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@TheSTHome

**D**o you reside in a house of ill repute? I am not suggesting, dear reader, that you live in a bordello, certainly not on a Sunday morning; merely whether you are living in the most life-sustaining house you could. The IPCC's Special Report on Global Warming warned that even half a degree's difference could wreak havoc on cities, and we all have to start doing our bit.

I hope there's time to tweak the revised and imminent National Planning Policy Framework; meanwhile, I predict a season of woodburner-shaming. In a different survey, Birmingham and Newcastle were named the greenest cities in Britain.

The C-word causing alarm for top-end estate agents and their clientele is not Christmas – although the mince pies that have popped up on offer in my local Co-op, best before November 2018, seem an apposite metaphor for the housing stalemate – but Corbyn. The prospect of a government led by Jeremy could ruin the reputation of all of London's houses and induce another sort of climate change.

“The exodus of wealth creators from the UK will be

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less of a ‘brain drain’ and more of a lobotomy,” says Trevor Abrahmsohn, who runs the north London estate agency Glentree. “The property market will be in freefall, with 30 sellers to one buyer.”

Incidentally, in the same week his architectural practice, Foster + Partners, bagged the Riba Stirling Prize for best building in the UK for its design of Bloomberg's European HQ, Lord Foster was named as one of the advisers on Neom, Saudi Arabia's ambitious \$500bn plan for a desert megacity on the Red Sea coast.

The Saudi royal court describes Neom as “a leading

global hub that exemplifies the future of human civilisation by offering its inhabitants an idyllic lifestyle, combined with exceptional economic prospects”. Following the disappearance of Jamal Khashoggi and the swirl of fatal speculation, three advisers out of 18 have resigned. Reputation matters.

**I'm loving...** Ikea. Our favourite purveyor of meatballs has a new planning studio on Tottenham Court Road. The flatpack brand is ditching the Allen key for the wedge dowel and going big on bespoke – dark marble worktops, leather handles – to fend off the design companies that have gorged themselves offering design hacks to super-style the budget Swedish designs.

**I'm loathing...** The same old arguments about the same new-home builders. Two pieces of research this week confirm what we've all been thinking. The abusive nature of leasehold is highlighted in a study by the property investment platform British Pearl. Using Land Registry figures, it found that the price of new-build leasehold houses is up by 11.7% on last year, while the cost of

freehold properties has risen only 0.7% in the same period.

Next up, according to Reallymoving.com, purchasers using Help to Buy are paying almost 10% more than those buying newly built homes without the benevolent assistance of the government scheme. These figures raise fears of a bubble that risks leaving a generation of homeowners stuck in negative equity, along with the 40% of 25- to 34-year-olds that the Institute for Fiscal Studies found couldn't get a mortgage on even the cheapest house in their area.

Every penny counts. Delays in the purchase chain cost homeowners an estimated £15m a year. Just under one in five owners who has bought within the past two years has experienced moving-day delays due to funds not arriving on time and tardy sellers. That's 115,000 delayed moves, according to a study to be published tomorrow by YouGov on behalf of the HomeOwners Alliance and Shieldpay. A quarter of those end up not merely inconvenienced, but out of pocket by an average £509.

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MOVING ON

**Levison Wood**, below, has walked the length of the Nile, trekked from Mexico to Colombia and, most recently, made a 5,000-mile circumnavigation of the Arabian Peninsula from Iraq to Lebanon. But no odyssey seems to have prepared the explorer for the slings and arrows of the UK property market. Wood, 36, put his painstakingly restored three-bedroom home in Hampton Court, southwest London, on the market in March 2017 for £1.25m. With no takers, it has been reduced to £999,995 (knightfrank.co.uk).

The screenwriter **Peter Morgan** once owned Battersea's most beautiful house – a pair of terraced homes knocked together and decorated by **Rose Uniacke**. It was let after Morgan, 55, split up with his wife, an Austrian princess. The creator of **The Crown**, who is in a relationship with **Gillian Anderson**, has now sold the 5,600 sq ft home for £5.9m, shy of the £6.5m asking price.



Alexandra Goss