

# More face-to-face hearings as courts reopen

- A further 16 additional courts to reopen this week

159 HM Courts & Tribunals Service (HMCTS) locations have remained open throughout the pandemic and a further 9 have opened in the last few weeks. This, together with the significant increase in use of remote audio and video technology, has enabled the justice system to continue functioning in these exceptional circumstances.

Now, 16 more sites have been assessed as suitable to hold socially-distanced hearings. These are spread across the country and across all jurisdictions. Each building has been individually assessed and will strictly follow public health guidance to ensure the protection and safety of all court users. A full list can be found below.

Lord Chancellor, Robert Buckland said:

Throughout the coronavirus outbreak, court staff and the judiciary have worked tirelessly to make sure justice has not stood still and I'm pleased that we are now in a position to reopen more of our buildings.

A functioning justice system is one of the hallmarks of a healthy democracy and today's update will give confidence to people up and down the country that justice can continue to be done in a way that is safe for all court users.

Lord Chief Justice of England and Wales, Lord Burnett of Maldon said:

This is a very welcome step towards reopening all our court buildings. A remarkable volume of work has continued throughout the lockdown, much of it being conducted by judges from home.

Reopening all of the court estate, using additional accommodation and continuing to use technology imaginatively will enable us to return to and surpass pre-lockdown volumes, helping manage the growing caseload.

The Senior President of Tribunals, Sir Ernest Ryder said:

All of the Tribunals in the UK are open for business and we have been able to provide an impressive service during the Pandemic by working remotely. The re-opening of tribunal buildings is welcomed.

It will allow us to add to that service for those cases which are not best suited to remote methods of hearing, where face to face determination by a tribunal panel is important.

We will continue to develop the technology that has been introduced for use in remote hearings and in our buildings and we will use this opportunity to increase the number of panel hearings that take place.

The dedication of all those in the justice system has allowed people across the country to continue to access the justice they are entitled to while being protected against the spread of the virus, and many thousands of court hearings across all jurisdictions have been heard since the coronavirus pandemic began.

Since the beginning of the pandemic, the government and the Judiciary have announced through HMCTS:

There are now 184 court and tribunal buildings open for essential face-to-face hearings, representing 54% of the 341 crown, magistrates, county and family courts and tribunals across England and Wales.

Work has also begun to identify suitable venues to house so-called 'Nightingale' courts. These would use public spaces, such as civic centres or university moot courts, to allow traditional court buildings to manage more work while maintaining social distancing – whether that be by hosting full hearings or allowing victims and witnesses to attend remotely. A working group has been established to develop these plans, made up of HMCTS officials, the judiciary, legal professional bodies, representatives of victims' groups and other court users.

## **Notes to editors**

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# **[Animal medicine seizure notice: Border Force, Inverness Airport](#)**

News story

Details of seizure notice served at Border Force, Inverness Airport following a routine search. Published in June 2020.



The following veterinary medicines were detained and subsequently seized at Border Force, Inverness Airport following an attempt to import:

- 1 x Equine Bute Paste
- 2 x 100ml Ketoprofen Injection
- 2 x 100ml Buscopan Compositum
- 2 x 100ml Doxycycline Paste
- 2 x 5ml Calmat Injection
- 6 x 50ml Syntocin Injections
- 100 x 1.3g sachets of Butalone Granules

These products were intended for use in horses and are not UK authorised products.

The medicines were seized under Regulation 25 (Importation of unauthorised veterinary medicinal products) of the Veterinary Medicines Regulations 2013.

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## [Change of Her Majesty's Ambassador to Montenegro – August 2020](#)

Press release

Ms Karen Maddocks has been appointed Her Majesty's Ambassador to Montenegro in succession to Ms Alison Kemp.



Ms Karen Maddocks has been appointed Her Majesty's Ambassador to Montenegro in succession to Ms Alison Kemp. Ms Maddocks will take up her appointment in August 2020.

## **CURRICULUM VITAE**

Full name: Karen Louise Maddocks

Married to: Philip Wilson

Children: Two

2017 to 2019 Guangzhou, Consul General

2016 to 2017 Guangzhou, Deputy Consul General

2013 to 2016 Beijing, First Secretary and Head of Science and Innovation Network

2012 to 2013 Full-time Language Training (Mandarin)

2009 to 2012 FCO, Deputy Head of Burma and ASEAN Team

2006 to 2009 Hanoi, Political Officer

2002 to 2006 Roles including FCO Desk Officer for Korea and Mongolia, Pitcairn/British Indian Ocean Territory, and Wellington, Political Officer

1998 to 2002 Voluntary Services Overseas (VSO), Teacher Trainer, Anhui Province/ Programme and Recruitment Officer, London

## **Further information**

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# **[Letter to the Chair of PACAC about the CSPL review of electoral regulation](#)**

[unable to retrieve full-text content] Lord Evans informed the Chair of PACAC

about the Committee's forthcoming review of electoral regulation.

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## [Letter to the Prime Minister about the CSPL review of electoral regulation](#)

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