



UNITED KINGDOM – January 2024

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UK GENERAL

Britain's shopkeepers say ministers must fix broken business rates

A group of leading shop chains are calling for a review of the business rates system which they consider to be “broken”. This article hears from the retail sector about the problems they face with the current system and changes that need to be made.

The article can be accessed via the following link:

[Britain's shopkeepers say ministers must fix broken business rates \(msn.com\)](https://www.msn.com/en-gb/news/uk/britain-s-shopkeepers-say-ministers-must-fix-broken-business-rates)

International Property Tax Institute

IPTI Xtracts- The items included in IPTI Xtracts have been extracted from published information. IPTI accepts no responsibility for the accuracy of the information or any opinions expressed in the articles.

Could taxing land more than income fix the UK housing crisis?

In this article a Professor of Housing and Planning at UCL examines the proposition that the historic increases in house prices is due to the economic shift in the latter part of the 20th century that saw housing transformed from a home into an asset. The article also looks at the theory that reducing tax on earnings and reintroducing a land tax would help solve the housing crisis.

The article can be accessed via the following link:

<https://theconversation.com/could-taxing-land-more-than-income-fix-the-uk-housing-crisis-221346>

Council tax bands need overhauling, northern business group says

This article looks at the Northern Powerhouse Partnership (NPP) who are urging the government to carry out an urgent revaluation for council tax to address the inequities that are being faced by areas with higher requirements for council budgets and services as compared to lower rates for more expensive housing e.g. in Westminster Council. The article also looks at the NPP's demands for higher bands for foreign-owned properties worth more than £2m.

The article can be accessed via the following link:

[Council tax bands need overhauling, northern business group says - BBC News](#)

Landlords press Chancellor to scrap property tax to 'create 1m homes'

Amidst a crisis in the private rented sector, the National Residential Landlords Association (NRLA) is urging the Chancellor to scrap the 3% Stamp Duty levy on additional homes. This article looks at the reasons it was introduced in 2016 and the views of the NRLA that scrapping it would increase the supply of homes for private rental.

The article can be accessed via the following link:

[Landlords press Hunt to scrap property tax to 'create 1m homes' \(thenegotiator.co.uk\)](#)

VOA Unveils New Standards for Agents

The Valuation Office Agency (VOA) has published a new set of agent standards when acting for clients in respect of business rates and council tax. This article examines the standards and the methods of enforcing them and hears opinions about them from the professional bodies.

The article can be accessed via the following link:

[VOA Unveils New Standards for Agents | Mirage News](#)

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ENGLAND

Council seeks tax rise of up to 21% over two years

It is reported that Birmingham City Council has asked the government for permission to increase council tax by up to 10% each year for two financial years. This article explains that councils have to hold a referendum for increases over 5.5%, but that the government is considering making an exception for Birmingham. The article reports that a decision has to be made prior to next year's budget being settled in February.

The article can be accessed via the following link:

[Birmingham City Council seeks tax rise of up to 21% over two years - BBC News](#)

Eric Pickles says Today there should be a National Council Tax revaluation – says the man who in 2010 destroyed all the databases of property values to prevent a revaluation, and caused the crisis in Local government Finances

This article looks at the current views of Lord Pickles who believes that there should be a council tax revaluation in England but says it will never happen as it would be too unpopular with the electorate. The article contrasts his views with those contained in reports from 2010 when he cancelled the revaluation that was in progress.

The article can be accessed via the following link:

[Eric Pickles says Today there should be a National Council Tax revaluation – says the man who in 2010 destroyed all the databases of property values to prevent a revaluation, and caused the crisis in Local government Finances | Decisions, Decisions, Decisions \(wordpress.com\)](#)

Households in England face above-inflation £2bn council tax raid

This article reports that the government have told local authorities to address the financial crises in council budgets by increasing Council Tax by the maximum 4.99% in April. The article considers the situations councils find themselves in as the PM is looking to cut income tax as a re-election strategy and hears opinions regarding how the council tax increase will hit the poorest households.

The article can be accessed via the following link:

[Households in England face above-inflation £2bn council tax raid | Tax and spending | The Guardian](#)

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NORTHERN IRELAND

Newry Chamber and Newry BID discuss Business Rates

The Department of Finance has issued public consultations on measures to support budget sustainability by raising additional revenue. This article outlines the revenue raising measures out for consultation as they relate to domestic and non-domestic rates and reports on a meeting in Newry where these issues were discussed.

The article can be accessed via the following link:

[Newry.ie - Newry Chamber and Newry BID discuss Business Rates](#)

SCOTLAND

Value of empty homes estimated at £3.4bn as surcharge increase urged

With over 28,000 properties unoccupied for more than 12 months in Scotland in 2023, this article hears from the Scottish Labour Party who feel that the government is not doing enough to increase the housing stock. Although councils are able to impose a surcharge of up to 100% on council tax on these properties, Scottish Labour are pressing for further increases.

The article can be accessed via the following link:

[Value of empty homes in Scotland estimated at £3.4bn as surcharge increase urged | STV News](#)

WALES

Welsh finance minister defends Labour plans to shake up council tax

The Welsh economy minister has defended the Cardiff government's plans for a radical review of council tax in the UK. This article examines the proposals, which are currently subject to public consultation, and include options for: a simple revaluation; increasing rates for more expensive properties and decreasing them for cheaper properties; and adding new tax bands, one at the bottom and two at the top. The consultation ends in February 2024.

The article can be accessed via the following link:

[Welsh finance minister defends Labour plans to shake up council tax \(ft.com\)](#)

Wales has been brave enough to completely rethink the hated council tax. Take note, England

The Institute of Fiscal Studies considers the Council Tax as the “worst of taxes” being regressive in nature. This article looks at the consultation in Wales to try to reform Council Tax to redistribute it to the wealthiest, with three options for degrees of redistribution

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being considered. The article examines the proposals and looks at the history of the tax whilst also looking at the possibility of introducing a Land Value Tax to encourage development.

The article can be accessed via the following link:

[Wales has been brave enough to completely rethink the hated council tax. Take note, England | Polly Toynbee | The Guardian](#)

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