

Feedback

Posts and tweets

 Rents in #PRS at highest level on record according to @rightmove. While PRS is great for many there are >1m low-income households who in previous generations would have got #SocialHousing and £1bn paid on temp homeless housing, much of it PRS
@PaulHackett10

 #Investment volumes were lower in the first half of the year, reflecting a global trend of weakening confidence. Longer-term activity was robust & investors continue to express preference for alternatives
@CBRE_UK

 Lady Thatcher's legacy - private landlords now own 40% of the council homes sold off under #Right2Buy and the rents have doubled
@HenryPryor

 Demand for #office space continues to be driven by #knowledgeconomy, w/ #coworking boom continuing to broaden its reach across major markets, forcing traditional landlords to adapt in order to accommodate occupiers
@AYUKViews

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The Editor reserves the right to edit letters

It's no surprise MEES are not policed

Editor: I was interested to read your article 'Councils "do not have time" to enforce MEES' (p8, 16.08.19).

Since the introduction of the Energy Performance of Buildings Directive (EPBD), via the Energy Acts, into UK law - introducing the requirement for properties for sale or letting to have a valid Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) - local authorities (LAs) have been the enforcement body.

All very straightforward on paper. However, to date, I am not aware of any particular incident of enforcement. The unofficial enforcing bodies currently tend to be agents and lawyers who decide not to undertake the required sales/lettings in absence of an EPC. It appears that the LAs, with insufficient time to dedicate to enforcement, are leaving 'the market' to self-regulate.

New-build projects tend to

Councils 'do not have time' to enforce MEES

London Trading Standards director says resource issue is to blame for lack of fines

Alex Howlett

Local authorities do not have the time or resources to enforce the Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards (MEES) that came into force in April 2018, according to a senior director at London



be regulated via the Building Regulations and the Building Control process.

But where the system falls over is in the case of building extensions. The Building Regulations may require an assessment and EPC on the new extension, at which point Building Control has no further interest. The EPBD requires the new extended building to have a new/updated EPC; however, this rarely happens as it is not policed.

So the suggestion that MEES is not being policed or enforced is no major surprise.

The historic underperformance of the EPBD when it comes to existing buildings is one issue, but given the government's zero-carbon agenda and the well-known impact of ageing building stock on UK emissions, it is clear MEES should receive a lot more attention. But the question is: from whom?
Neil Ingham, director, energy and sustainability, eb7

Overcrowding figures reveal scale of housing crisis

Editor: The figures recently released by the National Housing Federation showing that 1.3 million children in the UK are living in deplorable conditions are yet again further evidence of the sheer scale of the UK's housing crisis.

The research shows that overcrowding in England has reached record levels with around 96,000 more children living in overcrowded homes compared with a decade ago. The main cause is a lack of social and accessible housing and the National Housing Federation is calling on the government to invest £12.8bn every year for the next decade in building new social homes.

A lack of funding is certainly a

key factor, but with public finances still under extreme pressure, committing such an amount annually will be challenging.

We should also be thinking of new ways that private capital can be committed to help build the low-cost houses the UK so urgently needs. There are a limited number of social housing REITs but we should be far more ambitious in scope with regard to efforts to channel much-needed private sector funding into low-cost housebuilding.

We recently conducted research into the issue and have drawn up a policy package of new measures, including: tax breaks for individuals who lend to accessible housing developers; ideas to encourage

private pension holders to include such loans in their portfolios; allowing local authorities to allocate funding for housebuilding through more innovative alternative finance platforms; and educating property developers.

We believe such measures would give a significant boost to the funding available for low-cost housebuilding and help address the housing crisis, one of the most serious issues the country faces.
Yann Murciano, chief executive, Blend Network

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