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Room for Improvement in Kelly’s End-of-Term Report Card

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Service charges: who really benefits?

Management fees can be a case of dissonant cooperation among homebuyers but when things run smoothly a co-operative arrangement can be a boon, writes Linda Daly.

A recent study by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development highlighted the poor management of co-ownership schemes. In a report on the Irish market, the study called for better regulation and the introduction of a management code.

Homeowners at joint ventures are repeatedly pulled pins from their cheeks as they are repeatedly treated with contempt and absolutism. As the report stated, ‘The owners are not really owners – they are tenants.’

The issue is now on the public agenda. As the Daily Mirror recently observed: ‘The public has every reason to be alarmed.’

In the wake of a number of recent cases, some of which have hit the headlines recently, the government has announced consultation on a new regime for the management of shared ownership and co-owned properties.

Management fees are a big item on the agenda. The government has said it wants to ‘modernise’ the current system and make it more transparent and accountable.

The issue is not just about money. It’s about trust and the quality of life for residents. The government needs to take this seriously and act.

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