



Public Sector Legal News Update

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Cases

INSURANCE

R&S Pilling (t/a Phoenix Engineering) v UK Insurance Ltd. [2017] EWCA Civ 259. Court of Appeal (Civil Division) (CA (Civ Div)). Sir Terence Etherton MR; Beatson LJ; Henderson LJ. April 12, 2017

The carrying out of repairs to a car was classed as "use" of the vehicle within the Road Traffic Act 1988 s.145(3)(a) where those repairs were necessary in order to make the car lawful and safe to drive. The carrying out of such repairs was an activity consistent with the normal function of the vehicle.

Appeal allowed

Legislation

PLANNING

Neighbourhood Planning Act 2017. c.20

An Act to make provision about planning and compulsory purchase; and for connected purposes.

[Read full text here.](#)

Royal Assent: 27 April 2017

Regulatory Development

SOCIAL SECURITY

Improving Lives: Helping Workless Families. Issued by Department for Work and Pensions. 4 April 2017

A Department for Work and Pensions paper sets out plans to improve the support given to workless families and their children. Proposals include: the launch of the next phase of the Troubled Families Programme; a new programme to reduce parental conflict; enhancing the role of Jobcentre Plus in working with local partners; and greater support to help those with drug and alcohol dependencies into work, by implementing Dame Carol Black's review of employment and drug and alcohol dependency.

[Read full text here](#)

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News

CONSTRUCTION LAW

Taylor Wimpey to pay out £130m for homebuyers trapped by ground rents. *Guardian, 28 April 2017, 16.* By Patrick Collinson.

Taylor Wimpey is to pay out up to £130 million to buyers of some its new-build leasehold homes, which were left near-worthless after buyers found themselves trapped in contracts that doubled ground rent every 10 years, claiming that though the contracts were legal, they were "not consistent with our high standards of customer service". MP Peter Bottomley, leading a campaign against leasehold abuse, has called on other developers to also review their ground rent contracts.

Companies referred: Taylor Wimpey

Further Reading

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

A change of rate. *Accountancy 2017, 158(1485), 8-11, 13.* By Calum Fuller.

Comments on the revaluation of business premises for business rates throughout England and Wales, and notes the new rules in Scotland. Considers which regions will experience the biggest rate reductions and increases, the most affected areas in London, and the special reliefs for traders facing major increases. Examines proposals for more comprehensive reforms to the business rates system.