

# Civil news: launch of high cost family fixer service

News story

New email service to help providers who have issues working with us on high cost family contracts.



We have launched a new 'fixer service' to help providers who hold high cost family case contracts.

The 'high cost family fixer' service has been set up in response to feedback from providers. It aims to build upon the success of other services already dealing with application and claim errors. These are known as 'civil claim fix' and 'application fixer'.

## **What does this mean?**

'High cost family fixer' can help with a range of issues which are explained on our training and support website.

Examples include:

- case plan problems
- provision of documents
- cost limits

The new email service does not deal with billing issues for high cost family cases. These should continue to be dealt with through the 'civil claim fix' service.

## Where can I find out more?

Guidance is available on our training and support website and can be viewed by going to the 'contact us' page.

This covers:

You can also view information about the 'civil claim fix' and 'application fixer' services on the same page.

## Further information

[Training and support website: contact us](#) – scroll to 'high cost family fixer'  
[highcostfamilyfixer@justice.gov.uk](mailto:highcostfamilyfixer@justice.gov.uk) – refer to guidance on training site before emailing

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# UK's experts coming together for Smarter Working Live Conference

From 16 November, brilliant minds from across the UK's public sector are coming together for three days to discuss, debate and educate us on smarter working at this year's [Smarter Working Live Conference](#). While we have heard the term many times, how much do we really understand about smarter working, and how relevant is it to our working lives?

[Gov.uk explains](#) smarter working as empowering "... us all to make the right decisions about where, when and how we work; optimising the use of workplaces and technology, and realising savings for the taxpayer."

The [Government Property Agency](#) (GPA) has been leading the civil service transformation since 2018 by implementing smarter working practices across the Government's general office portfolio. So, what does this actually mean?

Steven Boyd, CEO at the GPA, will be opening the [Conference](#) by taking us through how the Agency is working with government bodies to design, build, manage and evolve workplaces and working environments for civil servants. You will discover the most important four 'C's' to workplace design and productivity.

Joining Steven is Rupert McNeil, Government Chief People Officer, and Helen Lederer, Deputy Director Corporate Services at No 10 and Cabinet Office Diversity and Inclusion Champion. Rupert and Helen will discuss the people,

culture and leadership elements of smarter working, and why they're some of the most critical principles in achieving sustainable change and in creating great places to work across the public sector.

As day one of the Conference continues, [you will join](#) a live panel of smarter working practitioners from different government departments who will discuss their approaches to smarter working implementation, lessons learnt, the benefits of smarter working to their organisation, and much more.

Andrew Nelson and Leah Jones from the GPA will then deep dive into how changing working practices and employee behaviours have impacted the workplace design. And how these insights have been applied to the recently updated Government Workplace Design Guide.

This is a completely virtual event that is free to attend, with various opportunities to interact with speakers, industry experts and like-minded peers across the three days. [View the full agenda](#), and [book your place now](#).

[Smarter Working Live](#) is hosted by the [Government Property Agency](#) (GPA) and [GovNewsDirect](#). This three-day conference is supported by the [Smarter Working Awards](#) – the platform for recognising the significant achievements and commitment demonstrated by individuals, teams and organisations to drive positive change towards smarter working. [View the Awards finalists](#).

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## [Defence Secretary Visits Oman for Joint Exercises](#)

HMS Queen Elizabeth – the Royal Navy's flagship aircraft carrier – is docked at Duqm port in Oman, as the UK Armed Forces carried out joint land, sea and air exercises with the Omani Forces.

The visit represents the UK's integrated approach to defence and foreign policy and the UK's enduring commitment to working with Oman and Gulf partners on promoting regional security and stability.

### **Defence Secretary Ben Wallace said:**

HMS Queen Elizabeth is here to demonstrate our commitment to the Omanis as invaluable partners and to show our support to the wider Gulf region.

This visit presents an opportunity to see UK forces working hand in hand with our Omani partners across land, air and sea exercises, promoting stability and security in the region and confronting our

shared threats.

The Defence Secretary hosted the Omani Deputy Prime Minister for Defence Affairs, His Highness Shihab bin Tariq, onboard HMS Queen Elizabeth. They observed the impressive capabilities of the aircraft carrier and met UK personnel onboard the ship. HMS Queen Elizabeth leads the UK Carrier Strike Group which is on its maiden operational deployment to the Indo-Pacific and Middle East, embodying the Government's Global Britain vision.

The Defence Secretary and Deputy Prime Minister for Defence Affairs also had the opportunity to see Exercise KHANJAR OMAN at the Ras Madrakah training area. This is a joint battlegroup exercise involving UK and Omani troops, with ground forces supported by the Carrier Strike Group at sea and F-35 jets from the air.

Exercise KHANJAR OMAN represents a key part of the Army's Future Soldier concept, which will see British soldiers more integrated with our partners in regional hubs around the world.

**Brigadier Marcus Mudd, Land Component Commander in Oman said:**

The Future of the British Army out here in Oman is extraordinarily exciting.

This is all about partnership. Oman is a strategic partner to the UK, particularly within the Gulf region. Being able to draw from each other's strengths and the specialist capabilities that we have is an incredible opportunity.

**Captain Kate Breeze, Wildcat Pilot, 1 Army Air Corps:**

Ex Khanjar Oman has really given us an unparalleled opportunity in terms of air, land, sea integration. We've got our partners in the Navy who are with the Carrier Strike Group and we've got the opportunity to work with F-35s and the Marines.

This is also a chance to work with our Omani colleagues and partners. We've been fully integrated with an Omani Reconnaissance Company throughout the exercise and that's been a fantastic opportunity".

The Defence Secretary observed urban training exercises which showcased the impressive range of skills and equipment at the disposal of our Armed Forces.

During the visit, RAF Typhoon jets arrived in Oman in advance of Exercise

MAGIC CARPET – a joint air exercise between the UK, Oman and Qatar Air Forces which will take place in the coming weeks. The annual event gives Typhoon pilots the opportunity to conduct a range of training sorties.

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## Remarks by His Excellency, the Governor of the Turks and Caicos Islands, on the admission of two Queens Counsel to the Inner Bar

Your Ladyship, and your esteemed colleagues of both Bench and Bar,

I sit next to you, in your Ladyships Court, as the representative of Her Majesty the Queen. Today, the 4th November 2021, is the 69th year of the reign of the second Queen Elizabeth, and we are gathered here to admit Mr Oliver Smith QC and Mr David Cadman QC, to the Inner Bar.

Four hundred and twenty four years ago, in 1597, the very first Queen's Counsel, Sir Francis Bacon, was appointed in the 64th year of the reign of the first Queen Elizabeth. Those present will be relieved to hear that time does not permit us to review over 400 years of history, and the development of the role, but from the outset – and to this day – it is the formal recognition of a person steeped in their legal craft – and as a result the rank of Queen's Counsel is recognized and respected throughout the world as a mark of quality in legal practice.

Days such as today, in any profession, are important. We would all do well, whatever our walk of life, spending a little more time – than we do – celebrating sustained success rather than criticizing momentary failure. Over the last two years I've seen far more here in TCI that I want to rejoice over, with regard to peoples achievements than I would ever have wished to criticize, so let's make sure, if nothing else, Oliver Smith QC and David Cadman QC – and their family, friends and colleagues – leave these proceedings knowing how much we respect and rejoice in their achievement.

The professional backstories of – if I may – Oliver and Philip have already been captured by your Ladyship and their now peers in the Inner Bar so, rather than repeat their exemplary records, I'll simply say to them "thank you". Thank you for being the people you are. Thank you for being the professionals you are. Thank you for upholding the very best traditions of your chosen calling and thank you for being of a standard that those who selected you, had no hesitation in doing so.

You are becoming a QC, as those who proceeded you did, not through any single act of brilliance but far more importantly, and in a much harder sense,

through a sustained and consistent approach to upholding the highest possible standards in an exacting profession. You pursued “excellence” not just as a destination – but as a journey – and it seems to me, today, we recognize that your journey has reached an extremely important way-point, but a way-point nonetheless.

Let me, if I may, now turn my attention to our Chief Justice in her Court. Your Ladyship today's ceremony is important in and of itself because the two Queens Counsel we admit today are here because of a new process that you spearheaded and sit within a wider framework of modernizing our judicial processes.

The appointments we celebrate were made through the implementation of the Supreme Court (Appointment of Queen's Counsel) Rules. This removed the privately conducted selection process by which your predecessors received ad hoc applications, after which your learned predecessors may or may not have made a recommendation to the Governor for appointment – with the result that only a former Chief Justice would know definitively, why or why not a recommendation was made.

These new Rules required Mr Smith, Queen's Counsel, and Mr Cadman, Queen's Counsel, to demonstrate their eligibility through codified criteria. The competencies they were required to demonstrate include being learned in the law, skilled in court advocacy, trusted by the Bench and service oriented through the free sharing of their talent with their community and actively advancing their profession.

The importance of these Rules, which makes access to Queen's Counsel more transparent, can be seen by taking a short walk back into England's more recent history where the system of appointment to Queen's Counsel by the Lord Chancellor after ‘secret soundings’ with senior judges, and others, was scrapped just 17 years ago, in 2004.

The selection process in England was the subject of suspicion and perceived discrimination, crowned by a public statement of the then Commissioner for Judicial Appointments, Sir Colin Campbell, that the private sounding system was unacceptable. The Lord Chancellor even suspended the application process and there was vigorous debate over whether Queen's Counsel should be abolished altogether. We know today, which side of the debate prevailed.

Your Ladyship's proactivity has removed the chance for this kind of controversy in TCI and for that, all present are grateful. The celebrants now before the Court are the fruit of these new Queen's Counsel Rules, referred to me by the Queen's Counsel Selection Panel, and I sincerely congratulate them for their demonstrated achievement, commitment to their profession and their service which we recognize today.

On that, Mr Oliver Smith – Queens Counsel – and Mr David Cadman – Queens Counsel – on behalf of Mr Majesty the Queen, through my own Office, a very warm welcome, to a very well deserved place, at the Inner Bar.

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# Foreign Secretary condemns military coup in Sudan

News story

Foreign Secretary Liz Truss has condemned the military coup in Sudan and called on the military to place the democratic transition back on course.



Foreign Secretary Liz Truss said:

The United Kingdom strongly condemns the military coup in Sudan on 25 October. In 2019, the Sudanese agreed on a unique partnership between civilians and military in order to steer Sudan's transition to full democracy. That partnership delivered huge progress, from abolishing oppressive laws to economic reforms and the Juba Peace agreement to help end decades of conflict.

The military's unilateral actions threaten all of these gains. In detaining civilian politicians and activists, and unilaterally amending the 2019 Constitutional Declaration, the military have undermined the spirit and letter of both that hard-won 2019 compromise, and also the Juba Peace Agreement. The Sudanese people have taken to the streets in their millions in recent days to reject these actions. International condemnation has been fast and widespread.

It is still however possible for Sudan's transition to get back on course. The United Kingdom welcomes and supports mediation efforts and urge the military to engage in a spirit of compromise. We note the release of four detainees on 4 November, but call for the immediate and unconditional release of all those detained since 25 October, the restoration of the Constitutional Declaration as a starting point for dialogue, and for security forces to respect the right to peaceful protest.

The United Kingdom will continue to support the Sudanese people in their demands for freedom, peace and justice. The military have the opportunity to put the transition back on course; the United Kingdom urges them to do so now.

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