Building Societies Association

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Society matters

Housing and mortgages for a changing society

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The views expressed by authors in this magazine are not necessarily those of the BSA.

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Welcome to the winter edition of Society matters

Katie Wise
Channels and Publications Manager, BSA

It seems like only last week we were in full planning mode for the 250th anniversary year of the first known building society. Almost a year on and we now have a chance to draw breath and reflect on the significance of the anniversary and everything that has taken place since the start of the year.

2025 has seen parliamentary receptions across the UK, the sector annual conference in Birmingham which was bigger than ever (including a recreation of the Golden Cross Inn in the exhibition hall!), a consumer campaign to raise awareness of the benefits of building societies and credit unions, and of course, a co-operatively brewed BSA beer in a nod to Richard Ketley, the landlord of the Golden Cross Inn in Birmingham where the building society movement was born.

Alongside our planned activity, we welcomed some real change across the regulatory space, with an increase in flexibility for lenders, enabling them to responsibly help more first-time buyers onto the property ladder, the retirement of the Building Societies Sourcebook, and acknowledgement of the value of diverse business models and support for future proofing legislation in the recently published Regulators' Mutuals Landscape review report.

And what of 2026? There is a real opportunity for the sector to seize the moment and lead the way to growth. Growth that supports households build their financial resilience, growth that helps more people into their first homes, and growth that is focused on regions and communities.

But before that, what of the next few pages? With a timely focus on housing and mortgages, we have some valuable insights to share. Insight into the world of first-time buyers from the BSA's Housing and Mortgage expert, Paul Broadhead, together with some great examples of building society product innovation. Richard Donnell, Zoopla, shares a review of the housing market in 2025.

Cambridge Building Society brings the retrofit journey to life, raising awareness of the value of energy efficient house improvements with their Ferndale Rise retrofit project. And Owen Jarvis from UK Co-Housing outlines the value of community-led housing and explains the strategic opportunity it presents for building societies.

On AI – the topic de jour – we hear about the potential impact of artificial intelligence on the broker-led market from Kate Davies, IMLA, Jamie Lawless, Lendwell and Francesco Di Petro, Newcastle for Intermediaries. We also hear how building societies can build long-term partnerships with brokers in our feature 'view from a broker'.

The proposed reforms of the homebuying process are explained by Novus Strategy alongside insight into their likely impact, and you can hear about the work of financial trade associations to create a more holistic and joined up Later Life Lending offering for consumers.

We also have the opportunity to hear from both the BSA's new Chief Executive, Sarah Harrison, and Chair, Simon Taylor. And Robin Fieth, former CEO of the BSA, signs off with his final Society Matters article.

It only remains for me to wish you an enjoyable and restful festive break – enjoy!

Katie

opinion

Time to accelerate mutual ambition

By Simon Taylor,
Chief Executive, Melton Building Society and Chair of the Building Societies Association

Simon Taylor, Chief Executive of Melton Building Society, has been appointed Chair of the Building Societies Association. Here he sets out his vision for how the BSA and its members can build fresh momentum and strengthen their impact in communities throughout the UK.

Stepping into the role of Chair is a privilege at any time, but doing so now carries particular significance. The landscape is shifting towards greater recognition of organisations with clear social purpose, deep community ties and long-term commitment to serve consumers rather than external shareholders. Mutuals have always embodied and embraced these qualities, yet today, with the government's stated ambition to double the size of the mutual and co-operative sector, we have a real opportunity to be at the forefront of practical and real change in housing, savings and financial resilience. An opportunity that we must seize.

This is why the Building Society Sector Growth Plan[1] matters. It sets out a clear route to unlocking the sector's full potential. The plan calls for better access to mutual capital and a regulatory framework that reflects the sector's lower-risk approach. These changes would give us more opportunity to innovate, to support more first-time buyers, to strengthen financial resilience and to act with confidence on long-term community priorities.

To achieve this we need visibility, influence and collaboration. We need a stronger dialogue with government, regulators and policymakers so that the mutual model is fully understood and fairly considered. As Chair, one of my priorities is to deepen real engagement to ensure the mutual perspective is part of every conversation on housing, savings and community prosperity.

Building societies are champions of ordinary working people and play a key role in keeping the financial services market competitive. Without us mortgage rates would likely be higher and savings rates lower, and we consistently deliver growth that outpaces our share of balances. But the real measure of our contribution is not in the numbers alone, it is in the impact we have on people's lives: access to a safe home, the ability to save with confidence and the reassurance that decisions are taken in the interests of members.

We cannot, however, be complacent. Consumer expectations and the challenges they face are evolving. In this role, I want to widen the range of voices I listen to, seeking out perspectives that are not always heard in the rooms where decisions are shaped. Doing so will help ensure the messages we convey, and the actions we call for, genuinely reflect the realities our members face.

This is not a task for me alone. I'm excited to be working with Sarah as she becomes the first female Chief Executive in BSA history. I'm also delighted that Susan Allen and Caroline Domanski have both been appointed Deputy Chairs. Having two Deputy Chairs is another first for the BSA, and will help us to maintain continuity as the sector navigates a period of significant change. It also enables us to have more balance and raises the voice of our credit union members.

But we will only succeed in strengthening the role building societies and credit unions play in supporting the financial wellbeing of communities across the UK with the continued support of our members and the commitment and energy of the BSA team. I look forward to working together to turn this moment of opportunity into meaningful progress for the people and communities we are here to serve. It is my honour and privilege to serve as chair and I will do everything I can to move our collective goals forward.

I look forward to seeing and engaging with as many of you as I can at the Building Societies Conference in Edinburgh on 28-29 April.

Lets Go!

Next steps:

Follow Simon on LinkedIn https://www.linkedin.com/in/simon-taylor-0995b614/

[1] https://www.bsa.org.uk/media-centre/press-releases/building-society-growth-plan-published

opinion

Shaping the next chapter for the Building Societies Association

By Sarah Harrison, Chief Executive, BSA

Growing up in a family business environment with a strong commitment to cooperation, I have always been aware of the positive impact customer-ownership delivers to the economy and to communities. I have seen the challenges people face in securing decent housing, and the need for organisations that support them and help them build better futures for themselves and their families. That sense of purpose, responsibility and opportunity is what drew me to this sector and to this role.

Today, the principles of mutuality, of innovation and inclusivity, and of trust and collaboration in the service of consumers and communities, matter more than ever. At a time when public trust in financial institutions is hard-won, building societies and credit unions stand out for their people-first approach and I am excited to bring the breadth of my experience to support this sector's growth.

Building societies and credit unions deliver real, tangible benefits, helping first-time buyers achieve home ownership, supporting savers through every stage of life and maintaining a resilient, regionally rooted presence that strengthens local communities and economies. This is a sector whose success is measured not just in numbers, but in lives improved and futures built.

Alongside this vital support for homeownership, financial resilience and communities, mutual building societies and credit unions bring much needed dynamism, competition and resilience to the financial services sector, and collectively, contribute meaningfully to the UK economy. We are at a pivotal moment, a time of opportunity. This government has committed to doubling the size of the mutual and co-operative sector, alongside building 1.5 million homes, over the course of this parliament, and to wider economic growth. Our challenge and opportunity is to ensure building societies and credit unions are central to this vision.

I want to acknowledge the strong foundations laid by my predecessor, Robin Fieth, and thank him for his commitment over the last 12 years which has brought us to this moment of opportunity. I am looking forward to working with the dedicated BSA team and our members to build on this momentum.

We are living in a complex world environment: economically, politically, socially and technologically. Customer expectations are evolving rapidly, as is the technology to meet them. The challenges and opportunities this presents are shared across financial services but building societies and credit unions can lead with trust, transparency and people-first values.

Over the coming year and beyond, my priorities will centre on three themes:

Strong advocacy, working to ensure that the voice of building societies and credit unions is clearly heard and that the regulatory and legislative landscape operates fairly for financial mutuals.

Effective partnerships across the financial mutuals sector to amplify our voice and build on the BSA's work as part of the co-operative and mutual business council.

Shaping the relevance and relatability of building societies, mutual-owned banks and credit unions to today's and future customers ensuring that the mutual difference is clear to see. We will champion innovation, support members as they invest in new technologies, modernise services and explore fresh approaches to meet members' needs .

Above all, my commitment is to ensure that the BSA remains a strong expert and unifying voice, one that reflects the diversity of its membership. My call to you all - BSA members, associates, partners and colleagues - is to join us in shaping the next stage of this sector's story; seizing opportunities for growth, and making a positive difference to customers, communities and the wider economy for many years to come.

Next steps:

You can follow Sarah on LinkedIn: https://www.linkedin.com/in/sarah-harrison-78487b18/

opinion

Parting words

By Robin Fieth, Special Adviser and former Chief Executive, Building Societies Association

The end of the year is traditionally time for reflections and resolutions, looking back over the past year and making our resolutions for the year to come. For me, that is especially poignant this year as I move on from leading the BSA and embark on the next stage – which I am calling non-retirement.

This is not a time for nostalgia. Rather, I would like to use my final article for Society Matters as a re-setting of the baseline for the years ahead.

The Government's commitment to doubling the size of the co-operative and mutual sector, taken together with the recent Mutuals Landscape Report published jointly by the PRA and the FCA, are both clear evidence of an operating environment for building societies, credit unions and other financial mutuals that we could only have dreamt about a decade ago. That is now the baseline operating environment for the whole sector to set out its three, five and ten year ambitions for growth, truly embedding financial mutuals at the heart of the future of UK financial services.

For building societies: £7.2 billion GDP contribution, 27 million members, 29% share of the mortgage market, 37% share of new first-time buyer lending, 35% of all high street branches, 760,000 first time savers and 123,00 first time buyers, topped with the massive £4 billion returned to members through higher interest rates and other payments, set the member and societal value baseline from which to move forward.

At a time when the globe seems more troubled than it has done for decades, when populism and nationalism are breaking down the world order that has existed for most of our lifetimes, it seems to me that there is a huge opportunity for genuinely purpose driven businesses. The foundations of the financial mutual sector are built on the concepts of self-help, co-operation and meeting the needs of individuals, households and communities across the whole country. When others seek to create division, exploit fears, promise the earth, we can play such an important role in creating inclusion, improving resilience and building communities.

£4 billon returned to members is £4 billion added to the UK economy, across all communities in every corner of the UK. It is a £4 billion contribution to UK economic growth. It is a baseline from which to move forward. The challenge for mutual boards, then, is how to build sustainably from here. How to take maximum advantage of the currently supportive political and regulatory environment. What do we need to do differently? What more of? What less of? Where do we need to make our next investments? In technology? In talent? In product? In brand? In community? How much do we do alone? How much in collaboration?

At a recent conference for non-executive directors, I asked the classic stewardship question – how do we ensure that we pass our business on to the next generation of directors, employees and, most importantly members, not only in a better state than we inherited it, but truly fit for the future?

We have the baseline. We know the challenge. Now is the time to determine the steps we need to take to have the best chance of creating the version of the future that we want for our businesses, our sector, our members and our communities. Truly purpose driven business!

Next steps:

Follow Robin on LinkedIn: www.linkedin.com/in/robin-fieth-b6635313 special

Opening the door to the next generation of homeowners

By Paul Broadhead,
Head of Mortgage and Housing Policy, Building Societies Association

Paul Broadhead looks at the pressures facing first-time buyers and sets out how the sector is working to reverse the long-term decline in homeownership.

The scale of the challenge is clear – around 2.2 million people who would reasonably have been expected to buy a home since the financial crisis have been unable to do so. Research[1] also shows that sentiment is declining: in 2020, 12% of 18–24-year-olds felt homeownership was out of reach, today it's risen to 19%. Not surprising considering now is the most expensive time in more than 70 years to be a first-time buyer.

These trends matter not only for individuals, but for the long-term resilience of communities and the wider economy. However, the picture is beginning to change, with first-time buyer numbers growing as recent reforms take effect.

Innovation from building societies

Against the challenging backdrop, building societies have continued to find solutions to help people into homeownership. Since our origins in 1775, we have found ways to innovate within the regulatory framework, developing targeted approaches that respond to the needs of aspiring homeowners of the day. Our appetite to push boundaries has been essential, as traditional routes to homeownership have become harder to access.

The BSA's Property Tracker Report shows that two financial pressures are consistently the biggest barrier to homeownership:

1. Saving for a deposit
2. Affording monthly mortgage repayments

However, the picture is beginning to change. With mortgage innovation and cuts to the Bank Rate, it's good to see that the proportion of would-be homeowners citing these affordability challenges as obstacles to buying is slowly reducing.

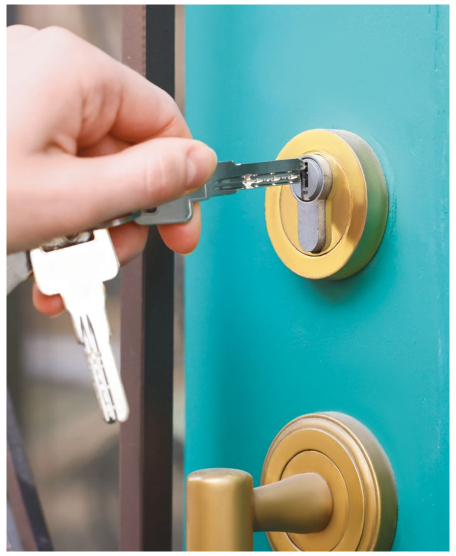
Regulatory momentum has started to build

Recent regulatory developments are now offering welcome flexibility. The option to disapply the Loan-to-Income (LTI) flow limit which restricts the proportion of lending above 4.5 times income, and the higher thresholds at which the limits apply, give lenders greater flexibility to support borrowers that can demonstrate affordability, without increasing overall risks in the financial system.

Importantly, these changes are permissive and do not replace lenders' own risk appetites or responsible lending frameworks. Instead, they open the door to meaningful support for first-time buyers who have previously been shut out. Early signs suggest these adjustments are already bearing fruit, with an increasing number of first-time buyers progressing from aspiration to completion.

Following the Financial Conduct Authority's (FCA) Discussion Paper, further consultation is expected in 2026. Future regulatory change must remain flexible and capable of adapting to rapid shifts in technology, including the growing use of AI. Crucially, changes should focus on interventions with the greatest potential to increase homeownership, rather than incremental adjustments that have limited impact.

But regulation and lender innovation alone cannot resolve the underlying shortage of homes. Without the long-awaited, long-term government strategy on increasing supply, affordability pressures will persist, despite the positive momentum created by the regulatory reforms.



A shared responsibility

Building societies will continue to step forward with the same determination shown by our founders. But real and lasting progress requires a shared and co-ordinated commitment to a long-term strategy.

While no single intervention will meet the needs of every aspiring homeowner, if government, regulators, lenders and the wider housing sector work together to increase supply and support responsible lending, we can give aspiring buyers the confidence that homeownership is once again achievable.

As the foundations for progress are being laid, now is our opportunity to show that the door to homeownership is no longer closed, but open wider it has been for many years.

[1] https://www.bsa.org.uk/information/publications/research-and-reports/first-time-buyers-the-missing-millions

special

Building societies are working hard to support first-time buyers with flexible lending options and innovative mortgage offers:

Leeds Building Society

Tackling one of the main barriers to homeownership, Leeds Building Society recently changed its affordability assessments for first-time buyer mortgages, allowing single or joint applicant earning £30,000 to borrow up to 95% loan-to-value with one of its Income Plus mortgages.

This means that a first-time buyer earning £30k can now borrow up to £165,000, enabling them to buy a home worth £173,000. Before these changes, a first-time buyer with a 5% deposit could have bought a home worth up to £141,000.

Using Land Registry data, the Society calculated that over 51,000 more properties sold over the past year would have been within reach of first-time buyers based on these changes, equivalent to 65% more homes.

To support its purpose of putting homeownership within reach of more people, the Society's Income Plus range of mortgages allows first-time buyers to borrow 5.5 times their income. Coupled with other initiatives such as Reach Mortgages, which are designed to help borrowers with lower credit scores, and the Society's connection to Experian Boost, which uses open banking to help borrowers increase their credit score, Leeds continues to innovate in support of first-time buyers.

Nationwide Building Society

Helping Hand, launched in April 2021, offers eligible first-time buyers the option to borrow up to six times their income on a five or ten-year fixed rate mortgage, up to 95% LTV - around 33% more than Nationwide's standard lending. Since launch, the initiative has helped over 65,000 people secure a home, with more than £13 billion lent.

Nationwide's decision to offer borrowing up to six times income saw a 53% increase in first-time buyers using Helping Hand between October 2024 and September 2025, with Britain's biggest building society supporting around 23,000 people – up from 15,000 in the 12 months prior.

Helping Hand completions on new builds rose 102% during the same period, driven by Nationwide raising its maximum LTV on new build houses to 95%.

The scheme has been particularly impactful in the Outer South East, accounting for 28% of all Helping Hand mortgages and 16% of Nationwide's first-time buyer lending in the region, making it a gamechanger for aspiring homeowners.

Skipton Building Society

Skipton Building Society's Track Record Mortgage, launched in May 2023, is a 100% Loan-to-Value product designed for renters who struggle to save for a deposit. It offers a five-year fixed rate and requires applicants to be over 21, have not owned a property in the last three years, and show 12 months of consecutive rent payments within the past 18 months. With no application or completion fees and a maximum loan of £600,000, it uses rental history as proof of affordability, removing one of the biggest barriers to homeownership.

Since launch, the mortgage has seen over £390 million in applications and £239 million in completions, proving its strong appeal among renters seeking a route onto the property ladder. Skipton has expanded the product to include longer terms, cashback, and allowing new-build flats, further widening accessibility. Its success has influenced other lenders, marking a major step toward inclusive homeownership in the UK.

Yorkshire Building Society

Yorkshire Building Society's innovative £5K Deposit Mortgage has helped more than 1,800 first-time buyers onto the property ladder since it was launched in March, 2024. Designed to tackle the biggest barrier to homeownership – finding a large deposit - the product allows buyers to purchase a home worth up to £500,000 with just £5,000 upfront, cutting years off their saving time. Extended to include flats earlier this year, the mortgage has transformed lives, enabling customers to 'stop planning and start living' and literally opening the door to milestones like marriage and starting families.

Tom Simpson, Managing Director of Homes at the Society, said: "It's not just about bricks and mortar - it's helping people achieve their dreams." This is just one example of steps the Society is taking in line with its purpose of helping more people into good homes. Others have included seizing the opportunity presented by regulatory changes to loan-to-income limits to enable more people to borrow more and removing the minimum income limit for first-time buyers needing more than 4.5-times their income.

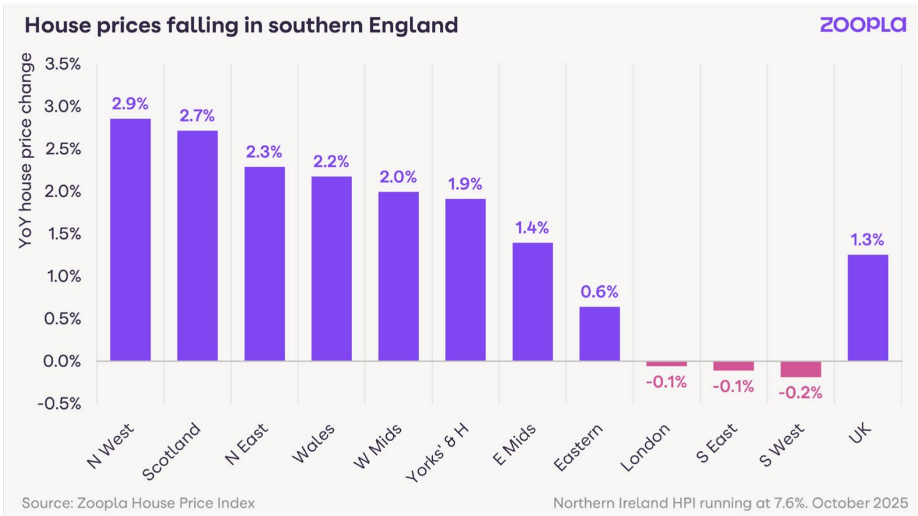
A review of the housing market in 2025

2025 - sales volumes up but house price inflation moderates

Lower base rates and stability in mortgage rates over 2025 have encouraged more sellers and buyers back into the housing market, building on the momentum generated over 2024. The net result has been a rebuilding of the sales pipeline - agreed sales, yet to complete - which at 350,000 homes worth over £100bn in sales value is the largest since 2021. This has supported an increase in gross lending for home purchases.

While there has been a recovery in volumes, house price inflation has held steady at 2-3% over the year based on mortgage lender indices, a little lower at 1-2% on our own index that includes cash sales. The housing market just needs enough house price growth to give people the confidence to put their homes on the market and for buyers to make sensible bids.

There is a big regional divide opening up with price inflation in southern England close to 0% over 2025 where more supply is boosting choice while affordability pressures and higher buying costs are limiting how much prices can increase. Elsewhere, house prices are more affordable to a wider part of the population, there is a more limited choice of homes for sale and buying costs are lower which is why house prices are 3-4% higher over 2025. It's likely to be the same direction of travel as we run through 2026.



Regulatory reforms boost first time buyers

First time buyers (FTBs) are the engine for the housing market - we estimate they accounted for almost 40% of all home sales in H1 2025, above the 5 year average share of sales. Existing homeowners are the next largest buyer group (33%), followed by cash buyers (21%) and then investors using a buy to let loan (7%). The reduction in mortgage stress rates since the Spring has certainly been a key factor supporting more FTB purchases. We analysed how many 2 or 3 bed homes a FTB could buy where the mortgage repayments at the stress rate are below the cost of renting in the local market at 80% LTV. With an 8.5% stress rate it was just 30% but at a lower 6.5% stress rates this increases to 50% of homes that could be bought.

By Richard Donnell,
Executive Director,
Zoopla

As well as more sales, this has boosted FTB house prices in northern England - we can see on Zoopla that FTBs are looking to buy homes that are 5-10% more expensive than a year ago in the midlands and northern regions of England. In fact, FTB prices are rising faster than the mainstream market apart from London where they are looking to buy homes 2.5% lower than last year as a result of higher stamp duty costs since April.

Helping renters become buyers

The big constraint for FTBs is deposit levels but this also links to the impact of stress rates. In markets with high home values across southern England you need to put down larger deposits just to get the household income to pass the stress rate to a level that prices in enough people.

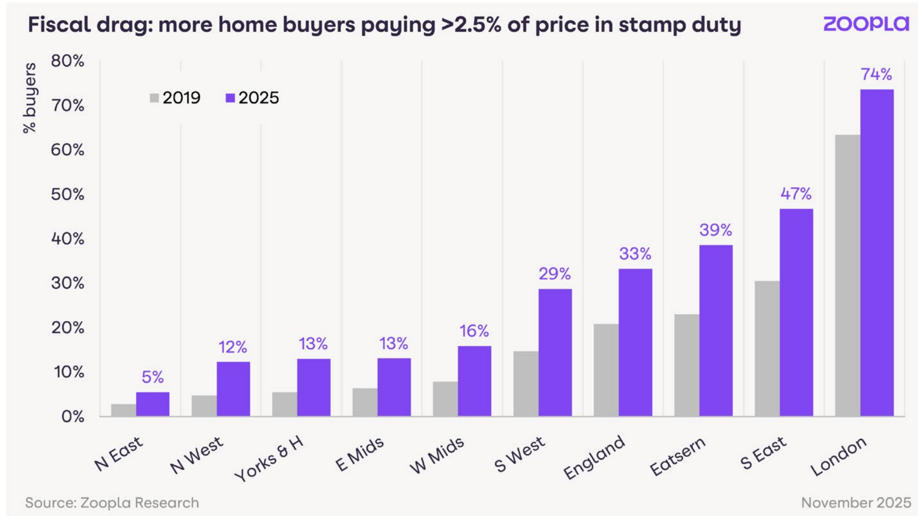
Access to mortgages is helping those on middle incomes and above but access to housing is still limited for a large chunk of would-be buyers who are paying rents every month but could pass a mortgage affordability test with a small deposit. It's great to see more innovation in this space, but it seems like we need more regulatory focus on this area. Yes, greater mortgage regulation stopped the boom and bust in house prices but at what cost to consumers looking to buy.

What tax reforms to boost market activity and access to home ownership?

The Budget brought a lot of speculation about property tax reforms. We had universal agreement of the need to remove or reduce the impact of stamp duty on home buying decisions as part of wider reforms of council tax. Sadly none of this happened and there was a new tax on the top 0.5% of the market that won't do much for access to home ownership.

Most FTBs buying outside of southern England don't pay stamp duty at all. In London, 80% pay - at an average cost of £16,000 - with 50% paying across southern regions (£2,500). Stamp duty is a growing bind on existing homeowners who get less relief and where the costs are starting to mount up - more average buyers in southern England are starting to pay 2-3% of the property value in stamp duty - with low price inflation this is not encouraging moves. This means fewer homeowner movers and more likelihood of people staying put, remortgaging to raise more debt to fund improvements.

The case for reforms remains and the proposals from the Onward think tank[1] are well worth consideration.



Do the proposed reforms to the home buying process go far enough?

Home buying and selling reforms are being consulted on by the Government at present. Everyone agrees on the need to seek improvements to increase certainty and reduce costly fall throughs and the consultation is welcome with many voices being heard.

The single biggest challenge is that all the data needed to make a recommendation to buy or lend on a property is not digitally available or shareable at present, and the ecosystem doesn't exist to pass this information up and down the process.

Home buying and selling reform is complex and has some way to go if it remains voluntary and with little to no mandating of requirements. Increasing the focus on consumer education is an important part of this process as, at the end of the day, it is consumers who decide to pull out of sales.

It's positive mortgage lenders are getting more involved as the conveyancing industry works to their instructions after all, and some early initiatives are yielding improvements in some key areas. Although there is much more to be done, this is something to be optimistic about as we head into 2026.

Next steps:

Keep up to date with Richard's research and insight https://www.zoopla.co.uk/discover/meet-the-team/richard-donnell/

[1]https://ukonward.com/reports/a-fairer-property-tax/

special

By Claire Van der Zant,
CEO, Novus Strategy & Consulting
novus strategy

The battleground for mortgage lenders has changed

The mortgage industry is on the edge of a structural shift. That was unmistakable in the BSA's recent webinar where MHCLG, DPMSG and OPDA all set out the same direction of travel for the future of homebuying and selling. Upfront information, shared data standards and trust frameworks are laying the new foundations for a redesigned property transaction. This is not an incremental update to how the system works. It is an overhaul of the infrastructure that lenders operate within.

The central message from my keynote was direct. What got us here will not get us where we are going. Customer expectations are clear. They want certainty, transparency and genuine choice across the home buying and selling journey. And while speed matters, speed alone is not the goal. The real aim is predictability across the entire transaction.

We will not achieve this by continuing to optimise isolated internal processes when the real friction has always lived in the handoffs between the actor groups in the transaction.

The industry's first phase of digitalisation laid important foundations, but it has reached a natural limit. Most lenders can now deliver Application to Offer in days. This is a significant achievement, but it has minimal impact on the end-to-end customer journey. The new battleground is Offer to Completion. This is the part of the journey lenders have not historically influenced and where three months (or more) of waiting often sits. It affects customers, it affects chains, and it affects the predictability of a lender's pipeline and capital planning.

No amount of internal modernisation will remove friction that exists outside the walls of a lender. Only interoperability can do that. And interoperability depends on breaking out of our current silos and working through shared data standards, platform thinking and open infrastructure. This is the second phase of transformation; Horizontal Digital Integration (HDI).

Without HDI, the goals we all agree on remain out of reach. HDI brings together previously isolated systems across the home buying journey, so they operate as part of an integrated framework.

The customer journey is already being redesigned around this new reality. Upfront information is transforming the work that happens before offer. Orchestration and data standards are reshaping the work that happens after. Lenders can either lean in now and help shape this design or wait and adapt to a model set by others. Waiting is not neutral. It is a strategic choice to follow rather than lead.

The vendor landscape reinforces this shift. Where once the market lacked clear differentiation, it is now separating into specialists, integrators and full ecosystem orchestrators. Understanding which partners are prepared for HDI, and which are still building toward it, will be essential in 2026. Choosing the wrong path risks getting locked into solutions that cannot support the future infrastructure of the market.

Many lenders are already deep into transformation programmes for core banking, origination or digital channels. These programmes matter, but HDI does not compete with them. It guides and sequences them, so that transformation programmes land in the right direction. You do not need to be digitally perfect before you start. But we do need to acknowledge that tomorrow's market will not look like today, and what got us here, won't get us there.

The industry is moving to a model built on data, trust and interoperability. HDI gives lenders the chance to lead rather than follow. The question is not whether the shift will happen. It is whether you are prepared to be an agent of change and lead the market or adapt to it later.

Next steps:
https://www.novus-strategy.com/
https://www.novus-strategy.com/horizontal-digital-integration

special

Greener homes, brighter future

By Carole Charter,
Chief Commercial Officer,
The Cambridge Building Society
THE CAMBRIDGE Building Society 175 YEARS

What does leadership look like for mutuals? It's not just about competitive products, community or digital innovation - it's about how we can tackle one of the greatest housing challenges of our time: decarbonising 29 million UK homes before 2050.

This is not a distant problem. It's here now.

In Cambridgeshire alone, 250,000 homes need energy efficiency upgrades. If mutuals don't step up, who will? Our sector was built on community resilience, problem-solving and long-term thinking.

So, we decided to step up to the challenge. Our Ferndale project is a deep retrofit of a typical 1930s semi-detached home that we've transformed into a carbon-positive living case study, improving the EPC rating from D to an A and delivering Passive House standards for air tightness.

Ferndale is proof that ambition and innovation can transform the ordinary into the extraordinary. We've installed renewable technologies - from an air source heat pump to solar panels and a rainwater harvesting system. It is now an old home fit for the future, removing more carbon dioxide than it emits.

This matters because most UK homes are not new builds. If we fail to take up the retrofit challenge, we will fail to meet net zero targets. Ferndale demonstrates that deep retrofit is achievable when approached with creativity and collaboration with contractors.

Ferndale is not just a house - it's a living educational resource. We recognised many homeowners want to make sustainable upgrades but don't know where to start. Over 15 months, the team collaborated with architects, energy experts and tradespeople to modernise the property using a blend of both traditional and innovative techniques.

We now plan to share real-world data on energy performance, air quality, and cost savings to demonstrate what older homes can achieve, not just in performance but in inspiring others to act. Because knowledge is the biggest barrier to action. Lenders, homeowners and policymakers need clarity on what it costs and the benefits it delivers.

By investing in this project and the educational programme we're delivering - including tours of the property for our members and community - we're helping individuals make informed choices. Building societies can all play a pivotal role in closing the knowledge gap, influencing regulation, and driving consumer confidence in sustainable solutions.

For 175 years, The Cambridge has responded to the housing challenges of each generation. Today, climate change is one defining challenge. Mutuals are uniquely positioned to lead because our purpose is aligned with long-term community wellbeing.

Ferndale signals to members, regulators, and peers that building societies are not passive observers in the sustainability debate - we are active innovators.

The retrofit revolution requires leadership, collaboration and investment. Mutuals can:

- **Champion education:** Share insights, demystify and empower homeowners.
- **Influence policy:** Advocate for incentives and schemes that make retrofit viable.
- **Innovate with lending:** Develop products that support sustainable home improvements.
- **Collaborate:** Work with traders, providers and government to scale solutions.

Ferndale is a game changer - a retrofit that delivers on comfort, carbon, and community. But this project should be a starting point, not the end. The question is not whether building societies should lead - it's whether we can afford not to.

Key upgrades include:

- **Two types of extension** rear timber frame and side brick-built extension
- **Comprehensive insulation** internal, external, cavity, roof and floor
- **Airtightness measures using innovative liquid membrane**
- **Air source heat pump**
- **A combination of underfloor and radiator heating throughout the property**
- **Mechanical ventilation system with heat recovery**
- **12-panel solar PV system including modular battery and EV charger**
- **Triple-glazed windows and doors**
- **Rainwater harvesting system**

Next steps: For more information about our retrofit visit www.cambridgebs.co.uk/greener-living special

View from a broker: building long-term partnerships

By Andrew Montlake,
Chief Executive, Coreco and Chair of the Association of Mortgage Intermediaries
AMI Association of Mortgage Intermediaries

Here we are on the edge of a bright, shiny New Year, and once again I am adopting the "cautiously optimistic" line looking ahead to 2026. I've probably used it more than once in recent years, but I'm saying it with more conviction this time.

Although I am expecting a market that feels more like a careful thaw than a sudden spring, we could well see a January bounce now the Budget is out of the way, especially if we do get the nice early Christmas present of a further Bank Base Rate cut.

The pricing we're seeing in mid-December already reflects a world where rates can edge down further, and mortgage products starting with a 3 could well be the norm for the year ahead. This has a massive psychological effect on homebuyers as many potential borrowers last "normal" memory is rates with a 1, 2, or 3 in front. So, 3 point something feels like a return to safety, whilst a 4 still feels like the "new, higher world".

If inflation behaves, 2026 should continue to bring better mortgage affordability, and a calmer mortgage market with fewer "blink-and-you-miss-it" withdrawals, something lenders and brokers alike will welcome. Whilst I do think there will be a gradual return of confidence, I'd still budget for the odd wobble as global events, economic data and policy moves, as well as market sentiment continue to tug at SWAP rates.

Where first-time buyers are concerned, we have done plenty of tinkering with the engine this year, with lower rates, better affordability calculations, higher income multiples and a host of new products, but we still haven't quite fixed the fundamentals.

The real answer is unsexy; build more homes, speed up planning, and support smaller, well-targeted deposit schemes that don't simply inflate prices. Aside from this, getting a deposit together while rents continue their inexorable rise and the cost of living shows no sign of reducing anytime soon remains an issue for many.

Whilst we do now have products offering 100% Loan to Value, (LTV) and deposits from as little as £5,000, yes the building society massive has stepped up and delivered, as well as some innovative tech-led lenders doing something different for first-time buyers, as an industry we need to keep innovating to come up with a new range of products and criteria that is effective in the new world of work and flexible needs.

I do think the market will be very first-time buyer led in 2026, and as an industry we need to make sure that we are getting the message out that lending is very much available. That education piece is essential as I have heard anecdotally that many prospective buyers who do not get what they need or get declined first time round assume they cannot get a mortgage full stop. We must point them towards advice and the multitude of options this gives them, especially from smaller, specialist lenders and societies.

That brings me to visibility. Mutuals already hold a meaningful slice of the market and a warm place in many brokers' hearts, but to win more hearts (and more cases) they need to invest relentlessly in the broker relationship. This means better broker-facing tech, quicker turnaround times, clearly communicated criteria, and a continued commitment to what they do brilliantly, manual underwriting, thoughtful exceptions and niche segments. Above all, intermediaries need to be treated as long-term partners, not a tap to turn on and off.

Mutual values ring true with broker values, with customer outcomes at the very heart of all we both do. And if we're serious about futureproofing ourselves against whatever form of AI, tech-led disruption or disintermediation comes next, likely from a source we haven't even seen yet, that partnership needs to stay strong.

Next steps:
Visit https://www.coreco.co.uk

special

Cohousing & community led housing: a growing opportunity for building societies

Bridport Cohousing CLT - HDA winner 2025
Rebecca Noakes photography

By Owen Jarvis,
UK Co-housing

UKCohousing

Across the UK, growing numbers of people are embracing cohousing — neighbourhoods designed for sociable, collaborative living. Residents have their own homes but share communal spaces, fostering stronger social bonds and more sustainable lifestyles.

Cohousing is well established in Northern Europe and the US. In the UK, the first modern scheme opened in 2003. Since then, more than 450 homes have been created across 25 communities, with another 14 schemes in the pipeline, 65 groups currently seeking sites and 100s more expected in the years ahead.

This is a small but growing market. Current and potential residents in cohousing are seeking to access a wider range of high street mortgages for what are good quality homes – flats, terrace and semi-detached housing with access to shared facilities and garden spaces.

For building societies, this represents a strategic lending opportunity aligned with their mutual values, sustainability commitments and long-term community investment. It also offers potential to differentiate products in a way that supports resilient, people-centred neighbourhoods. For some, cohousing is an radical alternative to mainstream housing. To others, it is simply what the idea of good, old fashioned, thriving neighbourhoods look like in the 21st century.

What Makes Cohousing Distinct

- Private homes with shared spaces such as gardens, workshops and a Common House.
- Co-designed by future residents, giving them agency from the outset.
- Collectively managed, fostering resilience and neighbourly support.
- Aligns with healthy ageing, climate goals, and nature-positive urban development.

Case Study: Marmalade Lane — Mortgage Challenges and Innovation in Practice

- Marmalade Lane in Cambridge is the UK's first site-first, developer-enabled cohousing scheme, completed in 2018.
- 42 homes, all market sale (leasehold apartments and freehold houses)
- Shared gardens, a car-free lane, and a Common House with guest rooms, kitchen, meeting spaces and workspace
- A vibrant multigenerational community

Initially, all resales were handled off-market through the community's own network. Over time, the community adopted a hybrid model: a short off-market period for the community network followed by open-market listings. This provided better 'comparables', increased lender confidence, and kept community involvement in the sales process.

Marmalade Lane demonstrates that cohousing can integrate with mainstream lending when products and processes are flexible.

Case Study: Ecology Building Society — Tailored Mortgage Products for Sustainable Living

Ecology Building Society has taken a leadership role in supporting cohousing and sustainable housing through specialised mortgage products that reward energy efficiency and community-led models.

Their offers include:

- Community Living Mortgage – designed for individuals buying within a cohousing or community-led scheme, with up to 90% LTV and flexibility on construction types.
- Eco Home Mortgage – offers discounted rates for energy-efficient homes (EPC B or above).
- Self-Build/Off-Site Build – supports non-standard or off-site construction, typical in bespoke community developments.
- Community & Commercial Mortgages – tailored for housing co-ops, CLTs and other community-led initiatives.

Ecology's approach shows how underwriting can incorporate non-standard builds and community models, while embedding energy performance criteria to support environmental goals.

The Strategic Opportunity for Building Societies

Social impact: Cohousing responds to demand for connection, mutual support and ageing well in place. Environmental alignment: Low-impact construction, shared green spaces and energy efficiency are built in.

Market potential: A pipeline of over 60 groups actively seeking sites represents real lending demand.

Mutual fit: Community-led housing aligns with the values, heritage and purpose of building societies.

Next steps:
If your organisation would like to explore tailored lending solutions or pilot approaches with cohousing groups, we'd love to hear from you.
Contact: Owen Jarvis
owen@cohousing.org.uk
www.cohousing.org.uk

opinion

AI and the future of mortgage advice

The future of mortgage advice is a hot topic, with the FCA's decision to remove the advice trigger and the growth of AI in the mortgage landscape. AI has the potential to drive a seismic shift in how lenders and brokers operate, throughout the customer journey, but questions remain about its implementation. Here we delve deeper into those questions and ask whether AI will replace or support mortgage brokers.

By Kate Davies
IMLA

AI is already here – to stay – and some of our biggest challenges in the immediate and foreseeable future will be in making sure humans stay in control of the technology and don't become controlled by it. That will call for changes in the way we educate ourselves and our children – so that we use our emotional intelligence and common-sense to recognise and distinguish what is real and reasonable from what is fake and misleading – whether that is in our daily diet of news stories or in our dealings with essential suppliers, including those who provide our financial services.

There is no doubt that effective AI will be able to assist in the advice process, reducing and speeding up many of the time-consuming bread-and-butter tasks. That will free up more time for advisers to become even better at what they do – sussing out what clients really need and want, and identifying appropriate products and solutions for them.

I appreciate that "bots" are getting more sophisticated all the time – but I think we are still a long way off having a completely automated advice world. The more complex an individual's circumstances, and the more individual help they need – the more opportunities there are for real people to deliver an expert, tailored, empathetic and personalised service. I think we increasingly see this across a number of industries and disciplines.

Websites and bots can do a lot of the basic stuff – but when the chips are down and something has gone wrong – don't we all really want to speak to an intelligent human who we can trust to sort it out for us?

The industry can't afford to stand still – it needs to harness and make best use of the new technology.

opinion

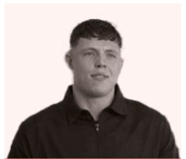
By Francesco Di Petro
Head of Intermediary Mortgages, Newcastle for Intermediaries

Technology is an enabler, not a replacement for the human relationship between brokers and customers. Financial services are complex by nature, with millions of customers, thousands of Intermediaries and hundreds of lenders and technology solution providers. At Newcastle Building Society we've seen technology enhance the relationship between advisers and borrowers, enabling advisers to spend their time more efficiently and focus on what matters most, listening to customers, understanding their circumstances and providing tailored, high-quality advice.

High-quality advice is valued by consumers, so our priority is to make advice easier and more accessible, while protecting those human relationships that help people connect to a better financial future.

Building societies are rooted in putting customers first, so we have a clear role in shaping the landscape of mortgage advice. That means evolving our products, investing sensibly in digital tools and working closely with intermediaries to understand what advisers and customers need. Consumer trends have dictated that over 90% of new mortgage applications are now submitted via intermediaries. To shape future thinking, it's paramount that building societies engage with intermediaries to understand their evolving needs, specifically around their tech deployment roadmaps.

We back advisers with practical support and streamlined processes that help make mortgage advice more sustainable, accessible and focused on real people.



By Jamie Lawless
Co-Founder & CEO, LendWell

Across the industry, conversations about AI often begin with a sense of uncertainty. Will it replace advisers? Will it erode the human relationship at the heart of mortgage advice? In reality, the direction of travel suggests the opposite. The most meaningful applications of AI are not those that automate advice, but those that strengthen advisers' capacity to deliver more consistent, contextual and human guidance.

The challenge today is that many AI systems fail at the very things advisers are best at. They can summarise documents or answer isolated questions, but they lack an understanding of the context that shapes real-world mortgage decisions: inconsistent income patterns, vulnerability indicators, incomplete documentation, or lender-specific nuances. Without this context, AI becomes unreliable beyond the demo environment.

A second issue is the absence of attribution. For AI to be safe and effective in a regulated environment, it must be able to show its reasoning. An adviser needs to see why a transaction was flagged, where an affordability figure came from, or which policy rule shaped an interpretation of income. Without transparent evidence, AI cannot support Consumer Duty requirements, nor can it form part of a dependable audit trail.

If we address context and attribution properly, AI becomes an enabler rather than a threat. It can take on the work that never required human judgement: re-keying information, reconciling documents, identifying mismatches, and drafting compliance notes. This frees advisers to spend more time on what clients genuinely value — reassurance, clarity, empathy and tailored support at a financially vulnerable moment in their lives.

The future of mortgage advice will not be defined by machines replacing people. It will be defined by advisers who are more human, because AI has relieved them of the administrative burden that once constrained their potential.

opinion

The future of later life lending

By Rachel Doy,
Association of Mortgage Intermediaries

The later life lending market has been steadily evolving in response to changes in life expectancy and the changing needs of older people. The traditional path from buying a home, paying off your mortgage and working until the state retirement age no longer applies for every homeowner. Modern families are more dynamic, people are living and working longer, and therefore needs are changing. The view that mortgages aren't for older people is having to evolve.

The later-life lending sector is therefore expected to see growth as more people live longer, retire later and rely on their housing wealth to support retirement. The Association of Mortgage Intermediaries (AMI) is working collaboratively with the Building Societies Association (BSA), the Intermediary Mortgage Lenders Association (IMLA), the Equity Release Council and UK Finance with a shared aim to ensure the future of the later life sector provides a market in which older borrowers can navigate options confidently and advisers can deliver consistent, high-quality guidance and advice across all product types.

From an industry perspective, the sector has long been relatively segmented, with mainstream mortgage advisers and equity-release advisers tending to operate in distinct advice areas. Lenders are also grappling with affordability assessments that were designed for working-age borrowers and do not always translate well to retirement incomes. At the same time, later-life consumers could present heightened vulnerability risks, with varying health, cognitive capability and family involvement, which require stronger and more consistent support across the advice journey.

For consumers, the difficulties are equally pronounced. Choosing between a wide variety of products such as standard mortgages, Retirement Interest Only (RIO) products and lifetime mortgages can be confusing, particularly when the long-term implications for estate value, tax, benefit entitlements and care planning can be poorly understood.

Against this backdrop, the industry-wide work now underway is both timely and essential. The trade bodies share a firm commitment to a coordinated approach that addresses the challenges facing the later-life lending market. The efforts are being reinforced by wider stakeholders such as the FCA and the Money and Pensions Service, independent voices are also shaping the debate, Fairer Finance, through its recent report has highlighted the need to properly utilise housing wealth.

We were pleased to see a commitment to review retirement interest-only requirements in the recent FCA Mortgage Rule Review feedback statement. We would welcome a regulatory change in how affordability assessments are calculated on RIO products. This would enable more flexibility and choice for consumers when assessing their later life borrowing needs. We, as trade associations are meeting in January following the FCA statement to decide on next steps.

Together, all of these organisations are working to create a more coherent later-life lending framework, one in which advisers, lenders, regulators and consumer groups all play a role in ensuring that older borrowers receive clarity, protection and genuinely informed choices.

opinion

Customer outcomes testing: getting it right

By Daniel Sawyer
By Rebecca Firth
KPMG, Risk and Regulatory Advisory

KPMG

Imagine navigating a complex journey without a reliable map or building a house without regularly checking its foundations. For building societies, ensuring positive member experiences can sometimes feel just as intricate. With the advent of Consumer Duty, simply intending to deliver good outcomes is no longer enough; firms must actively evidence them.

This is where Customer Outcomes Testing (COT) steps in – not as a burden, but as valuable insight to understand, measure, and ultimately enhance members' journeys.

Beyond traditional testing: What is COT?
Many societies are familiar with Quality Control (QC) and Quality Assurance (QA). While valuable, COT offers a distinct and crucial perspective.

QC	• Typically involves reviewing specific, point-in-time colleague activity against policy and procedure. • Its objective is to assess performance and competence, identifying training needs.
QA	• Focuses on the effectiveness of processes and controls. • Ensuring they operate effectively against policy and procedure.
COT	• Takes a broader, more holistic view. • It involves a regular review of discrete end-to-end customer journeys or product journeys over a period of time.

COT is **not** merely focused on policy/process adherence, point-in-time interactions, or individual agent performance. Its purpose is to identify, manage, and measure good customer outcomes, prevent foreseeable harm, and allow management to promptly address issues.

COT should be designed to:
- Observe the 'end-to-end' customer's journey, not just isolated 'parts'.
- Holistically review the customer's experience, considering whether it leads to a good or poor outcome.
- Identify patterns and themes that contribute to poor outcomes and foresee potential harm.

Next steps:
Read more about the challenges facing firms, the actions to take, and how we can help on KPMG's website:
https://kpmg.com/xx/en/our-insights/regulatory-insights.html

Three lines of defence: A collaborative approach
An effective COT Framework cuts across the three lines of defence, with defined roles and responsibilities:

- **First Line (1LOD):** Owns customer outcomes risks and is responsible for conducting outcomes testing. Often performed by an 'independent' or '1.5 Line' team.
- **Second Line Compliance (2LOD):** Provides independent oversight, advice, and challenge to COT activities, and conducts monitoring through a risk-based approach.
- **Third Line Internal Audit (3LOD):** Offers independent assurance on the design and operating effectiveness of the COT framework and its components.

By embracing a comprehensive and collaborative approach to COT, societies can not only meet regulatory expectations but also genuinely enhance customer trust and deliver fair value.

Key considerations for a COT Framework
A robust COT framework requires careful consideration across several components:

1. **Scope:** Clearly define which products, customer journeys, and service areas are in scope, and how this aligns with existing testing.
2. **Roles and Responsibilities:** Determine where the COT function will sit within the organisation, how it interacts with other departments, and ensure sufficient resources and capacity.
3. **Defining Good Outcomes:** Define what a good outcome looks like for a customer going through the journey and set good outcome standards.
4. **Policies, Methodologies, and Checklists:** Establish a single, consistent approach to COT, including detailed sampling methodologies and checklists aligned with customer outcome definitions.
5. **Feedback Mechanisms:** Implement effective feedback loops and root cause analysis to track issues to closure and ensure consistent reporting at appropriate levels of granularity.

By embracing COT not as a mere compliance exercise, but as a holistic, strategically targeted, and collaboratively managed framework across all lines of defence, societies can confidently demonstrate their commitment to delivering good outcomes, fostering deeper member trust, and securing a resilient future in an ever-evolving regulatory landscape.

opinion

By Robert Thicket,
BSA Policy Manager

Whether it's the Government or industry, there is non-stop hype about artificial intelligence and in particular, Large Language Models (LLMs).

The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development estimates that AI could speed up UK productivity every year by as much as 1.3%, if adoption is rapid and combined with expanded capabilities. The UK Government says that 1.3% growth in productivity would be worth £140bn.

Unsurprisingly, with the Government hungry for any growth it can get, it's determined to make this a reality.

In its recent blueprint for AI regulation, the Government announced the roll out of initiatives aimed at helping different industries drive growth, whether that's the NHS supporting better patient care or AI being used to bulldoze through planning applications.

Is the mortgage market on the cusp of an AI revolution?

AI in mortgages
The mortgage market, like any industry with data and document heavy processes, has eagerly adopted previous iterations of artificial intelligence, like machine learning.

But LLMs, in particular Agentic AI, have the potential to transform how mortgage intermediaries and mortgage lenders gather and process data, how they communicate with homebuyers and borrowers and even how they underwrite cases.

Agentic AI are autonomous AI systems that use LLMs as their reasoning engine and can set their own goals, plan multi-step processes, and execute complex tasks with minimal human intervention.

There are already examples of other financial services, like in the insurance industry where AI agents are used to manage their complete product lifecycle, with minimal human intervention. Could the same come to the mortgage market?

Experimentation and persistence
In the Governor of the Bank of England, Andrew Bailey's, recent speech he talked about General Purpose Technologies (GPT) as drivers of growth, with AI likely to join the ranks of the printing press, the steam engine, electricity and the internet as the latest GPT.

As he commented, while we are still at the experimentation stage with AI, investment and persistence are crucial.

AI tools and services are already helping mortgage advisers and lenders to speed up and improve their processes, gathering and validating documents and data, carrying out ID and verification checks and packaging cases so that underwriters have all the information they require to make a decision.

That's not to mention the AI tools that summarise complex information for consumers, answering mortgage intermediary criteria questions on lenders' websites, or translating documents for customers where English isn't their first language.

A number of building societies have been early innovators in using these types of tools, and the improvements are not just in terms of service times but also colleague experience. For example, they are helping underwriters to focus on assessing the information to make decisions on cases, rather than chasing and rekeying data.

The dawn of agentic AI
Jeff Goldblum's character in Jurassic Park famously observed that scientists were so preoccupied with whether or not they could, "they didn't stop to think if they should".

We are still at the early stages of AI, with firms equally unsettled by the possibilities the technology holds in terms of jobs and IT security.

At a recent mortgage conference in London, there were tales of fraudsters using deep fake technology to impersonate senior team leaders and consumers pulling out of lending agreements when AI showed them better deals available in the market.

So, could agentic AI soon replace underwriting teams and not just package cases but make the final call?

At the BSA's recent Mortgage Meet Up, there was a view that the market could still be 3 to 5 years away from that becoming a reality.

It will ultimately be for the industry to decide how far the technology should be allowed to go - and what safeguards it will put in place when things go wrong.

Dates for your diary

The BSA delivers a range of knowledge sharing and educational events that increase awareness of business issues and provide the tools and skills that industry professionals need to develop their roles.

View the latest listings and register at www.bsa.org.uk/events

Preparing for Successful Regulatory Visits

28 & 29 January 2026 | Online
Regulatory visits have become more intrusive than ever and can lead to capital and liquidity add-ons, follow-up work and/or other regulatory interventions, including s166 notices or even enforcement action.

This online workshop, split over two half-days, is especially helpful for those who have not yet experienced a regulatory visit or have a critical visit approaching and wish to hone their skills. It will help you know what to expect from such a visit, how to prepare effectively and how to have a positive effect on the outcome.

Cost: £495* BSA members only
www.bsa.org.uk/RegVisits2026

An Introduction to Treasury Management

11 February 2026 | London
This course will introduce participants to treasury management. It provides an overview of treasury operations within financial services, more specifically within building societies and within the regulatory environment.

The course assumes no Treasury or balance sheet management experience and is aimed at those who would like to understand where Treasury fits into the business, de-bunk the jargon and understand the external forces at work. It may be of particular relevance as societies are looking at their treasury operations in light of the expected retirement of the Sourcebook (PRA SS20/15) in 2026 as societies will look to set and manage their own limits, including for treasury and financial risk.

Cost: £525* BSA members & associates
£725* Non-members
www.bsa.org.uk/TreasuryIntroFeb

* VAT Exempt

Treasury Risk and Balance Sheet Management

24 February 2026 | London
This course provides participants with an overview of the financial and balance sheet risks a building society faces as a consequence of being a mortgage lender. We'll consider all key risks including liquidity, interest rate risk, credit risk and operational risks, and the regulation and governance that goes with it. We'll also examine the role of board governance and the relevant committees, especially the Asset and Liabilities Committee.

The course is either a follow-on from the introductory course, or for those who already have some treasury/balance sheet management understanding and want a deeper understanding of the balance sheet impacts of the risks.

Cost: £525* BSA members & associates
£725* Non-members
www.bsa.org.uk/RiskFeb26

Conversations with Vulnerable People

25 & 26 March 2026 | Online
This online facilitated course is designed to provide training for employees in front and second line roles who need to be able to recognise and respond to vulnerabilities.

Being able to recognise vulnerabilities and to respond to individual situations is becoming even more important as the rapidly rising cost of living creates new vulnerabilities for our customers such as debt or lower financial resilience while making other situations such as illness, abuse or de-stabilising life events more difficult to manage.

The course will be delivered online over two half-days and will be led by an expert Samaritans facilitator using a variety of tools to encourage interaction and group learning.

Cost: £399* BSA members only
www.bsa.org.uk/vpeopleMarch26

Building Societies Annual Conference 2026

28 & 29 April 2026 | Edinburgh
The Building Societies Annual Conference is heading to Edinburgh next year. The event takes place at the Edinburgh International Conference Centre on the 28th - 29th April 2026 and concludes with our conference reception and dinner on 29th April 2026, which will be held at the stunning National Museum of Scotland.

Registration is now open, and we encourage you to book your conference place and accommodation early to guarantee your place. For further information and details on how to book visit the dedicated conference website.

www.bsaconference.org

Building Societies Annual Conference

EDINBURGH

28 & 29 APRIL 2026

We look forward to welcoming all of our members, associates, colleagues and guests to next year's Building Societies Annual Conference.

The conference will be held at the Edinburgh International Conference Centre in Scotland, with the conference dinner taking place on the evening of Wednesday 29 April at the National Museum of Scotland.

For full details and to register your place visit the conference website.

www.bsaconference.org