

# The Letter

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RENT IS THEFT (obviously)

## Shapps Slams "Bizarre" Ruling on Squatters



Housing Minister Grant Shapps has attacked a judge's ruling that a London council must hand over an address list of empty homes to squatters as a "bizarre decision that flies in the face of common sense".

Judge Fiona Henderson ruled that Camden Council must comply with a Freedom of Information request from the Advisory Service for Squatters, and publish a list of vacant council and privately owned homes.

doubled after a similar list was published.

Shapps said "We've been clear that we want to bring more empty homes back into use, which is why I'm making one hundred million pounds available to help council led efforts to do so, and rewarding those that house people in former empty homes through the New Homes Bonus. But I also want to shut the door on so called "squatters rights" once and for all, and end the misery, expense and hassle that far too many people have had to endure for too long, which is why we are consulting on making squatting a criminal offence".

According to a report in The Daily Telegraph, Camden had argued that disclosure would compromise the prevention or detection of crime, and that the number of squatted properties in the South London borough of Lambeth had

“  
...I also want to shut the door on so called "squatters rights" once and for all, and end the misery, expense and hassle that far too many people have had to endure for too long...  
”

Housing Minister Grant Shapps

## Newsletter mailing list

If you would like to be added to our newsletter mailing list, please provide us with your name and address, and we will make sure that we send you a copy of *The Letter* each quarter.

### Win Win for Chichester City and St. Wilfrid's Hospice



Chichester City under 14s football team

Chinneck Shaw have sponsored Chichester City under 14s football team for the 2012/13 season, but decided not to have the firm's corporate logo on the shirt.

Instead, Chinneck Shaw's Director, Neil Shaw, requested that the logo of St. Wilfrid's Hospice would go on the shirts in order to promote the fantastic work carried out by the Chichester based hospice.

Neil's sister was cared for by St. Wilfrids in 2003, and he felt that this was a small way of saying thank you.

Neil said "We are pleased to be able to support the boys football team, and at the same time promote the great work that St. Wilfrid's Hospice does in our community."

# "Tiptop" Tipner

Portsmouth City Council (PCC) is working with fellow landowners The Southeast England Development Agency (SEEDA), and the Tipner Regeneration Company (TRC) on plans to turn the area into an attractive, modern gateway to Portsmouth.

The development would include offices, homes, shops and a new junction/ Park & Ride off the M275.

The council and CEEDA plan to clean up some of the land they own, including the P D Fuels site near Twyford Avenue. CEEDA, which owns the site, has plans for it to be developed for housing,

including affordable housing, and local facilities.

These plans will be considered by the council's independent planning committee later this year.

An announcement is expected in December on whether the government will provide up to twenty million pounds for a new junction/ Park & Ride off the M275 to enable the full Tipner redevelopment scheme to go ahead.

Cathy Wadsworth, the council's Strategic Director for Re-generation said: "We are making real progress with Tipner. We have already

started talking to residents near our sections of land so they understand what's being planned in terms of the clean up, and there will be plenty of opportunities for people to have their say. Our aim is that residents in Twyford Avenue, and others close by, will have a cleaned up site with new facilities like a local convenience store and maybe a doctor's surgery. We would make sure any clean up operation causes the absolute minimum disruption to local residents, and follows the strictest safety procedures. Health and Safety is our number one priority."



# Hindhead Tunnel opens on time

It has been three months since the Hindhead tunnel opened, and businesses across the region are reaping the rewards promised to them.

On 27 July Transport Secretary Philip Hammond took a pair of scissors, and cut the tape to open the new tunnel.

Local firms and commuters had been told their journey between Portsmouth and London would be cut down by as much as 30 minutes.

A florist wholesaler based in Horndean said that the new tunnel has made a massive difference. Before the tunnel opened their drivers could spend 45 minutes just stuck in traffic. The company had estimated that their drivers

wasted 117 hours every year waiting for the Hindhead lights to change.

The tunnel was built as part of a three hundred and seventy one million pound development which will also see the old A3 dug up, and the area around the Devil's Punchbowl returned to nature.

It will take up to 36,000 vehicles a day which had previously been funnelled through Hindhead. The project engineers say the tunnel is the longest underground road tunnel in the UK, at 1.25 miles long.

It would seem logical that there would be a positive effect upon rental and capital values of all properties south of the Hindhead tunnel.



*The Hindhead Tunnel open as scheduled on 27 July 2011*



## Demand for rental property continues to outpace supply

New tenants' demand again outpaced the supply of rental property, as many continue to turn to the letting sector, says the latest RICS residential lettings survey.

As a result of this, rents continue to increase, although the survey indicates that the pace of growth moderated slightly.

One of the main drivers of the strong demand for rental property continues to be would-be buyers who have moved to the lettings market after struggling to find mortgage finance, or first time buyers unable to meet lenders' deposit requirements.



New landlord instructions – which indicate the flow of rental property coming to the market – continue to edge upwards, albeit only modestly. Surveyors report that where tenancies are coming up for renewal, some landlords – particularly those in London and the Southeast – are now choosing to put their property on the sales market, making even fewer rental properties available.

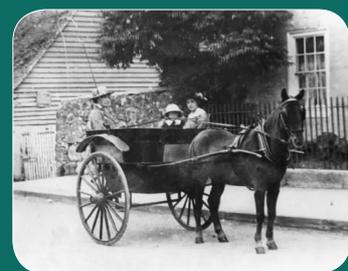
RICS spokesperson James Scott-Lee says “The

combination of strong tenant demand, and a limited stock of good properties on offer, is pushing rents ever higher over much of the country. This is the case for both houses and flats.

Moreover, with mortgage finance for first time buyers likely to remain in short supply for some time to come, this imbalance is set to persist. The inevitable outcome is that rents will continue to increase.”

For the full report please visit [www.rics.org/lettings\\_survey](http://www.rics.org/lettings_survey).

## No Rental Void for 60 Years!



One of our elderly tenants in Southsea has lived in the same house for over 60 years, and can remember when Mr Chinneck used to collect the rents on a Monday morning using a horse and cart! She recalls the rent was 8 shillings & 1 penny per week [8s 1d pw].

As all experienced Landlords know, one of the keys to a successful investment is to keep rental voids to a minimum – a 60 year uninterrupted let isn't too bad is it!

chinneckshaw\*

is able to arrange Gas Safety Checks for £31.00 + vat.

## The Green Deal

The Green Deal is the Coalition Government's flagship policy for improving the energy efficiency of existing buildings in Great Britain. It is a new market framework, and is based on a key principle that the cost of some energy efficiency measures pay for themselves, in effect, through the resulting savings on fuel bills.

Britain has some of the oldest building stock in Europe. Our draughty homes are poorly insulated, leaking heat and using up energy. As consumers, we pay a high price for inefficient housing – and so does the planet. A quarter of the UK's carbon emissions come from the energy we use to heat our homes, and a similar amount comes from businesses, industry and workplaces.

Under the Green Deal, bill payers will be able to get energy efficiency improvements without having to front up the cash. Instead, businesses will provide the

capital, getting their money back via the energy bill. At the heart of the offer is a simple rule known as the Golden Rule: estimated savings on bills will always equal or exceed the cost of the work, and the length of the payment period should not exceed the expected lifetime of the energy efficiency measures.

Another interesting aspect of the Green Deal is that the finance will not be a personal loan on the householder or building owner, but will, in fact, be a debt held on the property. Future owners of the property will take on the remaining elements of the Green Deal until payment is complete.

The Green Deal presents an excellent opportunity for Landlords to improve the energy efficiency of their properties, helping tenants save on their bills and do their bit for the environment.

The Green Deal will be enacted from the Energy



Bill that is currently going through parliament. If all goes according to plan the government is hoping that the Green Deal will be launched on 1 October 2012. For further information please visit the government's Department of Energy and Climate Change website – [www.decc.gsi.gov.uk](http://www.decc.gsi.gov.uk).

*A quarter of the UK's carbon emissions come from the energy we use to heat our homes...*

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