

## QUEEN'S SPEECH

We digest the latest news so you don't have to!

### HIDDEN PROBLEMS FOR LANDLORDS

Those of you listening to the Queen's Speech with bemusement at her announcement of future charges for plastic bags may not be aware that she also gave Royal Assent on 14 May 2014 to the new Immigration Act. This introduces provisions which require private landlords of residential properties to check the immigration status of their tenants.

This obligation is not simply to check that the tenants have a right to be in this country at the start of the tenancy. The Landlord must also make sure that that right does not lapse during the tenancies term. Falling foul of the regulations could lead to a fine of up to £3,000!

It is hoped that the scheme will be piloted before the regulations are brought into full effect but Landlords be warned.

### YOU SHALL NOT PASS

News that the Passport Office is experiencing unprecedented delays and levels of demand for new passports has led ministers to recommend Britons to indulge in "staycations". This is not news but a new craze for renting properties direct from their owners has also been hinted at in recent weeks.



The idea is that you swap your property with a family of similar circumstances in a different part of the country or of the world. With the recent period

### THE TIMES THEY ARE A CHANGING

It has recently been announced that from 30 June 2014 Land Registry will no longer require originals of Transfer documents to be supplied to them on applications for registration. This announcement signifies a further move towards e-conveyancing and it is already now possible to apply for registration of Transfers of Title online. The fees for doing this are half the price of the paper version and, with a few initial teething problems, the system seems to be working fairly well. Obviously those who were opposed to dematerialisation of Title Deeds and the abolition of Land and Charge Certificates will consider this to be a further retrograde step and it is possible that fraudsters are rubbing their hands in glee. We would remind our readers that it is extremely important to keep your address for service registered in the Land Registry (of which you can have up to three) up to date so that you receive information on any activities on your properties. Properties that are not subject to a mortgage are particularly vulnerable and land owners resident overseas can also be a target. What will happen if/when the Land Registry is privatised is anyone's guess, huge potential for fraud. Lobby your MP!

of hot sunny weather it may seem like a very good idea. Far be it for us to pour cold water on such plans but be warned if your "visitors" decide they prefer your house to their own, be prepared for a long and expensive fight through the courts to evict them.

However for those not tempted by this proposition holiday home ownership is also a way of providing yourself with a source of relaxing breaks for years to come. Many holiday homes come with restrictions on occupancy and for details of the effect of these restrictions, please do not hesitate to contact one of our Conveyancing Team.

# Property Bites

continued

## A SQUIRREL BY ANY OTHER NAME

News worthy of reporting is thin on the ground at this time of year which is known as the “silly season” for politicians and journalists alike. It is no different for your roving reporter but we were amused to read of a new kind of squirrel which is appearing in our woodlands. Interesting facts concerning these new rodents – two greys cannot equal a black, one black furred parent must be involved to produce a black offspring. Grey squirrels are not actually grey, they are in fact covered in a combination of white, black and orange stripes and Red squirrels are still the underdogs – forgive the mixed metaphor being two thirds the size of greys or blacks.



*Edited by Denise Oatham*

## HOLIDAY WAR STORIES



Again as it is “silly season” we would love to hear from you with your tales of woe for holidays that have not quite turned out how they should be. The hotel that was half-built, the luggage that didn't arrive, the 17 hour wait in the airport due to French air traffic control disputes. We would love to hear from you and of course if you do have a real problem with a holiday not living up to your expectations then our Litigation Team would be happy to see whether a well-placed letter or email can produce some offers of compensation.

## NEW FOREST SHOW

As part of the holiday season, the New Forest Show will take place on 29, 30 and 31 July and Heppenstalls will be there. Those who visited our stand last year will remember the strawberries and champagne and the intellectual challenge of determining which king or queen was on the throne at the date of the conveyances set up on the stand.

We can't promise a repeat of that this year but we can promise you a warm welcome and a glass of something refreshing and we look forward to seeing you there.



## OUR PROPERTY TEAM



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