

Right to transfer determinations: West Kensington and Gibbs Green Estates

Determination letter and expert report in response to determination requests under Regulations 12(2) and 13 of the Housing (Right to Transfer from a Local Authority Landlord) (England) Regulations 2013, relating to the West Kensington and Gibbs Green Estates.

Right to transfer determination: Cressingham Gardens Estate

[unable to retrieve full-text content] Determination letter and expert report in response to a determination request.

UN Human Rights Council 41: Item 10

Thank you, Mr President,

The United Kingdom emphasises the significant role of technical cooperation and we welcome States' engagement with the Council and with the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) as they work to protect the human rights of those States' citizens. It is important that the Council provides opportunities to not only highlight the most egregious human rights offenders, but also to encourage engagement. We invite all states to consider how best to use this agenda item to support countries that seek such cooperation and engagement with the OHCHR.

The UK is encouraged by the Government of Afghanistan's commitment to better promote and protect human rights. However, largely due to the challenging security situation, the progress made since 2001 is fragile and we urge Afghanistan to take steps to better implement its commitments.

In particular, we remain concerned by the sustained high level of civilian casualties in Afghanistan. All credible claims of civilian casualties must be fully investigated and all parties must take immediate measures to avoid the killing of civilians. We urge particular attention to be paid to those groups most vulnerable to violence, such as minorities, women, aid workers and journalists.

We welcome the continued co-operation between the Government of Georgia and OHCHR. We commend the government's openness in discussing its human rights challenges and in accepting international assistance. However, we remain concerned that those in effective control of Abkhazia and South Ossetia continue to refuse access to OHCHR and other international human rights mechanisms. We are also concerned that the 'de facto authorities' have further restricted freedom of movement and increased civic inequality based on ethnicity.

We regret that Tbilisi's first Pride march was cancelled because the security of its participants could not be guaranteed. We underline the UK's strong support for the commitment made by the Government to support and protect the rights of all citizens, including the right to freedom of assembly and expression.

Thank you, Mr President.

[Tanker driver fined for discharging waste onto public highway](#)

Stanley Hall, aged 50, of High Carr Road in Durham pleaded guilty to discharging contaminated water into a highway drain along the B6317 near Crawcrook on the evening of 13th July 2017.

Video evidence recorded by a vigilant passing motorist was played in court clearly showing black liquid being discharged from the vehicle in question, and subsequently flowing through gully holes at the roadside adjacent to Bradley Burn.

Defending himself, Hall accepted that what he'd done was wrong, although insisted he had been placed under pressure to do so by his now former Hartlepool based employers as the tanker had to be taken in for repairs that evening.

The prosecution for the case were the Environment Agency.

Rachael Caldwell, Area Environment Manager for the Environment Agency, said:

Discharging any contaminated liquid waste is a serious offence as it could cause an unlimited amount of damage to the environment and if it ends up in the local watercourse it could have an impact on residents and wildlife.

Records confirmed the Defendant drove his vehicle from Hartlepool to Ryton where approximately 8,000 litres of waste was drawn out from a storage tank

and taken to a sewage treatment works. He later made the return journey to extract a further 8,000 litres, but rather than taking it to the sewage works he emptied the contents on to the road.

The day after the offence took place an Environment Agency officer attended the scene and took photographs showing the pathway of the liquid along the roadside. The officer assessed the scene and decided no obvious lasting impact was made upon the watercourse.

Rachael Caldwell added:

We applaud the vigilance, care and attention of the passing motorist, whose quick thinking to safely record footage of the offence has been a key piece of evidence in the prosecution of Mr Hall. We would urge the public if they see any suspicious activity to report the information to our incident line.

If you see or are aware of waste crime, you can report it by calling the Environment Agency's incident hotline on 0800 80 70 60 or call Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111.

Audit quality of councils will face examination in new independent review

A review into the quality of local authority audits and whether they are spotting warning signs early enough, was today (10 July 2019) launched by Communities Secretary Rt Hon James Brokenshire MP.

The major work will examine the effectiveness of local authority financial reporting and audit regime.

In a speech at the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's (CIPFA's) annual conference Public Finance Live, the Communities Secretary is expected to say there are far reaching consequences when audits aren't carried out properly.

Announcing the review, the Communities Secretary Rt Hon James Brokenshire MP is expected to say:

A robust local audit system is absolutely pivotal to work on oversight, not just because it reinforces confidence in financial reporting but also service delivery and, ultimately, our faith in local democracy.

There are potentially far-reaching consequences when audits aren't carried out properly and they fail to detect significant problems.

I am delighted Sir Tony Redmond will be leading this work and I await his report towards the end of this year.

Local authorities in England are responsible for 22% of total UK public sector expenditure so the way local authorities report their accounts must be of the highest level of transparency and quality. The review will also look at how councils publish their annual accounts and if their financial reporting system is sufficiently transparent to be held to account.

The review will be led by the former President of the Chartered Institute of Public Finance Sir Tony Redmond. Sir Tony is a former local authority Treasurer and Chief Executive. He has also worked as a Local Government Boundary Commissioner and held the post of Local Government Ombudsman, along with a number of non-executive positions in the public and third sectors.

During his speech, the Communities Secretary will confirm the review will look at the quality of the audit of local authorities, whether auditors are using their reporting powers correctly and if councils are heeding recommendations to help improve the financial management of their accounts.

The review will also look at whether there is an 'expectation gap' between what taxpayers believe an audit will deliver, and what it can in reality deliver.

Sir Tony Redmond is expected to report to the Communities Secretary with his initial recommendations in December 2019, with a final report published in March 2020.

Read the full [terms of reference](#) of the review.

The review of financial reporting and external audit follows the full implementation of the [Local Audit and Accountability Act of 2014](#).

The responsibilities for local authority audits and how they are conducted is set down within the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014.

The 2014 Act gave effect to manifesto commitments to abolish the Audit Commission and its centralised performance and inspection regimes and put in place a new localised audit regime, refocussing local accountability on improved transparency.

Now the Act has been fully implemented, the government is required to review its effectiveness. This review will meet the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government's commitment to undertake a post implementation review of the audit framework and financial reporting elements of the Act.