

Press release: Probate applications made simpler and easier with online service

- Bereaved can now apply for probate online
- New service is simpler and more efficient
- Part of a £1bn programme of court reform

The [service](#) enables people to apply, pay and swear a statement of truth online – saving time and offering convenience to those dealing with a bereavement.

It also means that, for most people, a visit to a probate registry or solicitor's office is no longer needed, speeding up the process while making it more straightforward and efficient.

HMCTS chief executive, Susan Acland-Hood, said:

Making probate simpler and more convenient, and removing the need to attend a probate registry and swear an oath in person, helps bereaved people at a very challenging time – those who have tested our new service have told us how much difference it makes. I am delighted we are now able to offer this new, simpler way of doing probate to the public at large. It is part of the work we're doing to make the justice system easier to navigate for everyone.

The [service](#) has already been successfully trialled "by invitation" and it is hoped that by making it widely available to the public more people will benefit. 93% of those who have used it so far were satisfied or very satisfied with the service.

One person who has already done so is Tony Donoghue from East Yorkshire. Mr Donoghue, a managing director, applied for probate online while dealing with his father's estate. The 55-year-old said:

It's easy to use, fast and convenient. I found it so efficient. It's exactly what you want from an online government system – if only everything could be this simple.

Once I sent everything off, I was sent the grant of probate within a week. I think that really reinforced for me what a good and efficient service it is.

HMCTS will add more features in time – including the ability to apply if the deceased did not leave a will. Feedback is encouraged and changes and

improvements will be made where needed.

The [service](#) is part of HMCTS's ambitious £1bn programme of court reform, which is bringing new technology and modern ways of working to the justice system. This includes a new fully accessible online small money claims service – with more than 39,000 claims made since its launch in March and user satisfaction at 90% – and a new system for applying for divorce online, which has cut errors in application forms from 40% to less than 1%.

Notes to editors

- The service can be used if the deceased was a permanent resident in England or Wales, if the applicant has the original will and is named as an executor, and for up to four joint applicants.
- Anyone who struggles to use the online service can access face-to-face support with The Good Things Foundation.
- The paper form remains available to anyone who wishes to use it, and this too has been simplified.
- For further information or to source case studies [contact the MoJ press office](#).

[Press release: Probate applications made simpler and easier with online service](#)

People applying for probate can now do so from the comfort of their own home, thanks to the expansion of an online service.

[Press release: Queen approves re-appointment to the Churches Conservation Trust](#)

The Queen has approved the re-appointment of Sir Simon Jenkins as a Member of the Churches Conservation Trust.

[News story: The Isles of Scilly joins HM Land Registry's Local Land Charges Register](#)

From 17 January, anyone requiring local land charges (LLC) searches in the local authority area of the Council of the Isles of Scilly will need to get them from HM Land Registry rather than going directly to the council.

The Council of the Isles of Scilly is the fifth local authority to migrate its local land charges data to HM Land Registry's national register following Warwick District Council, Liverpool City Council, the City of London Corporation and Blackpool Council.

Craig Dryden, Senior Manager for Infrastructure and Planning at the Council of the Isles of Scilly, said:

We have enjoyed working closely with HM Land Registry to digitise our local land charges and migrate them to the new digital LLC Register. The Isles of Scilly are home to many charges of an unusual nature such as listed buildings including several lighthouses, two telephone kiosks and a pigsty. Some charges have areas extending into the sea which are especially challenging to map. The local land charges team have worked hard with HM Land Registry to meet these challenges, and the new register now provides easier access to information for all.

Karina Singh, Head of Transformation at HM Land Registry, said:

The Isles of Scilly represent our first full paper-to-digital transformation of a local authority's local land charges and our two teams worked closely to achieve this. While the dataset has been small in comparison to some others, there have been large numbers of ancient monuments, areas of conservation and special areas of protection on the islands to map. I am delighted that users of the LLC service now have instant access to all local land charges relating to the Isles of Scilly via our easy-to-use digital service. They can also see the spatial extent of each charge for the first time. This all helps to make the conveyancing process simpler and faster.

HM Land Registry is working in partnership with a number of local authorities in England to migrate their local land charges data to a central, digital

register as part of a phased approach. Once migrated, anyone will be able to get instant online search results via GOV.UK using the [Search for local land charges](#) service.

HM Land Registry's business customers can use their existing portal and Business Gateway channels or their usual search providers to access local land charges data for those local authorities which have migrated.

Customers will need to continue to submit CON29 enquiries to the local authority.

[watch our short video](#).

For more information, read about the [Local Land Charges Programme](#).

Press release: Takeaway boss gets second disqualification after breaching first ban

Since 2008, Matthew Akinola Babatunji Lasebikan (43), from Port Talbot, ran an Asian-style takeaway under the guise of several different companies. More commonly known as Noodlebox, the takeaway was located on Salisbury Road in Cardiff.

However, on 19 February 2016 Matthew Lasebikan provided a disqualification undertaking to the Secretary of State, which saw him being banned from running companies for three-and-a-half years.

Matthew Lasebikan was disqualified after he caused the company that controlled the Cardiff takeaway, Tokyo Noodles Limited, to run up significant tax debts between 2014 and 2016 and during part of this period he acted as the director despite not formally being appointed.

The ban should have restricted Matthew Lasebikan from being appointed a director or managing a company. However, at the same time he gave the disqualification undertaking, Matthew Lasebikan was the appointed director of Noodles Catering Ltd – the latest company set up to run the takeaway.

Matthew Lasebikan resigned a month later on 10 March, with Tomasz Posieczek appointed in his place. Tomasz Posieczek had been employed as a chef in another business owned by Matthew Lasebikan but he was merely a patsy as Matthew Lasebikan continued to run Noodles Catering Ltd, even though he had been banned from doing so.

Noodles Catering eventually went into liquidation on 21 December 2016 with

liabilities of just over £86,000 and the liquidator's report to the Secretary of State brought a spotlight onto Matthew Lasebikan's activities.

On 19 December 2018, the Secretary of State accepted a disqualification undertaking from Matthew Lasebikan after he admitted acting as a director whilst subject to a disqualification undertaking and without getting leave of the Court to do so.

Effective from 9 January 2019, Matthew Lasebikan is banned for 11 years from directly or indirectly becoming involved, without the permission of the court, in the promotion, formation or management of a company.

And Tomasz Posieczek previously had his disqualification undertaking accepted in November 2017 after he admitted that he allowed Matthew Lasebikan to act as a director of Noodles Catering. His ban was effective from 19 December 2017 and lasts for two-and-a-half years.

David Elliott, Chief Investigator for the Insolvency Service said:

Matthew Lasebikan thought he had got round his disqualification by having one of his employee's names on the records, while he still ran the show behind the scenes.

Both Matthew Lasebikan and Tomasz Posieczek were at fault and their bans should serve as an important warning that people who accept disqualifications or appointments as directors should be fully aware of their duties.

Matthew Lasebikan is of Port Talbot and his date of birth is January 1976.

Tomasz Posieczek is of Cardiff and his date of birth is May 1982

Company Noodles Catering Ltd (Company Reg no. 08939037).

A disqualification order has the effect that without specific permission of a court, a person with a disqualification cannot:

- act as a director of a company
- take part, directly or indirectly, in the promotion, formation or management of a company or limited liability partnership
- be a receiver of a company's property

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 other restrictions](#).

The Insolvency Service administers the insolvency regime, investigating all compulsory liquidations and individual insolvencies (bankruptcies) through

the Official Receiver to establish why they became insolvent. It may also use powers under the Companies Act 1985 to conduct confidential fact-finding investigations into the activities of live limited companies in the UK. In addition, the agency authorises and regulates the insolvency profession, deals with disqualification of directors in corporate failures, assesses and pays statutory entitlement to redundancy payments when an employer cannot or will not pay employees, provides banking and investment services for bankruptcy and liquidation estate funds and advises ministers and other government departments on insolvency law and practice.

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

Media enquiries for this press release – 020 7674 6910

You can also follow the Insolvency Service on: