

Suspended sentence for Cheshire director after he repays £35,000

Alan O'Grady, 55, from Widnes in Cheshire, was director of Tailored Recruitment Services Ltd (TRS), which supplied staff to the warehouse sector and major UK companies in the north west of England.

TRS was wound up in 2017 with over £1 million owing to HMRC in unpaid taxes. The Insolvency Service investigation at that time found that Alan O'Grady had taken over £40,000 out of the company despite knowing it was insolvent. He told investigators he could not remember the transaction, however it was discovered he had used the money to fund a property purchase for his mother-in-law.

Alan O'Grady accepted a disqualification undertaking and was disqualified for 9 years in 2019 for his failure to maintain adequate accounts and records as director of TRS, and for withdrawing funds to the detriment of creditors.

The case proceeded to a criminal prosecution, to which O'Grady pleaded guilty and also agreed to repay £35,000.

He was sentenced on 19 October 2021 at Liverpool Crown Court by Miss Recorder Bex QC.

John Ingham at the Insolvency Service said:

This sentence will send a message to those who are in a position of trust as company directors, to honour their liabilities to creditors and in particular the public purse, rather than for personal or third-party gain.

Notes to editors

Persons subject to a disqualification order are bound by a [range of restrictions](#).

[Information about the work of the Insolvency Service, and how to complain about financial misconduct](#).

Contact Press Office

You can also follow the Insolvency Service on:

Social housing sector stock and rents statistics show impact of pandemic

The Regulator of Social Housing today published [statistics about the social housing sector](#) for both private and local authority registered providers, including stock ownership and rents as at 31 March 2021.

Returns from all registered providers of social housing show the sector provides 4.4 million homes across England with around a 25,000 net increase in social homes in the year. The number of Affordable Rent and low-cost home ownership homes increased, while the number of social rent homes fell. General needs (social rent) homes still make up the majority of the social housing sector at 77% of all stock, with supported housing at 13% and low cost home ownership at 7%.

The coronavirus pandemic impacted on registered providers in a variety of ways. The measures in place to protect tenants led to a dramatic fall in evictions by private registered providers from over 10,000 to fewer than 800. The pandemic also affected stock changes. In 2021, private registered providers once again increased the number of low cost rental homes they offered. However, this was the smallest annual increase since 2014. Local authority providers saw another decline in the number of low cost rental homes. However, this was the smallest annual decrease since 2012. Both private and local authority providers continued to develop and acquire homes, with nearly 25,000 low cost rental homes and 14,000 low cost home ownership homes joining the stock.

For profit providers continue to increase their stock, with more than 4,000 homes added in the year. About three-quarters of this growth has been in low cost home ownership. However, stock held by for-profit providers is a very small (0.5%) proportion of overall stock.

As expected, rents increased in the year. The average increase in general needs (social rent) average weekly net rents was 2.7%, which was in line with the cap of CPI+1%. This increase follows falls in rent across the sector over the previous four years. The average weekly general needs rent across England was £92.84 with continued regional variation. Rents were lowest in the North East (£77.67) and highest in London (£114.44).

Will Perry, Director of Strategy at RSH said:

The data from this year's Statistical Data Return and Local Authority Data Return show the impact of the coronavirus pandemic on evictions and stock changes, as well as the increase in rents in line with the limit set by government.

Collecting this data supports us in taking a risk-based and proportionate approach to regulation, across both local authority

and private registered providers, and makes a valuable contribution to National Statistics.

Further information

For press office contact details, see the [Media enquiries page](#).

For general queries, please email enquiries@rsh.gov.uk or call 0300 124 5225.

Notes to editors

- Local authority social housing data was formerly collected through the Local Authority Housing Survey. Since 1 April 2020 it has been collected by RSH through the Local Authority Data Return when RSH took on responsibility for the regulation of local authority rents. Private registered provider data has been collected by RSH through the Statistical Data Return since 2012.
- Both local authority and private registered provider data are designated as National Statistics by the UK Statistics Authority.
- A total of 1,557 providers completed either the LADR or the SDR in 2021. There was a response rate of 100% for the 2020-21 LADR and 95% for the 2020-21 SDR (100% for private registered providers owning 1,000 or more social housing units).
- Homes includes self-contained units such as houses and flats and non-self-contained bed spaces, referred to collectively as units in the data.
- Of the 4.4m units of social stock owned by RPs, private registered providers own 2.8m units while local authority registered providers own 1.6m units.
- The 51 for-profit providers reported 13,671 units of social stock in 2020, compared to 9,313 in 2019.
- The Welfare Reform and Work Act 2016 introduced a 1% annual rent reduction for four years. Rents from 1 April 2020 are regulated through RSH's rent standard with a rent cap of CPI + 1%.
- RSH promotes a viable, efficient and well-governed social housing sector able to deliver homes that meet a range of needs.

[DASA recognised as Investor in Innovation](#)

DASA has been benchmarked and accredited by the Institute of Innovation and Knowledge Exchange (IKE Institute) – the UK's professional body for innovators. It accredits, certifies and benchmarks innovation in such sectors as construction, defence, education, energy, electronics, nuclear, security, technology and transportation.

DASA recognised for innovation in six categories

The review panel, chaired by Professor Sam Medhat, IKE Institute Chief Executive and member of the ISO International Innovation Committee, assessed DASA's innovation position in six categories: Strategic Alignment; Organisational Readiness; Core Capabilities and Technologies; Horizon Scanning and Industry Foresight; Customer Awareness; and, demonstration of Impact and Value.

Professor Medhat said:

Since its launch in December 2016, DASA continued to surprise us with its active role in challenging business as usual to create and support the development of a more disruptive innovation capability in defence and security. It is refreshing to see such a highly progressive, well organised and dedicated team, delivering innovation services and stimuli at an industrial scale.

I am very pleased to say that DASA has pushed the boundary in many of these assessment categories, and set itself a new benchmark record. So, many congratulations, and well done to the DASA tenacious team for being an exemplar Investor in Innovations organisation.

Anita Friend, Head of DASA said:

DASA continues to build ecosystems of customers and suppliers that ensure the identification and development of innovative solutions to security and defence challenges, thus underpinning the UK's prosperity agenda. Our approach brings together a combination of frequently staged open and thematic competitions that explore the collective innovation talent and capability, particularly of those from Small and Medium Enterprises to explore and demonstrate the art of the possible.

Harnessing the power of technology and having it inextricably linked to capability in defence and security is a primary driver for us. During last year, we've invested some £146M in projects from about 1700 organisations. DASA's annual report 2020/21 outlines many of the achievements and provides case studies across many domains.

IKE Institute's Innovation Manifesto highlights its commitment to support the development of innovative people and organisations. The IKE Institute is represented on the UK Scientific and Parliamentary Committee and the BSI/ISO Technical Innovation Committees amongst other innovation related boards, to influence the inter-relationship between education, business, and government through collaborative networks and knowledge exchange. For more information, visit [IKE Institute](#).

[UK-India tri-service exercise Konkan Shakti](#)

Personnel from all three services from both countries are exercising in a tri-service exercise, the most ambitious conducted by the two countries to date. It follows on from the May 2021 announcement by Prime Ministers Modi and Johnson of the India-UK 2030 Roadmap.

The United Kingdom's Carrier Strike Group (CSG), led by HMS Queen Elizabeth, is also participating in the exercise.

The exercise is another step in deepening the defence and security ties and boost strategic cooperation in the Indo-Pacific region. The exercise provides an opportunity for the armed forces of two outward looking, confident democracies to work in synergy and uphold our shared commitment to peace and security.

First Sea Lord Admiral and Chief of Naval Staff Admiral Tony Radakin said:

The CSG's engagement with India showcases the deepening comprehensive strategic partnership. Both the Indian and the Royal navy are blue-water, multi-carrier navies, which places us in a very exclusive club. Our growing interactions are a testimony to the shared commitment to rules-based international system, a belief in the values of open trade, and in the importance of the freedom of the high seas – a right conveyed on all nations.

Defence Adviser at the British High Commission, Gavin Thompson, said:

A strengthened partnership with India is a key pillar of the UK's tilt to the Indo-Pacific. Prime Ministers Modi and Johnson agreed to work in lockstep for our shared security and prosperity. Konkan Shakti will not only boost the cooperation of our armed forces but also strengthen the living bridge connecting the people of our two great nations.

Further information

The Konkan Shakti exercise began on 21 October and will culminate on 27 October. The UK is only the third country with which India is conducting a tri-service exercise.

The exercise follows the CSG's two-day engagement with the Indian Navy in July, followed by exercise Konkan along the UK's coast in August and exercise

Ajeya Warrior between the two armies earlier this month.

The CSG is operating in the region as part of a six-month deployment to the Indo-Pacific. The maiden CSG deployment will travel 26,000 miles, visiting more than 40 countries. Pictures/footage of the CSG21 deployment can be downloaded [here](#).

At 65,000 tonnes, HMS Queen Elizabeth is the largest surface vessel ever constructed in the UK. She leads six Royal Navy ships, a Royal Navy submarine, a US Navy destroyer and a frigate from the Netherlands in the largest concentration of maritime and air power to leave the UK in a generation. It is equipped with the fifth generation F-35B lightning multi-role aircrafts. They are being jointly crewed by the Royal Air Force, Royal Navy and the US Marine Corps.

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Government takes out first nationwide injunction against climate activists blocking key roads

- National Highways granted new interim injunction covering Strategic Road Network in England, banning activities that obstruct traffic and access.
- Those who breach the injunction will be in contempt of court and at risk of imprisonment and/or an unlimited fine
- Comes as nine protestors face High Court proceedings for breaching other injunctions.

National Highways has secured a new nationwide interim injunction to target protestors who cause disruption on any part of the Strategic Road Network in England.

The High Court granted the interim injunction today (Monday 25 October) following an application from National Highways.

The new injunction bans activities that obstruct traffic and prevent access to 4,300 miles of motorways and major A roads. It also bans activities which cause damage to the road surface and infrastructure and prohibits activists from gluing themselves to the road or abandoning their vehicles.

Anyone who breaches this injunction faces imprisonment and/or an unlimited fine. Activists found in contempt of court may also be forced to repay the costs of their case.

The latest interim injunction was granted in addition to three earlier injunctions including one covering the M25. Transport Secretary Grant Shapps said:

We are making use of every avenue of existing law to try to prevent the continued life-endangering action being carried out by Insulate Britain, which is causing intolerable disruption to motorists' lives and livelihoods. This new interim injunction will ban activities that obstruct motorways and major A roads across the entire country.

On top of the immediate measures we're taking, the long term solution lies in the changes to the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill which were set out by the Home Secretary, giving additional powers against disruptive protests which target critical national infrastructure. This includes unlimited fines & prison sentences of up to 6 months for obstructing highways.

Duncan Smith, Acting Executive Director of Operations at National Highways, said:

This new injunction covering the Strategic Road Network across the country is another step forward in helping to keep these reckless and dangerous protests away from our network and endangering peoples' lives.

We continue to serve court papers on those who have breached the previous injunctions. People who breach the injunctions face imprisonment and/or an unlimited fine.

National Highways has already taken out three injunctions to prevent action along the M25, the M25 feeder roads and major roads around the Port of Dover following dangerous disruption caused by demonstrators from Insulate Britain.

More than 100 activists have already been served with court papers in relation to these injunctions and may face imprisonment and/or a fine for contempt of court if they are found to be in breach of the orders going forward. On Friday, National Highways made nine applications to the High Court against protestors who had breached an existing injunction by blocking the M25. Now an application for contempt of court has been made, the court

will decide whether the protestors breached the injunction order.

These injunctions are a short-term solution to tackle the highly disruptive protests we have seen over the last few weeks, and the government has committed to legislating to prevent these kinds of guerrilla tactics in the long-term through the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill.