

Recruitment starts for new Social Mobility Commission Chair

News story

The Equality Hub begins recruitment for a new Chair of the Social Mobility Commission (SMC).



Equality Hub

The Equality Hub has begun recruitment for a new Chair of the Social Mobility Commission (SMC).

Sandra Wallace and Steven Cooper will continue acting as interim Co-Chairs until October 2021 at the latest.

The chair will lead the SMC in promoting social mobility both within and outside Government, oversee work to strengthen the evidence base and improve public understanding of how opportunity is created and made accessible to all.

Recruitment for the role begins today and applications will be taken until 11 June 2021.

The role is advertised on [HMG Public Appointments' website](#).

To note:

- The SMC is an independent statutory body that exists to create a United Kingdom where the circumstances of birth do not determine outcomes in life.
- The Equality Hub sponsors the SMC and as a result the Minister for Women and Equalities has statutory responsibility for appointing the Commission's chair.

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[Pneumococcal polysaccharide vaccine: change to the supply route from June 2021 letter](#)

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[Teletext faces court action unless it pays over £7m in refunds](#)

On 4 February, the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) announced that it was opening an investigation into Teletext Holidays after receiving hundreds of complaints. These showed that people were not receiving refunds they were owed within 14 days, as required by law, for package holidays cancelled by the company due to pandemic restrictions.

The CMA wrote to Truly Holdings Ltd., the company that operates Teletext Holidays and also AlphaRooms.com, in March, setting out in detail its concerns and giving the company an opportunity to address them. The CMA told the firm it could avoid any potential court action by signing formal commitments – known as ‘undertakings’ – to refund affected consumers and ensure compliance with the Package Travel Regulations going forward.

However, Teletext has not agreed to provide undertakings that are sufficient to address the CMA’s concerns.

The CMA has now informed Teletext Holidays that it is preparing to take court action and will launch proceedings if it does not repay the outstanding refunds, or commit to do so, without unnecessary delay.

Andrea Coscelli, Chief Executive of the CMA, said:

There must be no more delays to Teletext refunding customers for holidays they could not take because of the pandemic. It is

unacceptable that many have already waited months for the refunds they are legally entitled to.

We take very seriously the ongoing failure of Teletext Holidays to meet its obligations. The firm must now comply with the law and commit to refunding its customers. If it does not do so, we will not hesitate to pursue this case in court.

Today's announcement follows significant action by the CMA in relation to holiday cancellations during the coronavirus pandemic. The CMA has [written to over 100 package holiday firms to remind them of their obligations to comply with consumer protection law](#), and has already secured refund commitments from [LoveHolidays](#), [Lastminute.com](#), [Virgin Holidays](#), and [TUI UK](#).

Further information on this case can be found on the [COVID-19 cancellations: package holidays web page](#).

Notes to editors

1. Teletext Holidays is the trading name of Truly Travel Limited, which is a subsidiary of Truly Holdings Limited. Truly Travel Limited and Alpha Holidays Limited (Alpharooms.com) are both subsidiaries of Truly Holdings Limited. For convenience, references to Teletext and Teletext Holidays are references to Truly Holdings Limited.
2. The CMA sent a letter before claim to Truly Holdings Limited on 30 April 2021. This outlined that the CMA intends to apply to the court for an order under section 217 of the Enterprise Act 2002 requiring the company to comply with its obligations under [the Package Travel and Linked Travel Arrangements Regulations 2018](#).
3. The CMA's investigation relates to package travel holidays booked with Teletext Holidays, not flights or accommodation booked on a standalone basis.
4. Where package holidays are cancelled and consumers are entitled to a full refund under the Package Travel Regulations, those refunds must be provided within 14 days of the cancellation.

Chris Grigg CBE appointed Chair of the UK Infrastructure Bank

Chris Grigg CBE, who has more than 30 years' experience across the real estate and financial services industries, was appointed following a fair and open competition.

He starts the job on Tuesday (4 May 2021) and the Bank will launch in an interim form later in the Spring. Mr Grigg has held a range of leadership

roles including Chief Executive of Barclays Commercial Bank and, most recently, at British Land, a property development and investment company.

The UK Infrastructure Bank (UKIB) – headquartered in Leeds – will receive an initial £12 billion of capital and £10 billion of government guarantees, which will enable it to unlock more than £40 billion of financing for key projects across the UK. It will prioritise investment in projects that help tackle climate change, helping the UK to meet its net zero target by 2050, and level up the country by supporting regional and local economic growth.

The Financial Secretary Jesse Norman said:

I am delighted that Chris Grigg CBE has agreed to serve as Chair of the new UK Infrastructure Bank. He brings a great deal of useful experience to this important role, and I look forward to working closely with him.

Mr Grigg, who will lead the Bank's board and set the strategic direction of the organisation during an initial three-year term, said:

It is a great privilege to be the inaugural Chair of the UK Infrastructure Bank.

I am excited to lead this organisation as we build it from the ground up and ensure it provides vital financing for the UK infrastructure market and local authorities to support the transition to net zero and spread economic opportunity across the whole of the UK. I look forward to getting started.

Further Information:

- Chris Grigg was selected following a fair and open competition, after the role was advertised on the Cabinet Office Public Appointments website for one month.
- He confirmed that he has not undertaken any political activity within the previous five years including donating to, or canvassing on behalf of, any political party.
- He previously served as interim Senior Advisor to the Chancellor of the Exchequer on the Bank since December 2020; this was a part time and unpaid role.
- Alongside serving as Chair of the Bank, Mr Grigg is a Senior Independent Director on the board of BAE Systems. This was declared from the outset of the process and was not considered a conflict of interest for taking up the role of Chair at UKIB by the selection panel or ministers. It is common for individuals to hold multiple non-executive roles. He has signed a legal letter of appointment confirming that any confidential information he receives as Chair cannot be disclosed and can only be used for the purposes of the Bank.
- The Chair role is a part time position. Mr Grigg will serve an initial

three-year tenure with possible reappointment for one further three-year term.

- The Bank's £22 billion of financial capacity will consist of £5 billion of equity, £7 billion of debt, and £10 billion of guarantees.
- A [Policy Design paper for the UK Infrastructure Bank](#) has been published.

About the Appointment Process:

Chris Grigg was selected following a fair and open competition. An advisory assessment panel chaired by Charles Roxburgh (Second Permanent Secretary, HM Treasury) and also consisting of Sir John Armit (Chair, National Infrastructure Commission and National Express Group) and Bernadette Kelly (Permanent Secretary, Department for Transport) interviewed a number of candidates and made recommendations to the Financial Secretary to the Treasury and Chancellor, which informed the selection decision.

There were 21 applications for the position, of which six candidates were shortlisted for interview.

[Parole Board Chief Executive's blog – April 2021](#)

I am a great fan of Restorative Justice (RJ) and its ability to bring victims and those responsible for the crime committed against them together with the goal of taking steps towards repairing the damage done and trauma suffered by the victim as well as giving offenders an opportunity to face the people who have suffered at their hands.

RJ gives both victim and offender the chance to talk about the incident, explain how it has impacted them, seek assurances that it won't happen again, and agree on how to put things right.

From speaking to victims I know this is what many people affected by crime want, which is why 85% of victims who go through Restorative Justice are satisfied with the experience. Research indicates that RJ can also lead to a drop in re-offending, as it helps people who have committed crimes to recognise the harm they have caused and encourage them to address underlying problems.

Whilst the primary purpose of RJ is to repair the harm caused to a victim of crime; if an offender has participated in RJ, this may be of interest for a parole review, and may be just one of the factors that Parole Board members will want to take into consideration when assessing the offender's suitability for progression or release, alongside all of the other evidence we review.

Given the Parole Board focus on the most serious offences, restorative justice is not commonly part of the evidence we receive, however where it is, members need guidance on how to assess that information

That is why the Parole Board has been working with Why me? Restorative Justice to develop guidance for Parole Board members about RJ and how to take account of it where it is mentioned in parole reviews.

This new guidance to Parole Board Members makes clear some important underpinning principles:

- RJ is a voluntary process and neither the offender nor the victim can be compelled to engage against their wishes. It can only take place with the consent of both parties;
- Either party can withdraw at any time;
- Any documentation produced as part of the RJ process, including notes from RJ meetings are all confidential and the Parole Board will not ordinarily have access to these.

As it is difficult to measure the impact of RJ, members should not place weight solely on the completion of RJ when considering future risk but will consider it alongside the entirety of the evidence they are presented with. In considering the outcomes of RJ, members know that it was not designed to reduce reoffending or risk of serious harm – its primary function is to repair harm done. Some victims do ask what the impact might be on parole if they engage in restorative justice with an offender.

Parole Board members will be interested in whether the prisoner has changed their behaviour and attitudes in any way as a result of the activities they have taken part in, such as Restorative Justice or a victim awareness programme. Information about participation in Restorative Justice will usually come from one or more of the following:

- Probation reports where the Community Offender Manager has engaged with the Restorative Justice practitioner and staff working within the prison.
- The prisoner's own written representations (often from a legal representative) or oral evidence at a hearing.
- The Victim Personal Statement, if there is one.

Parole Board members may wish to learn more about the RJ process and its outcome. They could ask for further information, in order to consider whether it has any relevance to the assessment of risk. The focus will be on the impact that engaging in the Restorative Justice process has had on the prisoner and how it may have influenced or changed behaviour. Any reference to Restorative Justice may prompt the Board to ask for further information about the process.

In addition to the guidance provided to Parole Board members, Why me? has produced an information leaflet for RJ Practitioners about disclosing information to the Parole Board. The leaflet reinforces the confidential nature of RJ processes and that only limited information should be provided.

The leaflet can be read here: [Why me? RJ Leaflet](#)