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News story: New online learning tool for flat management companies



Today we launch the first of our online interactive learning tools: flat management companies.

Flat management companies are commonly set up to own the freehold of a property such as a block of flats, and to manage the communal parts of the building. The directors and shareholders of the company are usually the residents of the property.

If you're a flat management company director or thinking about setting one up, you need to know about your responsibilities to Companies House.

Our learning tool is completely free, works on any device and can be completed in 25 minutes. It covers 5 parts:

1. Companies House and your flat management company.
2. Becoming a director.
3. Keeping records.
4. Filing accounts and types of accounts.
5. A quiz to test your knowledge.

This does not replace independent legal or other professional advice.

You can find more information in our [Flat management and right to manage \(RTM\) companies](#) guidance.

Property management law is different in Scotland. Read the [Scottish government's guidance](#) on property factors.

Published 26 September 2018

[News story: Perceptions of vocational and technical qualifications](#)



We have today (26 September 2018) published the results of a perceptions survey covering a range of regulated vocational and technical qualifications available for study in England. The survey reports the views of more than 3,000 employers, learners and training providers in late 2017 into early 2018.

Phil Beach, Executive Director for Vocational and Technical Qualifications, said:

It is important that we ask employers, learners and training providers for their views on vocational and technical qualifications, particularly as they are reformed, so that we can measure changes in levels of understanding and perceived value over time.

This new survey complements our existing study of GCSEs, A levels and Applied Generals. It means we now have a more comprehensive picture of attitudes towards qualifications available for study in England. It will help us, and others involved in reform, to make sure that new qualifications deliver the changes necessary for employers and learners.

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Published 26 September 2018

[Press release: Jail for man who sexually abused Worcestershire teen](#)

A man who sexually abused a 14 year old boy has been jailed today after the Attorney General, Geoffrey Cox QC MP, referred his sentence to the Court of Appeal for being too low.

Gerard Francis Drew, 46 at the time of the offending (now 64), returned to his Redditch home where a friend and the victim were drinking. Drew and his friend are both hearing impaired, and had a conversation in sign language which the victim could not understand. The two then proceeded to sexually assault the victim for around an hour.

Drew was originally sentenced at Hereford Crown Court in July, where he was given 2 years imprisonment suspended for 2 years. Today, after the Attorney General's referral, the Court of Appeal found that the decision to suspend the sentence was unduly lenient, and that the sentence ought to be 2 years immediate imprisonment.

Speaking after the hearing, the Attorney General said:

“Sexual abuse is one of the most psychologically damaging things that can

happen to a person, especially during their formative years. It is important that we send a clear message to offenders like Drew that crimes of this nature will not be tolerated.”

Press release: £500 fine for Loughborough man fishing in Rothley in close season

A 41-year old man from Loughborough has been successfully prosecuted after being found guilty of fishing for freshwater fish in the close season in May 2018.

The case was brought to Leicester Magistrates Court by the Environment Agency on 20 September 2018 where Clint Maskell, of Palmer Avenue, Loughborough pleaded guilty and was ordered to pay a total penalty of almost £500.

The penalty includes a fine of £333 plus costs of £125 and a victim surcharge of £33 after Clint Maskell was found fishing in the close on 16 May 2018 on the River Soar at Cossington Mill, Rothley, contrary to Environment Agency byelaws and national byelaws of the Water Resources Act 1991.

Following the verdict, Pete Haslock, Fisheries Enforcement Team Leader for the Environment Agency said:

We regularly carry out enforcement operations in order to protect fish stocks and improve fisheries and we take all kinds of illegal fishing – including fishing in the close season, as in this case – extremely seriously.

We hope this case will act as a reminder to anglers of the importance of checking the byelaws in their area to find out which waterways are open to fishing during the close season. The case also shows anglers how seriously the courts take these offences.

Illegal fishing is not just unfair on other anglers who fish within the law, it also endangers the future of the sport by damaging the sustainability of fish stocks, so it is important for people to report any information about suspected illegal fishing to us in order for us to investigate.

This year the annual close season ran from 15 March to 15 June. Anglers can check the byelaws in their area [here](#).

Anyone who suspects anglers of illegal fishing are urged to contact the

Environment Agency's 24/7 hotline on 0800 807060, or Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111.