

[News story: Notification of charitable bequests – first meeting with charity sector](#)

We held a very positive and productive first meeting with representatives of the charity sector on this issue, and we are grateful to them for their insight on key issues..

It was an invaluable opportunity for us to hear the sector's views on a range of matters, including the vital importance of legacies in funding charitable work and the need for continuity of service beyond the end of Smee & Ford's current notice period.

We were able to reflect that we are working closely with the company through this period and that HMCTS is looking to establish interim arrangements to ensure that charities continue to receive a notification service beyond July 2019 while we consider options for the longer term.

The meeting with the Institute of Legacy Management, Institute of Fundraising/Remember A Charity, National Council of Voluntary Organisations and the Association of Chief Executives of Voluntary Organisations follows a decision to end HMCTS' current arrangement with Smee & Ford, which has provided a paid-for notification service to participating charities for several years. While this was established in good faith, HMCTS has found that it is not consistent with the department's legal duties.

[Susan Acland-Hood's open letter](#) to the charity sector was published on 31 January 2019. A summary of the meeting will be published shortly too.