

Digital service

2015 was the year that *Inside Housing* went truly 'digital first'. Under newly installed editor, Emma Maier, the title overhauled its traditional editorial approach of preserving exclusive content for paid-for print subscribers. It now breaks exclusive news and features on a new-look website strategically throughout the week to its digital readership, ahead of both rival publications and the Friday print edition. This more agile digital approach was a prelude to the biggest change in the history of the publication: in April Insidehousing.co.uk went behind a paywall. The move was a huge commercial success: increased reader satisfaction, and in Jan-June alone subscribers doubled to 8,200, paid-for subscriptions, revenues jumped 75% and a new editorially-led content marketing offer created a £72,000 sponsorship revenue stream. This growth in subs uptake was driven by a new corporate subscription model whereby organisations could buy subscriptions for all or a proportion of their staff.

Key to the success of this transition was the redesign of the website, with a fresh navigation, new sections and features, significantly improving the user experience.

The site redesigned its longer feature pieces so they are better read online and on tablet and mobile devices. It also developed an interactive [salary calculator](#), and experiments with new formats embedding video, data maps and social media reaction (it was the first to use the [Shorthand interactive feature platform](#) in UK B2B media to power a multimedia [piece on tenant activism](#)).

The introduction of the free-to-view [Housing Live blog](#) powered by [24LiveBlog which](#) has enabled the website to analyse the full breadth of each day's housing news, reaction and events in real time. This popular feature also allows reporters to flag on-diary stories and sign-post to coverage across the web, so they are freed to produce more exclusive journalism.

Another innovation was the introduction of the IH50 of the 50 most influential sector thought-leaders, ensuring that agenda-setting user-generated content is published on the site every day. The first of a series of planned user-generated subscriber-only content networks – the [Communication Network](#) - has been successfully launched, feeding frontline voices into sector debate and ensuring that readers have a greater stake in the site. Just a month after soft-launching, 23 landlords are regularly posting quality content – the best of which is being used in print. Similarly, comments on articles are now a subscriber-only privilege, blocking trolls and seeding a new community of constructive commentators.

Overall, Inside Housing's rapid digital transition and innovation in service throughout 2015 tells a story that few B2B titles would easily replicate.

Links:

<http://www.insidehousing.co.uk/debate/communications-network>

<http://www.insidehousing.co.uk/=7011660.article>

<http://www.oceanmediagroup.co.uk/features/housingprotests/>

<http://www.insidehousing.co.uk/analysis-and-data/salary-calculator/7008109.article>

NEW HOMEPAGE DESIGN

The screenshot displays the homepage of the Inside Housing website. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the site's name 'INSIDEHOUSING' and the tagline 'news, views and jobs in social housing'. Below this is a main menu with categories like NEWS, BUSINESS, POLICY, ANALYSIS AND DATA, DEBATE, PROFESSIONAL, EVENTS, and JOBS. The main content area features a large article titled 'G15 calls for review of regulation' with a blue-tinted image of a modern building. To the right of this article are smaller sections: 'Diagnosis: housing' and 'Top 60: Joint Venture Developments of the Year'. Below the main article is a 'Latest news' section with a map of the UK and a 'HOUSING LIVE' section with a 'Read today's live feed' button. A 'Featured employer' section is also visible, listing 'Director Opportunities' at 'Inclusion Housing' with a salary of 'circa £52,000' and location 'York'. The website is viewed in a browser window, with the address bar showing 'www.insidehousing.co.uk' and the system tray at the bottom indicating the time as 11:06 on 06/09/2015.

COMMUNICATIONS NETWORK

The screenshot shows the 'COMMUNICATIONS NETWORK' page. At the top, there's a navigation bar with 'HOME', 'DEBATE', and 'COMMUNICATIONS NETWORK'. The main header features the 'COMMUNICATIONS NETWORK' logo. Below the logo, a welcome message states: 'Welcome to the Communications Network: a place that housing organisations can call their own. Here, housing professionals from our network members set the agenda by sharing their views and experiences through blog posts. Follow the debate on the biggest taking points in housing here and on Twitter using the hashtag #ihccomments. If you wish to become a member, click here.' The 'Latest communications network posts' section contains four articles: 'Five top tips to get young people involved in decision making' by Suzy Sorby; 'Tips to attract good applications for your apprentice vacancies' by Caroline Bowden; 'How CAKE helps collaboration and engagement.' by Mark Brookes; and 'Specialist housing solutions can stop the revolving door of hospital admissions' by Linda McGowan. A sidebar on the left lists 'Communications network members' including Amicus Horizon, Aster Group, Bromford, Bron Afon Community Housing, Circle Housing, Cross Keys Homes, Estuary Housing Association, First Choice Homes Oldham, Genesis Housing Association, and Horton Housing Association. A Twitter feed for #ihccomments is visible, showing a tweet from Staffordshire Housing. A promotional banner for 'Delivering & Maintaining Homes Building Neighbourhoods' is dated 18-19 November 2015 in Olympia, London.

LIVE BLOG

The screenshot shows the 'Live blog - 8th September' page. The title is 'Live blog - 8th September' with a sub-header '8 September 2015 | By IH reporters'. There are options to 'Print', 'Email', 'Share', 'Comment', and 'Save'. The 'Key stories' section lists: 'The G18 group of large housing associations in London has called for a review of the current regulatory system'; 'The National Housing Federation said it expects social landlords will offer support to refugees'; and 'IH50: Housing must be at the table as the devolution agenda is forged, says Alison Thain'. Below this, a comment section is empty. The next article is '08:46 Redrow makes record profits', stating 'House builder Redrow has made a record pre-tax profit of £204m, up 53% on last year, according to its final year results. Group revenue rose 32% to a record £1.15bn - this was driven by a 12% increase in completions and a 13% increase in average selling price to £269,800, the firm says.' It quotes Chair Steve Morgan: 'The Local Plan process has noticeably improved since the introduction of the NPPF; however, Local Plans are still taking far too long in many parts of the country.' Another article is '08:39 Y:Cube: No silver bullet', quoting Oliver Wainwright: 'The Guardian's architecture critic, has reviewed the YMCA's first factory-built homes for homeless families and people on Merton's waiting list. He finds that residents are enjoying their new homes, but he is not quite sold on the idea of the Y:Cube. He writes: "If taken up as the silver bullet to endless waiting lists, there's a very real risk it could sow the seeds for a future of cheaply built, meanly scaled, less stable housing that can be conveniently swept away at a moment's notice.'" A 'Newsletter Sign-up' section offers options for 'Asset Management', 'Care and Support', 'Daily News', 'Development and Finance', 'Law and Regulation', and 'Tenancies'. A 'Related' section lists previous live blogs from July, June, May, April, and January 2015. A 'HOMES' logo is visible in the top right, and an 'INSIDE HOUSING' logo is at the bottom right.