

Civil news: tender to replace HPCDS services opens

News story

Early legal advice added to in-court services under the new Housing Loss Prevention Advice Service which will replace the Housing Possession Court Duty Scheme.



Tenders are invited from 17 November 2022 to bid for the Housing Loss Prevention Advice Service (HLPAS). This will allow delivery of early legal advice in social welfare law together with in-court duty work from 1 August 2023.

The in-court work service is currently provided under the Housing Possession and Court Duty Scheme (HPCDS). But this will be replaced by HLPAS, as set out in the Civil Legal Aid (Housing and Asylum Accommodation) Order 2022.

We are also inviting applications for the delivery of housing and debt contract work to support delivery of the HLPAS.

Why is this happening now?

We need to award new contracts in time for the delivery of HLPAS services from 1 August 2023 until 31 August 2024 in 103 HLPAS areas. These areas are listed in the HLPAS Information for Applicants document (IFA) available on our GOV.UK tender pages.

We intend awarding one contract for each HLPAS area. We will offer an unlimited number of contracts for housing and debt services in each procurement area.

Who is eligible?

Providers able to meet the minimum tender requirements can deliver HLPAS services. You do not need to be a current legal aid provider to tender for this opportunity.

What are the minimum requirements?

Providers interested in delivering HLPAS work must meet one of the following requirements:

- currently hold a 2018 housing and debt contract
- be awarded a 2018 housing and debt contract through the procurement process at the office from which they are bidding

In consideration of these requirements, we are also inviting tenders for the delivery of housing and debt contract work.

Providers tendering for a housing and debt contract as part of this procurement process, must also submit a compliant tender for HLPAS work.

Tender deadline

The tender opens on 17 November 2022 and closes at 12pm on 19 December 2022. Bids must be submitted using the Legal Aid Agency's eTendering system.

Further information

[HLPAS and housing and debt services from August 2023](#) – to find out more and download documents

[eTendering system](#) – to submit your tender

[Civil Legal Aid \(Housing and Asylum Accommodation\) Order 2022](#) – legislation setting out introduction of HLPAS

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[**Statement by the E3 and US to the IAEA Board of Governors introducing**](#)

resolution on Iran's non-cooperation with the IAEA

Thank you, Chair.

I have the honour to speak now on behalf of France, Germany, the United Kingdom, and the United States of America.

We would like to thank the Director General for his report on safeguards in Iran contained in GOV/2022/63. The report outlines the Agency's continued efforts and engagement with Iran to clarify information relating to the correctness and completeness of Iran's declarations under its NPT Safeguards Agreement.

We also recall the Director General's previous reports to the Board of Governors since 2019 on Iran's safeguards obligations, as well as the resolutions adopted by the Board on these matters contained in documents GOV/2020/34 and GOV/2022/34. The Board's message in these resolutions was resounding and clear.

Regrettably, the Director General's latest report once again underscores that Iran still has not provided the substantive co-operation necessary to clarify and resolve outstanding safeguards issues.

Chair,

Resolving these issues remains central to establishing the international verification assurance that Iran's nuclear programme remains exclusively peaceful. Exercise of the Agency's authority to provide this assurance is central to the integrity of the NPT safeguards regime. As we have said, the outstanding issues in Iran are not historical – they are integral to the necessary verification assurances that Iran's declarations are correct and complete.

Chair,

In June of this year, the Board voted by an overwhelming majority to adopt a resolution calling on Iran to fulfill its legal obligations and engage with the IAEA to clarify and resolve all outstanding safeguards issues without delay. At the September Board meeting, 56 States joined a statement recalling that June resolution, and echoing the Director General's concern that Iran had still not engaged with the Agency on the outstanding safeguards issues.

Unfortunately, despite the Board's repeated calls, the Director General's report makes clear that Iran's lack of substantive co-operation remains serious and ongoing. The Agency has sought to clarify outstanding safeguards issues since 2019. Iran has been given ample time and opportunities to do so. Over the course of nearly four years, we have seen numerous meetings fail to produce substantive progress from Iran. Recent, last-minute promises from Iran to hold additional meetings in the future, after years of delay and

denial, are late and inadequate. Iran must fulfill its safeguards obligations and provide substantive, credible explanations for the presence of uranium particles at undeclared locations.

Chair,

Given the continued lack of substantive cooperation from Iran, and with sincere regret that Iran has again made it necessary, France, Germany, the United Kingdom, and the United States jointly propose to the Board today the new resolution contained in document GOV/2022/68 to support the Secretariat's effort to resolve these matters.

As in past resolutions, our objective is to uphold our collective responsibility as Board members to ensure that IAEA safeguards and the non-proliferation regime are implemented in a fair and objective manner in Iran and globally. We strongly believe this Board cannot and will not be intimidated by threats from Iran, or others who echo those threats, that mischaracterise the objective of the proposed resolution. The aim of the resolution is to support the Director General's efforts to finally obtain from Iran the substantive co-operation necessary for the Agency to verify that Iran is meeting the basic undertaking of its NPT Safeguards Agreement.

Our draft submitted for the Board's consideration has the following main points:

First, the Board would express continued, strong support for the Agency's professional and impartial efforts in carrying out its mandate in verifying Iran's safeguards obligations. The Director General and the Secretariat continue to have our full confidence in this regard.

Second, the Board would decide that it is essential and urgent that Iran fulfill its legal obligations and take the specific actions called for by the Director General without delay. The actions include: Iran providing technically credible explanations for the presence of particles of man-made uranium at the three undeclared locations in Iran; informing the Agency of the current locations of the nuclear material and/or contaminated equipment; and providing all information, documentation and accesses the Agency requires to clarify all outstanding safeguards issues. Article 18 of Iran's NPT Safeguards Agreement authorises the Board to take this step to ensure verification of the non-diversion of nuclear material. We hope Iran that would appreciate the seriousness of this decision and provide at the planned meeting later this month with the IAEA the substantive cooperation required; Iran should not miss the opportunity that meeting presents to make good on that long-awaited co-operation.

Receiving and verifying technically credible explanations from Iran, including by granting all access requested by the IAEA for this purpose, remains essential for the Agency to report that the issues are no longer outstanding, and for the Agency to be in a position to provide assurance that Iran's nuclear program remains exclusively peaceful.

For the avoidance of doubt about the ultimate outcome we seek, we want to be

clear. Once Iran provides the necessary substantive co-operation, and when the IAEA Director General reports that these issues have been duly addressed and are no longer outstanding, we will support removing the need for the Board's consideration of these issues, including the request for the Director General to report on them. We would very much welcome Iran taking the opportunity before it to bring such an outcome to fruition. Reaching that outcome would be a significant success for Iran, the IAEA, and the global nuclear non-proliferation regime. Until that point, the Board should request the Director General to report on the implementation of Iran's NPT Safeguards Agreement and of this resolution at the earliest appropriate date before the March Board of Governors.

Chair,

As in the past, Iran has argued that any Board action under this item may undermine our efforts to restore the JCPOA. It is Iran that has undermined these efforts by seeking to politicise its safeguards obligations, and so the Board can support diplomacy by underscoring its absolute support for the Agency in carrying out its vital mandate.

Chair,

Our delegations have engaged broadly with Board members to explain our thinking, solicit their feedback, and listen to their views on these matters. We thank the overwhelming majority that has already indicated support for this resolution, and would welcome the text being made public, should it be adopted. Thank you.

A coherent and unified international response on Afghanistan is critically important

Thank you Ambassador, thank you for convening this session, and many thanks to the briefers for the really helpful and detailed presentations.

As we've heard, fifteen months on from the Taliban takeover, the situation in Afghanistan is critical. A harsh winter could cause levels of need not seen in decades. And widespread denial of fundamental human rights by the Taliban continues, including the systematic oppression of women and girls. The Taliban have not lived up to their commitments to the Afghan people.

Against this backdrop, a coherent and unified international response is critically important.

Our commitment is clear. The UK is the second largest donor to the UN's

Humanitarian Response plan. We are the second largest donor to the World Bank's Afghanistan Reconstruction Fund. And we are leading efforts with the World Bank and others on economic stabilisation.

We have disbursed \$319 million in humanitarian and development assistance last financial year – and committed a further \$319 million this financial year. And we strongly support Security Council Resolution 2615, which ensures delivery of vital aid is not hindered by sanctions. But these efforts are in vain if the Taliban do not themselves ensure unhindered humanitarian access. We urge the Council to remain united in addressing these challenges, rather than feeding divisions.

We have heard again today calls from certain Council members for the immediate release of Afghanistan's frozen assets. Let us be clear – to do so in the absence of an independent and autonomous central bank, with appropriate terrorist financing controls, would not be responsible.

Instead we should focus on supporting UN efforts to address the urgent humanitarian and economic crisis. The chronically underfunded Humanitarian Response Appeal is a good place to start – and we encourage all our international partners, including those looking to criticise the west, to focus first on making a contribution to this.

Mr Chair, we will continue to do all we can in support of the Afghan people. But our efforts can only go so far.

The last months have seen the Taliban implement draconian measures limiting women and girls' freedom of movement and their access to jobs and services. Afghanistan remains the only country in the world where girls are barred from attending secondary school. The UAE Ambassador spoke very eloquently earlier about why these restrictions are so damaging. The human cost is stark. But so too is the economic one – As we've heard from the UNDP today, restricting women from the work force has already cost the Afghan economy up to 5% of GDP.

There has also been no serious effort towards inclusive governance, nor a genuine commitment to protect minorities. We are especially concerned at the risk of atrocity crimes against minorities such as the Hazara.

So the fundamental point is this: If the Taliban does not change its course – foremost on upholding human rights, and delivering on its counter-terrorism commitments – they will not deliver a stable and prosperous Afghanistan, and they will not gain legitimacy in the eyes of the Afghan people nor the international community.

Thank you.

Entrepreneur prisoners bid to turn back on crime

- prisoners compete for funding from business leaders in 'Dragons' Den'-style event
- new scheme gives prisoners skills to start their own businesses on release to cut crime
- figures show offenders who get a job after prison significantly less likely to reoffend

Proposals that were put before the attendees included a graphic design consultancy and personal fitness business, as offenders bid for start-up funding at a unique event inside HMP Thorn Cross, in Cheshire.

The 'Dragons' – comprising local entrepreneurs, the public and ex-offenders who have started their own companies – voted for their favourite plan to help get it off the ground once the prisoner is released.

The winner was announced today by Prisons Minister Damian Hinds and will receive a grant of £400 – backed by Entrepreneurs Unlocked – which will support them in getting their business off the ground upon release, helping them to stay on the straight and narrow. Runners up were awarded £300 each.

Minister for Prisons and Probation Damian Hinds said:

Getting ex-prisoners into work cuts reoffending and makes our streets safer.

Entrepreneurship drives our economy and can provide a promising path for those who are ready to turn their lives around. It is heartening to see prisoners demonstrate the skills needed to succeed in business and life.

The event, which took place in Global Entrepreneurship Week, is the culmination of a 12-week course run by charity Entrepreneurs Unlocked, which aims to give prisoners an insight into the realities of running a business.

Sessions include training in finance, marketing, sales planning and developing a product or service – providing participants with the skills they need to integrate back into society and put a life of crime behind them.

Entrepreneurs Unlocked founder David Morgan said:

The Hidden Entrepreneur event is the first of its kind to showcase the entrepreneurial talent of people in prison. We will highlight this pathway for people that not only reduces the risk of re-offending but also demonstrates the social and economic value of

entrepreneurship.

I am grateful to HMP Thorn Cross for allowing us to host the event, to all of our speakers for sharing their inspirational stories, and to all the businesses who joined us as together we can really make a difference in people's lives by supporting them on their new entrepreneurial pathway.

Attendees at the event heard from a range of inspiring ex-offenders who have been successful in setting up their own businesses. These included H.M.Pasties, a start-up which works to 'bring out the good inside' by employing ex-offenders to make and sell pasties.

Getting prisoners into work is a tried-and-tested way of cutting re-offending – with those who get a job after prison being up to nine percentage points less likely to reoffend.

The Government's Prisons White Paper sets out a strategy to reduce reoffending and keep the public safe, with a laser-focus on helping prisoners develop the skills they need to find work on release and turn their backs on crime.

The government is investing to reduce reoffending, which includes helping prisoners develop the skills they need to find work on release and turn their backs on crime.

The Prison Service's (HMPPS) [New Futures Network](#) has been set up to connect businesses with prisons so employers can find and train a pipeline of skilled, motivated workers to fulfil their recruitment needs within a variety of key industries.

Earlier this year, the government [changed the law](#) so prisoners in open prisons can apply for apprenticeships in vital industries – and in October 2022 the [first prisoners started their apprenticeships](#) at big-name employers including Timpson and Greene King.

Notes to editors

About Entrepreneurs Unlocked

Entrepreneurs Unlocked helps individuals develop skills to become their boss and lead crime-free lives. For many people whose career prospects may be limited due to their criminal record, entrepreneurship and self-employment could be the best pathways to a better life.

The charity provides its services to 5 prisons; HMP Liverpool, Thorn Cross, Risley, Hindley, and Buckley Hall.

The course run by Entrepreneurs Unlocked gives prisoners the chance to prove that they are committed to staying on the straight and narrow once released. Once prisoners have completed the programme and have the basic tools they need to grow and develop, they are also given access to additional coaching

to further their learning. Upon release they can also continue to access support from Entrepreneurs Unlocked and its community partners, meaning there is guidance at every step of their journey to maximise the potential of success.

About Global Entrepreneurship Week

Global Entrepreneurship Week is run by Global Entrepreneurship Network and happens in the second week of November every year. It is a global campaign in which 200 nations come together to encourage citizens to consider the path of entrepreneurship.

New concrete batcher at Sellafield brings sustainability into the mix

We need vast amounts of concrete to build the facilities which will enable us to safely treat and store the waste removed from our ponds and silos on the Sellafield site in West Cumbria.

The new on-site concrete batcher means we no longer need to buy in concrete from multiple suppliers.

This gives us greater certainty on price and supply and means we can buy and produce concrete on a greater scale.

New laboratories within the batcher plant will help us make the most sustainable concrete we can – and there will be added environmental benefits as concrete supplies will now only travel short distances around Sellafield itself, helping to reduce traffic on local roads and leading to a reduction in carbon emissions.

The batcher plant also uses both rainwater and site-generated greywater sources so they can be used and recycled in the concrete production process, minimising the use of freshwater.

The facility is operated by Tarmac, the largest construction materials company in the UK, and was delivered by the Programme and Projects Partners at Sellafield.

Head of the Programme and Project Partners at Sellafield, Duncan Elliott said:

This is the first major project to be completed by our partnership and will bring significant benefits to support major infrastructure delivery and hazard reduction at Sellafield.

There's been a fantastic team effort from everyone involved. The plant has been 4 years in the making and Sellafield now has a brand-new world-class facility.

Thank you to everyone involved in achieving this huge success, a great effort, well done!

The concrete batching plant sits within the partners long-term pipeline of major infrastructure projects and is the first to be delivered by the partnership.

Each project being delivered by the partners plays a vital role in ensuring Sellafield can safely empty ponds and silos, manage the waste and store it safely and therefore helping Sellafield achieve its purpose to create a clean and safe environment for future generations.

Multiple organisations worked together with Sellafield Ltd and the partners to build the plant and bring it to operation.

Organisations included: OneAim, Tarmac, Total Batching Solutions, and teams working in the partnership, supporting the site's construction, commissioning, and transition to the new concrete provider.