

Christmas and New Year closures for courts and tribunals 2019



Crown Courts, magistrates' courts, County and Family Courts, the Royal Courts of Justice and the Rolls Building, and Tribunals will close over the Christmas period on:

- Wednesday 25 December 2019
- Thursday 26 December 2019
- Friday 27 December 2019
- Wednesday 1 January 2020

Offices in Scotland will be closed on:

- Wednesday 25 December 2019
- Thursday 26 December 2019
- Wednesday 1 January 2020
- Thursday 2 January 2020

Some emergency courts may operate over the holiday. Please check before travelling. See [court and tribunal finder](#) for details.

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Cambridgeshire care home boss banned for 4 years

Anita Ram (69), of Stevenage, started running Millfield Lodge Care Home in Gamlingay, Cambridgeshire, as a sole trader business in the early 1990s. It was incorporated in 2004, but only began formally trading in July 2014.

In April 2017, the home was inspected by the Care Quality Commission (CQC)

and rated 'Requires Improvement' after breaches of regulations relating to the safeguarding of people, their care records, and reporting of incidents to the CQC were discovered.

In July and August of the same year, further, unannounced, inspections were carried out. Inspectors found that Millfield Lodge Care Home Limited was in breach of six regulations under the Health and Social Care Act 2008. At the August inspection the service was rated as inadequate.

They resolved that Anita Ram as director was not a fit and proper person to carry on the service, as she had failed to co-operate with the nursing agency that ran the service in the home, removed records and equipment, and prevented access to people's finances, among other concerns.

Inspectors also uncovered that not all residents in the home were being safely administered their medication, with discrepancies between the amount of medication in stock and the amounts recorded as having been administered. Anita Ram had also failed to ensure the building met required fire safety standards, meaning residents were at risk.

As a result of these concerns, the CQC applied to the courts to cancel Anita Ram's registration as a care home provider and close the home. Residents were safely moved from the home on 10 August 2017, and the company ceased trading.

Millfield Lodge Care Home Limited entered Creditors Voluntary Liquidation and liquidators were appointed in September 2017, before it was formally wound up in October.

The liquidator's report on the insolvency to the Insolvency Service triggered an investigation into the conduct of Anita Ram.

On 30 September 2019, the Secretary of State accepted a four-year disqualification undertaking from her. Effective from 21 October 2019, Anita Ram cannot be involved, directly or indirectly, in the promotion, formation or management of a company without permission of the court.

David Brooks, Chief Investigator for the Insolvency Service, said:

Care homes provide a vital service to our communities, taking care of some of the most vulnerable members of our society, and so are rightly held to the highest standards.

The Insolvency Service will not hesitate to pursue the disqualification of any director whose conduct while in charge of such a business is assessed to pose a risk to the people under their care.

Anita Ram is of Stevenage and her date of birth is August 1950.

Millfield Lodge Care Home Limited (05160128).

The Care Quality Commission report into Millfield Lodge Care Home [can be accessed here](#).

Disqualification undertakings are the administrative equivalent of a disqualification order but do not involve court proceedings.

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

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

You can also follow the Insolvency Service on:

[Tech Nation to support growth of UK Lawtech with £2 million of government funding](#)

Tech Nation will embrace the opportunities of lawtech, drive innovation and help the sector grow. An ambitious vision and series of projects will be delivered through a 3-year programme.

The funding was allocated following the government's announcement earlier this year of just over £2 million for UK lawtech to support the development and use of technology in the legal sector. This could include encouraging investment and innovation, ensuring understanding, awareness and use of lawtech, exploring ethics and regulation around technology in the legal sector, enhancing the competitiveness of the UK as a global commercial dispute resolution centre and promoting the use of English law and UK jurisdiction as a foundation for LawTech globally.

Justice Secretary, Robert Buckland QC MP, said:

This funding will help support the development and use of UK lawtech, boost wider economic growth and pave the way for a technological revolution in the UK legal sector.

Tech Nation has an impressive track record in both fintech and insurtech and I'm delighted they will be taking forward this initiative.

Tech Nation will be responsible for driving forward and building on the work of the Lawtech Delivery Panel, an industry-led body designed to promote and champion the use of technology in the UK's legal sector. It will work closely

with the legal and tech sectors.

Tech Nation CEO, Gerard Grech said:

The legal services sector is a major contributor to the UK economy, contributing around £25 billion annually. Emerging technologies are transforming legal services, while investment in UK lawtech has tripled in the last year alone.

We look forward to working with the LawTech Delivery Panel's distinguished members, tech entrepreneurs, the Ministry of Justice and the wider ecosystem to grow this sector.

The UK is the second largest legal services market in the world, worth around £25 billion to the economy with more than 300,000 people employed in the sector, and a leading global legal centre.

Entrepreneurs, academics, and legal services providers are starting to develop new technology to drive innovation in the sector and improve the UK's productivity, and the government is committed to supporting this activity.

Large London law firms are already recognising the opportunities presented by innovative ways of working and new technologies. This includes setting up spaces within their own buildings to encourage product testing and feedback designed to encourage growth in the sector.

Barclays has also partnered with the Law Society of England and Wales to launch a LawTech Eagle Lab in London which provides a space for start-up companies to develop new products, build their business and collaborate with entrepreneurs and innovators, with support provided by law firms and universities.

Notes to editors

Tech Nation, the leading scaleup network for entrepreneurs, has an established UK tech network and a strong track record in the tech sector, having provided support for the government-backed Fintech Delivery Panel and Insurtech Board.

This funding has been allocated to Tech Nation following the [government's announcement earlier this year](#) of just over £2 million for UK lawtech to support the development and use of technology in the legal sector.

Lawtech

Lawtech refers to new legal technologies which aim to support, supplement or replace traditional methods for the delivery of legal services. In 2018 the lawtech sector was valued at \$15.9 billion globally.

Lawtech Delivery Panel

Announced by the Lord Chancellor in July 2018, the Lawtech Delivery Panel is industry-led and government supported. The Panel promotes and champions the use of technology in the UK's legal sector, by identifying both barriers to and catalysts for growth and adoption. The Panel aims to provide direction to the legal sector, help foster innovation and create an environment in which new technology and the UK's nascent lawtech community can thrive.

The Panel brings together senior figures from industry, government, academia, judiciary, regulators and the legal technology community to address challenges and seize opportunities. The Panel's core objectives are around investment and ecosystem, education and adoption, regulation, ethics, commercial dispute resolution, and legal framework and UK jurisdiction.

[£18m extension to Opportunity Area programme](#)

Young people in some of the most disadvantaged parts of England are set to benefit from an extra £18 million investment to build on improvements in educational outcomes, careers advice and attracting teachers.

The Education Secretary Gavin Williamson has today announced the Government's Opportunity Areas (OA) programme will be extended for an additional year, building on its success so far in areas of the country where children have for too long been left behind.

The programme is also showing impact in a wide range of areas from early years education to employment, following an initial £72 million boost for interventions across literacy, maths, attendance, teacher training and recruitment, post-16 options and careers advice since its launch in 2017.

Education Secretary Gavin Williamson said:

I grew up in Scarborough, now part of the North Yorkshire Coast Opportunity Area, and having returned recently for a visit I've seen for myself the progress being made and the difference it is making to young people living there.

Ability is evenly spread across the country, but opportunity isn't. We're determined to put right the wrongs of places left behind and see the Opportunity Area programme grow – helping local leaders and schools to tackle some of the greatest challenges young people face.

It's not just about what happens now in these 12 areas but the impact these projects will have on future generations and paving the way for them to overcome obstacles to success.

The programme has been operating in 12 Opportunity Areas across the country – Blackpool, Derby, Norwich, Oldham, North Yorkshire Coast, West Somerset, Bradford, Doncaster, Fenland and East Cambridgeshire, Hastings, Ipswich and Stoke-on-Trent. Areas were chosen because they face some of the most entrenched obstacles to social mobility and were set up to improve outcomes and increase opportunities for all young people in these areas.

West Somerset has shown progress in early years' development, with performance historically below the national average for pupil outcomes at the end of reception year, but now showing year on year improvements. The Story Start scheme is one of a range of early years' initiatives, supporting families in rural areas to play, chat and read to boost their child's development so they can start school with the skills needed to thrive.

Across all the Opportunity Areas around 60,000 young people have also been given the chance to develop life skills like resilience, teamwork, problem-solving, confidence and leadership thanks to a share of the £22 million Essential Life Skills programme.

Today's funding extends the programme into a fourth year, which will run until August 2021, to help sustain long term improvements and outcomes.

Schemes put in place to improve maths are showing signs of success across some Opportunity Areas. In Ipswich, six weeks of Saturday maths classes provide targeted support, free bus travel and food for disadvantaged Year 11s at risk of not getting a GCSE level 4 or 5, with the first 75 pupils enrolled showing an average boost in predicted grades of 1.3 in comparison to the start of the programme.

[Government consults on new police powers to criminalise unauthorised encampments](#)

The Government will launch a consultation on proposals to give police new powers to arrest and seize the property and vehicles of trespassers who set up unauthorised caravan sites.

Currently such trespassing is defined in law as a civil matter. But the Home Office is consulting on making it a criminal offence.

Home Secretary Priti Patel said:

Unauthorised encampments can cause misery to those who live nearby, with reports of damage to property, noise, abuse and littering.

The public want their communities protected and for the police to crack down on trespassers.

Our proposals aim to ensure these encampments can be challenged and removed as quickly as possible.

This follows a Home Office review into how trespassing while setting up an unauthorised encampment could be made a criminal offence in England and Wales, learning lessons from other countries like the Republic of Ireland.

As a result, the Home Office is proposing to broaden the categories of criminal trespass to cover trespassers who enter onto any land without permission of the occupier with the intention to reside.

As part of the consultation, which will begin on Tuesday, the Home Office is also seeking further views from local authorities, police forces, travellers, communities and the general public on alternative measures giving the police greater powers to tackle unauthorised encampments.

These proposed amendments to the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994 include:

- lowering the number of vehicles needed to be involved in an unauthorised camp before police can act from six to two;
- giving the police powers to direct offenders to sites in neighbouring local authorities. Currently they can only direct trespassers to sites in the same area;
- allowing officers to remove trespassers from camping on or beside a road; and
- increasing the time – from 3 months to a year – during which offenders are not allowed to return to a site they have already been removed from.

Responses to an initial consultation on the amendments, launched in April 2018, were clear that problems are caused for communities and business across the country by unauthorised encampments.

Councils have since been reminded of their existing obligation to provide enough “transit sites”, which provide travellers with a place to stay short-term and prevent problems from being shifted to neighbouring areas.

The Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) has made nearly £2 million available to councils to crack down on illegal developments, with funding also available under the £9 billion Affordable Homes Programme to help develop authorised sites.

In June this year the Government announced MHCLG will lead development of a

cross-government strategy to improve outcomes for travellers.