Social Care Institute for Excellence and All-Party Parliamentary Group on Arts, Health and Wellbeing

The All-Party Parliamentary Group on Arts, Health and Wellbeing (APPGAHW) has undertaken a major Inquiry into

the role of the arts in health and wellbeing, with which the Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE) has been involved. The Inquiry yielded a substantial report – Creative Health: The Arts for Health and Wellbeing – providing strong evidence that creative and cultural activities can have a positive impact on people’s health and wellbeing. Taking up the findings of the Inquiry, this briefing sets out some of the ways in which the arts and culture can help in social care.

[Children’s Commissioner’s report: Measuring the Number of Vulnerable Children in England](#)

July 2017

Millions of children in England living vulnerable or high-risk lives, says a July 2017 report (pdf) from the Children’s Commissioner for England. This report reveals, for the first time, the scale of vulnerability among children in England. [Accessible housing policy update](#)

29th June – Housing LiN

This briefing highlights the significant accessible housing deficit, seeks to inform and update housing professionals about policy developments that may affect them, and makes the case for including accessibility amongst their top priorities.

[Dealing with Hate Crime](#)

April - UK Race and Europe Network

The guide helps victims of hate crime (and NGOs who work with victims) to understand rights to justice, police and criminal justice agencies’ obligations to take action, and share good practice in helping victims.

[Housing and Communities Inequalities in Northern Ireland](#)

June – Equality Commission for Northern Ireland

This report shows that Catholics wait an average of 15 months for housing compared with nine months for Protestants, according to the report, while migrant workers are “extremely vulnerable to exploitation and discrimination”. The Department for Communities (DfC) is currently reviewing its allocations policy, which is administered by the Northern Ireland Housing Executive.

[Housing Guide for People with Sight Loss](#)

July 2017, Thomas Pocklington Trust

This online guide aims to share information for visually impaired people who are looking for a new home, seeking to live independently for the first time or experiencing problems in their current accommodation. It will share personal experiences from visually impaired people who have different life circumstances, provide useful suggestions, and signpost to sources for further advice.