

Local Land Charges Register continues to grow as Scarborough joins

News story

Property hunters in the area will now have access to instant local land charges search results, making it quicker and simpler to buy and sell.



Image credit: Duncan Cuthbertson/Shutterstock.com

From today (Monday 29 November), anyone requiring local land charges searches in the local authority area of Scarborough Borough Council will need to get them from HM Land Registry rather than going directly to the council.

Councillor Liz Colling, Cabinet Member for Inclusive Growth at Scarborough Borough Council, said:

Migrating our local land charges data to HM Land Registry will make it quicker and easier for people to access the information they require during the buying or selling process. We are delighted to be the first council in North Yorkshire to have made the transfer.

Mark Kelso, Programme Director for HM Land Registry's Local Land Charges Programme, said:

We have worked together closely with Scarborough Borough Council to migrate their dataset to our national, digital Local Land Charges Register. I am really pleased that people buying property in Scarborough will now have access to instant local land charges search results, making it quicker and simpler to buy and sell property in the area.

Local land charges searches are normally required in the property-buying

process. Most local land charges are restrictions or prohibitions on the use of the property such as planning permissions or listed building status. The local land charges search will reveal whether a property is subject to a charge which then informs a buyer's decision to buy a property or parcel of land.

HM Land Registry is working in partnership with local authorities to migrate their local land charges data to a central, digital register as part of a phased approach. Once migrated, anyone will be able to get instant online search results using the [Search for Local Land Charges](#) service.

HM Land Registry's business customers can use their existing portal and Business Gateway channels or their usual search providers to access local land charges data for those local authorities which have migrated.

Customers will need to continue to submit CON29 enquiries to the local authority.

For more information, read about the [Local Land Charges Programme](#).

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[**UK aid supports vulnerable people in Chad using millions of pounds recovered during corruption case**](#)

- The Serious Fraud Office and UK Government used the funds recovered since the 2018 case to benefit the people of Chad.
- £4.4 million has been used to provide life-saving support for over 150,000 people to address food insecurity and treat malnutrition.
- The UK also deployed an Emergency Medical Team to help support Chad's Covid-19 response, including distributing vital medical and hygiene kits.

More than 150,000 people in Chad have been helped with lifesaving UK aid, including emergency food supplies, funded by £4.4 million recovered in a corruption case by the Serious Fraud Office (SFO).

The money was recovered from a series of corrupt transactions involving personnel and companies connected to staff at the Chadian Embassy in Washington, United States, and was the first time the UK has agreed to channel money from a civil corruption case into critical global aid projects.

The funding has gone to support vulnerable people in Chad – which has one of the highest levels of hunger in the world – with food rations, cash

assistance and medical support.

UK Minister for Africa, Vicky Ford said:

We have ensured money recovered from corrupt deals has gone into providing life-saving support to more than 150,000 vulnerable people in Chad.

Working with our partners around the world, the UK will always stand against corruption.

The funds have also been used to support Chad's COVID-19 response and to provide vital humanitarian assistance to over 150,000 people, including malnourished children, through partners on the ground such as WFP, ICRC and UNICEF.

In addition, UK aid through CARE International, provided cash assistance to 1,600 households, allowing them to buy vital supplies like food and shelter materials, and improved access to safe water for 10,500 people.

During the pandemic, the funds went towards the deployment of a UK Emergency Medical Team (UK EMT) of seven medical experts to two hospitals in N'Djamena, Chad's capital city.

While there, they supported the care of critical patients from COVID-19 and helped to train local medical staff on how to treat people with the virus, as well as high quality sanitation and hygiene practices to reduce its spread.

On top of this, further support to local NGOs reached over 1 million people to reduce the spread of COVID-19, including the distribution of vital protective clothing and medical kits provided to more than 10,000 people.

When the £4.4 million profits from the illegal share deals entered the UK's jurisdiction, the SFO began civil recovery proceedings and the resulting funds have now been diverted to aid projects since 2018 to help the most vulnerable people in Chad.

UK Serious Fraud Office said:

We are both proud and delighted that illicit funds recovered by the Serious Fraud Office have now been redistributed to the people of Chad.

The money we seized has rightly been spent on much-needed humanitarian aid projects, rather than lining the pockets of corrupt officials.

Our dedicated staff are experts in their field, working tirelessly to recoup the ill-gotten gains of criminals and deliver justice for victims – wherever they may be.

- The trial – Saleh v Director of the SFO – followed a number of previous appeals against the Property Freezing Order which can be found here.
 - More information about the SFO case against Chad Oil is available here.
 - The £4.4m funding is broken down as follows:
 - ICRC received £0.2m for emergency assistance, including protection activities
 - UNICEF received £1.8m for nutrition support
 - WFP received £1.3m for food assistance
 - To tackle Covid-19 – £350,000 was used to fund the deployment of a UK Emergency Medical Team and £755,176 went to the UK aid Tackling Deadly Diseases in Africa programme in Chad.
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Watford car chase gang have sentences increased

Three men who were part of a gang that stabbed a man to death have had their sentences increased after the Solicitor General, Alex Chalk QC MP referred the case to the Court of Appeal.

On 31 August 2019, the offenders, including Haroon Azad, 23, Umar Sarfraz, 23 and Mohammed Hamza Shah, 21, embarked on a car chase through the streets of Watford after a dispute escalated between themselves and one of the victims, Ryan Higgins. They deliberately collided with the car that Mr Higgins was driving and launched a violent attack on him and Luke O'Connell, 26, who was a passenger. The offenders used a wrench to smash through the window of the car, and weapons including a samurai sword and a machete to attack the victims who were trapped inside the car.

On 16 September at Reading Crown Court, all 3 men were found guilty of manslaughter for their involvement in Luke O'Connell's death. They were all also found guilty of wounding Ryan Higgins, who was stabbed in the leg, arm and back during the attack. They were each sentenced to 9 years' imprisonment.

Following the sentencing, the Solicitor General, Alex Chalk QC MP, referred their sentences to the Court of Appeal under the Unduly Lenient Sentence scheme.

On 25 November the Court of Appeal found their original sentences to be unduly lenient and increased them to 12 years' imprisonment each for Shah and Sarfraz, and 13 years' imprisonment for Azad.

Speaking after the hearing, the Solicitor General, Alex Chalk QC MP said:

The violent actions of these men cost Luke O'Connell his life. My

thoughts remain with Luke's family and friends who have suffered an unimaginable loss. I hope the Court's decision to increase these sentences acts as a warning to those who commit such violent crimes, that they can expect to spend a very long time in prison.

[DVLA urges drivers aged 70 and over to keep their money in their pocket this Christmas](#)

DVLA is urging drivers aged 70 and over to keep their money in their pocket this Christmas, after the agency revealed that more than 800 drivers had notified them about third-party websites charging hefty premiums for their services.

Many of these sites appear high up in the results on a Google search, resulting in scores of drivers inadvertently using a third-party website, when they believe they are dealing with DVLA. The agency is reminding drivers to always use [GOV.UK](#), the official government website, to prevent being charged additional fees.

New figures released today show that in the last 12 months, DVLA received notifications from 803 drivers who unnecessarily parted with money to renew their driving licence at 70 years old through a third party website. Some of these sites charge up to £81 handling fee, which is £20 more than the cost of a typical weekly family shop.

Third party websites charge a fee to pass a driver's application to DVLA, but these sites are not affiliated with DVLA, and applications made through third party websites will not be processed any quicker than those made through [GOV.UK](#). This is the only place to access DVLA's online services where you can be guaranteed not to be charged additional fees on top of any statutory fees that may apply.

Julie Lennard, DVLA Chief Executive said:

Drivers looking to renew their licence at 70 and over should use our online service which is secure, free of charge, and also the quickest and easiest way to transact with DVLA. Customers usually receive their driving licence in just 5 days.

Always remember to always use GOV.UK when using any of DVLA's many online services.

When a driver reaches their 70th birthday, they must renew their entitlement to drive every 3 years. DVLA reminds drivers 90 days before their licence is due to expire, and the quickest and easiest way to renew a licence is to go to GOV.UK where the service is quick, easy to use, available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year and is free of charge.

Notes to editors:

- Figures referenced are by the [Office of National Statistics](#).
- To renew a driving licence at 70 online or find out more about renewing a licence visit [Renew your driving licence if you're 70 or over](#).
- When we become aware of sites misleading motorists, we work closely with other government agencies and Netcraft to raise the issue. If we believe a website is operating outside the advertising guidelines we'll inform the relevant enforcement and controlling bodies. This includes OFCOM or Phone Paid Service Authority (PSA), as well as eBay and Google directly in some instances, to have content removed. Our reporting has seen numerous sites taken down in recent years.
- To renew online, drivers will need to have a valid UK passport and provide addresses of where they've lived over the last 3 years. For DVLA to retrieve the photograph from HM Passport Office the customer will need to provide their passport number. If DVLA can retrieve the photograph this can be used to renew the licence. There's no need to send in original documents.
- Drivers who apply online can expect their licence to be issued within 5 working days, although more complex transactions, including those where medical investigations need to take place, may take longer. Customers can also [track the progress of their licence application](#) online.

Future Tech Forum – Opening Keynote

Good morning everyone.

It's an absolute pleasure to welcome you all to London, to the inaugural Future Tech Forum.

It's the first major summit I've hosted since becoming Digital Secretary in September and what better place to be hosting a discussion about the future of tech, than in the Science Museum?

As you wander around this building over the next couple of days, you will spot "NeXTcube" – the computer that Tim Berners-Lee was sitting at when he designed the World Wide Web. With his invention in 1989, Berners-Lee set off a chain of events that have led us all here today.

Because digital technology has fundamentally changed our way of life. In fact, the entire infrastructure of the global economy – and modern society –

is now built around tech. The five biggest tech companies are now worth almost \$10 trillion – more than the next 27 most valuable U.S. companies put together. Amazon is the third biggest employer on the planet. Apple's stock is worth more than Belgium's entire wealth.

These companies track who we are, and what we like, and where we go and what we buy. They are an ever-present fixture of our daily lives. And they've done a huge amount to improve our existence. They connect us with friends and family. They've revolutionised working life. And given that the economies of some of these tech companies are the size of countries it's great to see them tackling country-sized challenges like looking at tackling global welfare and development – as you'll see in the first session with Microsoft today.

Meanwhile, the pace of technological change is astounding. We've got doctors performing surgery in a room miles away from their patient, armed with a joystick and some 3D equipment. Groundbreaking companies are exploring wild ways to manipulate biology – like reviving the smell of extinct flowers to create new perfumes.

At the same time, AI is everywhere – and getting more sophisticated by the day. Almost all experts think that within this century we'll see a situation where machines are more intelligent than humans. In the long history of humanity, we are now officially living in the Digital Age. So it's no wonder that governments all over the world are racing to set the rules for this new era.

Because if there's anything we've learnt over the last 20 years, it's that without the right governance and values built in from the start, tech can create some very serious problems. Problems that are hard to fix once they've happened.

Algorithms can send dangerous misinformation and poisonous abuse all over the world in a matter of seconds. Authoritarian governments can use tech to track, to intimidate, and to repress. News services can be blocked with the flick of a switch, and competitors crowded out with the tweak of an algorithm.

All of this has ramifications: for our privacy, and prosperity and for society as a whole.

And so I'm gathering you all here today to start a new and frank conversation about the future of tech: About how we can work together to harness its incredible potential, particularly when it comes to tackling the biggest challenges we face, like climate change while protecting people from the darker side of the Digital Age.

It's on us, as like-minded partners, to make sure the tech revolution is a democratic one. And together, we'll be discussing a number of challenges over the next two days.

Like: How do we get the governance of tech right from the start, rather than playing catch-up? What are the issues we need to think about now, before the

adoption of new and emerging tech becomes widespread? How do we ensure new technologies reflect our liberal and democratic values? And where do we need international solutions – given tech is global in its very nature – and how do we deliver them? Every country in the world is grappling with these very same questions but the UK is leading the way in answering many of them.

The most obvious example is our Online Safety Bill, which we introduced in Parliament in July. That Bill is a truly groundbreaking piece of legislation. We'll be going further than any other country to regulate social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter and TikTok.

I know that the world will be watching what we do, and looking to follow our lead in many cases. We've got a 10-year plan to become a global AI superpower, through our National AI Strategy. We've broken yet more ground with a new, pro-competition Digital Markets Unit, to oversee the world's most powerful tech companies.

We're at the cutting edge of deepening Digital Trade, and I'm particularly pleased to welcome colleagues from Singapore here today, with whom we're negotiating a ground-breaking Digital Economy Agreement.

And in a year of international leadership for the UK, we have used our presidency of the G7 to draw a number of lines in the sand about the future of tech: We agreed that as we tackle illegal and harmful content online, we should do so in a way that also protects fundamental democratic rights, like freedom of speech.

We agreed to work together on digital technical standards, and to promote the trusted and free flow of data. We agreed to accelerate the use of digital technologies to boost trade. And finally, we agreed to secure critical digital infrastructure, like our telecoms networks. I want to build on that work over the next two days, as our G7 leadership comes to a close and that's why I'm delighted that so many people have travelled from all over the world to be here today.

We've got representatives from every corner of the planet – from the Republic of Korea to Kenya, Finland and the United States And I'm very excited about the UK's new Digital Trade Network, which is going to make the most of fast-growing tech markets in the Asia Pacific region.

But we know that governments can't meet these challenges alone. We've got to change the existing model, and bring together government, industry and academia to write the next chapter of tech together. To work together in a way that is more collaborative, more frank and more honest than it has perhaps been so in the past.

So the Future Tech Forum is bringing together the widest group of thought leaders from across government, industry and academia.

As the Prime Minister said when he announced this summit in his speech to the UN General Assembly in 2019, we have pulled together the broadest possible coalition to take on this task. And if we get these questions right, the

potential benefits for our countries are enormous. So as I officially open the Future Tech Forum, I'd like to finish by saying that I think we're facing a fundamental choice about our future:

Is tech going to be a force for good, or a force for bad? We're all here today because we are determined to make it the former. So without further ado, let's get things underway with the first session, on tech and democracy.

I'm delighted to welcome to the stage:

Former Danish Prime Minister and NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen

Microsoft Vice President John Frank

And last but by no means least, my colleague Julia Lopez, the Minister for Media, Data and Digital Infrastructure.