

[Privy Council appointments: 1 November 2022](#)

Press release

The King has approved the following new appointments to His Majesty's Most Honourable Privy Council



The King has been pleased to approve that Rachel Reeves MP and Baron Kennedy of Southwark be sworn of His Majesty's most Honourable Privy Council.

Published 1 November 2022

[Welsh Secretary celebrates 40 years of S4C](#)

News story

The broadcaster has been a pillar for Wales and the Welsh language for the last four decades



Secretary of State David TC Davies has congratulated broadcaster S4C on its 40th anniversary.

Since 1982 S4C has entertained and served viewers throughout Wales and beyond. The channel celebrated its 40th birthday on 1 November.

The UK government continues to support S4C. Earlier this year the channel secured an improved funding deal which included £7.5m in new money each year to support its digital services.

Secretary of State for Wales David TC Davies said:

Congratulations to S4C on 40 years of broadcasting. The channel has educated and entertained generations of audiences and plays a crucial role in the creative industries in Wales.

As a government we continue to support S4C so it can create and broadcast the highest-quality content to audiences in Wales and across the world.

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[Merseyrail to manage fines using the Single Justice Procedure](#)

Anyone responding to a Single Justice Procedure (SJP) notice from Merseyrail, for an offence such as travelling without a valid ticket, can now enter their plea online.

If the defendant pleads guilty, their case can be managed without a court hearing. These cases are managed using Common Platform, our criminal case management system which supports SJP. This means defendants' cases can be resolved quickly, fairly and more efficiently.

As with all SJP cases, defendants can still choose to have their case heard in a court. They can also submit a plea on paper, rather than electronically.

Each Merseyrail case will be considered in the same way and the same penalties apply.

The rail provider is the first outside London to use Common Platform for prosecuting cases online.

Benefits to Merseyrail operations

Suzanne Grant, Commercial Director at Merseyrail, said:

I'm really pleased that we're the first regional train provider to use Common Platform to progress these types of cases.

Whilst the majority of passengers travelling on our network purchase a ticket, this new platform will allow us to deal with the small number that fail to do so promptly and efficiently.

It will benefit both Merseyrail and our customers. For our staff, it means less paperwork. For our customers, they'll be able to make a plea online and have their case resolved far more speedily, rather than it hanging over them for a month or more.

Working with HMCTS, we've rigorously trialled the new system, which delivered greater efficiencies and faster processes all round, so we're confident it'll be a huge asset to how we operate.

About the SJP

The SJP is part of the [Single Justice Service](#). This service supports magistrates' courts to deal with minor offences more efficiently, while still ensuring rigorous, open and fair justice.

A single magistrate, supported by a legal adviser, can decide adult, minor, non-imprisonable and victimless offences, such as fare evasion. People who plead guilty can resolve their case without going to court. This minimises delays and allows more court time for other cases.

It's already used to process SJP cases for other non-police prosecutors, including:

- Transport for London
- TV Licensing
- Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency

Future plans

We're planning to onboard more non-police prosecutors on to Common Platform.

More information

[Find out more about Common Platform](#), the case management system supporting SJP.

[New Geovation Accelerator Programme participants announced](#)

News story

Six firms with exciting ideas for using location and property data have been chosen as the latest to benefit from the award-winning Geovation Accelerator Programme.



Image credit: kitzcorner/Shutterstock.com

Geovation is an initiative for PropTech (property technology) and GeoTech (geospatial technology) start-up entrepreneurs to use location and property data in innovative ways, sponsored by HM Land Registry and Ordnance Survey. By coming up with solutions to existing problems or filling a gap in the market, these start-ups create products and services which benefit society and stimulate economic growth.

To date, 150 GeoTech and PropTech start-ups have been supported and more than 1,500 jobs created.

The PropTech start-ups are:

- [Pantera Solutions](#) – Transforming forecasting and strategy planning for commercial real estate.
- [Blocktype](#) – Helping developers and planners understand the development potential of land.
- [EverKnock](#) – A virtual concierge to manage your home move.

The GeoTech start-ups are:

- Wateraware Collective – Creating a living map of water quality data across the UK.
- [Civitem](#) – Advanced analytics for climate resilience planning in agriculture.
- [RouteZero](#) – RouteZero decarbonises business travel by 55% using digital tools.

Andrew Trigg, Chief Geospatial and Data Officer at HM Land Registry, commented:

By offering our data, grant funding and mentoring to the new participants over the next 12 months, we're fostering the next generation of data-led entrepreneurs, and we're excited to see how they go on to transform the property industry and beyond.

The Geovation Accelerator Programme offers 12 months bespoke support to help early-stage founders grow their business. Start-ups receive up to £20,000 in grant funding and the equivalent of over £100,000 in support during the programme including workshops, coaching and access to data from Ordnance Survey and HM Land Registry.

For more information visit [Accelerator – Geovation](#)

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[Thousands in last year of life to have disability benefits fast-tracked](#)

Press release

More people nearing the end of their lives will receive vital, fast-tracked financial support, thanks to legislation passed last week.



- Fast-tracked access to Personal Independent Payments (PIP), Disability Living Allowance (DLA) and Attendance Allowance (AA) will be extended to people who are in their final year of life.

Thousands more people nearing the end of their life will have fast-tracked access to financial support through the benefits system, thanks to landmark legislation passed last week.

In one of his first major legislative acts as monarch, King Charles III has granted Royal Assent to the Social Security (Special Rules for End of Life) Bill.

This means that people who are thought to be in the final year of their life will be able to receive fast-tracked access to certain benefits, six months earlier than they were able to previously.

This will apply to Personal Independent Payments (PIP), Disability Living Allowance (DLA) and Attendance Allowance (AA).

Secretary of State for Work and Pensions Mel Stride MP said:

It's hugely important that people in the last year of their life are treated with dignity and receive the financial support they need and deserve quickly.

Extending this support confirms our commitment to alleviating the pressures faced by those who are nearing the end of their lives, and their families.

The Special Rules changes to PIP, DLA and AA will come into effect as soon as practical and follow the same changes made to Universal Credit (UC) and Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) earlier this year.

Those who are eligible will not be required to attend a medical assessment, and in the majority of cases they will receive the highest rate of benefits.

Further Information

- Special Rules for End of Life (SREL) were previously referred to as Special Rules for Terminal Illness (SRTI)

Media enquiries for this press release – 0115 965 8781

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