

News story: CMA tightens its approach to requests for internal documents

The Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) is asking for comments from businesses and their legal representatives on guidance that explains when the CMA is likely to ask merging businesses to provide internal documents, and how they will be expected to respond. It also makes clear that the CMA is likely to use its compulsory information gathering powers as standard in future where internal documents are requested in merger investigations.

The guidance sets out a general tightening-up of the CMA's approach, and provides guidance on what steps businesses should take to respond to requests for internal documents fully and accurately. The more consistent use of the CMA's compulsory powers will help it to fine businesses where they fail to respond to requests without a reasonable excuse. These changes are designed to address concerns in some recent cases where businesses had failed to provide all the information requested, or provided it slowly.

It is also intends to provide further clarity about the CMA's likely approach, helping businesses that are considering transactions to plan more effectively for the merger review process.

The [consultation and draft guidance](#) is available for comment until 25 April 2018.

Press release: February 2018 Price Paid Data

This month's Price Paid Data includes details of more than 85,200 sales of land and property in England and Wales that HM Land Registry received for registration in February 2018.

In the dataset you can find the date of sale for each property, its full address and sale price, its category (residential or commercial) and type (detached, semi-detached, terraced, flat or maisonette and other), whether it is new build or not and whether it is freehold or leasehold.

The number of sales received for registration by property type and month

| Property type | February 2018 | January 2018 | December 2017 |
|---------------|---------------|--------------|---------------|
| Detached | 19,174 | 25,932 | 17,395 |

| Property type | February 2018 | January 2018 | December 2017 |
|-----------------|---------------|--------------|---------------|
| Semi-detached | 20,725 | 29,282 | 19,216 |
| Terraced | 21,462 | 30,741 | 19,809 |
| Flat/maisonette | 17,842 | 22,887 | 14,523 |
| Other | 6,046 | 7,953 | 5,384 |
| Total | 85,249 | 116,795 | 76,327 |

Of the 85,249 sales received for registration in February 2018:

- 61,237 were freehold, a 3.7% increase on February 2017
- 16,133 were newly built, a 11.8% increase on February 2017

There is a time difference between the sale of a property and its registration at HM Land Registry.

Of the 85,249 sales received for registration, 23,559 took place in February 2018 of which:

- 378 were of residential properties in England and Wales for £1 million and over
- 216 were of residential properties in Greater London for £1 million and over
- 2 were of residential properties in Cardiff for £1 million and over
- 1 was of a residential property in Greater Manchester for £1 million and over

The most expensive residential sale taking place in February 2018 was of a terraced property in the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea, London for £10,750,000. The cheapest residential sale in February 2018 was of a terraced property in Chester le Street, County Durham for £19,000.

The most expensive commercial sale taking place in February 2018 was in the City of London, for £75,972,945. The cheapest commercial sale in February 2018 was in Macclesfield, Cheshire for £250.

[Access the full dataset](#)

Notes to editors

1. Price Paid Data is published at 11am on the 20th working day of each

month. The next dataset will be published on Monday 30 April 2018.

2. [Price Paid Data](#) is property price data for all residential and commercial property sales in England and Wales that are lodged with HM Land Registry for registration in that month, [subject to exclusions](#).
3. The amount of time between the sale of a property and the registration of this information with HM Land Registry varies. It typically ranges between two weeks and two months. Data for the two most recent months is therefore incomplete and does not give an indication of final monthly volumes. Occasionally the interval between sale and registration is longer than two months. The small number of sales affected cannot be updated for publication until the sales are lodged for registration.
4. Price Paid Data categories are either Category A (Standard entries) which includes single residential properties sold for full market value or Category B (Additional entries) for example sales to a company, buy-to-lets where they can be identified by a mortgage and repossessions.
5. HM Land Registry has been collecting information on Category A sales from January 1995 and on Category B sales from October 2013.
6. Price Paid Data can be downloaded in text, CSV format and in a machine readable format as [linked data](#) and is released under the [Open Government Licence \(OGL\)](#). Under the OGL, HM Land Registry permits the use of Price Paid Data for commercial or non-commercial purposes. However, the OGL does not cover the use of [third party rights](#), which HM Land Registry is not authorised to license.
7. The [Price Paid Data report builder](#) allows users to build bespoke reports using the data. Reports can be based on location, estate type, price paid or property type over a defined period of time.
8. HM Land Registry's mission is to guarantee and protect property rights in England and Wales.
9. HM Land Registry is a government department created in 1862. It operates as an executive agency and a trading fund and its running costs are covered by the fees paid by the users of its services. Its ambition is to become the world's leading land registry for speed, simplicity and an open approach to data.
10. HM Land Registry safeguards land and property ownership worth in excess of £4 trillion, including around £1 trillion of mortgages. The Land Register contains more than 25 million titles showing evidence of

ownership for some 85% of the land mass of England and Wales.

11. For further information about HM Land Registry visit www.gov.uk/land-registry.

12. Follow us: on Twitter [@HMLandRegistry](https://twitter.com/HMLandRegistry), our [blog](#), [LinkedIn](#) and [Facebook](#).

Contact

Press release: Parole Board statement following decision of Judicial Review in the case of John Worboys

As a result of the bravery and determination of the women who brought this challenge, the experience of victims will be better and there will be much simpler ways to challenge our decisions in the future.

[Here is a link to the full judgement](#)

It was clear before the Worboys case arose that there was a compelling case for major reform of the parole system. This judgment will now open up the decision making of the Board which we have been calling for.

The Parole Board are not seeking to challenge the outcome of this case and the Worboys case will now be re-referred to the Parole Board. The court acknowledged that this was an unusual and complex case and we want any decision to be made on the best possible evidence.

The Chair Professor Nick Hardwick has since resigned from the Parole Board.

Chief Executive Martin Jones said: "Parole Board members make incredibly difficult and complex decisions every day that can have a devastating impact on victims and the case of John Worboys is no different. The courts have decided we must go back and look at this case again in light of additional information that wasn't before the original panel and we will do just that.

"Nick Hardwick and I have always been clear that we will support our members when they face criticism in making these important decisions. I am deeply sorry that Nick Hardwick has decided to resign, he is a man of real integrity, and I have been proud to work with him."

Notes to Editors

Professor Nick Hardwick's letter of resignation is attached [here](#).

The Parole Board are not seeking to challenge the outcome of this case but are still working through the wider implications of the judgment.

The Worboys case now need to be re-referred to us by the Secretary of State and an oral hearing will likely take place in the next few months. It will be chaired by a senior member of the Judiciary.

The court was clear that the Parole Board is the best people to make decisions of this nature. Our serious further offence rate is less than 1%, that shows we are effective at making these difficult decisions.

As Rule 25 still stands at present and the case is now under consideration again, we are not currently able to comment on the details of the case.

Chief Executive Martin Jones will not be available for interview. For more information, please contact comms@paroleboard.gov.uk or 020 3880 0809

Press release: Letter of resignation from Nick Hardwick to the Secretary of State for Justice

We met this afternoon to consider the implications of the judgment in the Worboys case.

I want to repeat my admiration for the courage and tenacity of the women who brought the judicial review. Their success will have consequences that go far beyond this individual case and will benefit victims and the administration of justice for years to come.

I am very pleased that the court declared the Rule that prohibits the Parole Board from explaining its decisions should go and that the judgment recognised that this was something I had been calling for. I am pleased too that as a result of Dame Glenys Stacy's investigation into victim communication in the case, these processes will be improved in future and that she made no criticism of the Parole Board's actions in this matter. I am also confident that as a result of this case a much simpler system for reviewing Parole Board decisions will be established and, as I have already made clear in my submission to you, this is something I would very much welcome.

Consistent with these principles, I have been clear throughout the legal processes that followed the decision in the Worboys case that I welcomed the scrutiny to which it was subject. I instructed that there should be no

procedural moves to prevent such scrutiny, as the judgment indicated could have been made, and that our disclosure of material relating to the case should be as full as possible. I am as anxious as everyone else that the correct decision should be made.

The court was critical of some aspects of the panel's decision-making processes although it did not overturn the panel's decisions on these grounds. It could not, no more than you or I, put itself in the place of the expert and experienced panel members who heard the evidence and made the decision. The court did however find that the panel's understanding that it could not go beyond the offences for which Worboys was convicted was mistaken in this "difficult, troubling case with many exceptional features." I shared the panel's misapprehension in this matter and this was supported by the advice I received. We were wrong.

You told me that you thought my position was untenable. I had no role in the decision of the panel in the case and believe I am capable of leading the Parole Board through the changes, many of which I have advocated, that will now be necessary. I am sorry for the mistakes that were made in this case but I have always made it clear that I will support the members and staff of the Board in the very difficult individual decisions they make and I will accept accountability for the work of the Board. I will not pass the buck to those who work under me. In these circumstances I inform you of my decision to resign with immediate effect.

In conclusion, I want to state my concern about the independence of the Board. I believe this matter raises very troubling questions about how the Board's independence can be safeguarded. I hope Parliament will consider what structural changes are necessary to ensure this independence is protected in future.

Speech: The UK's leadership in smart cities

Welcome to this session on smart cities.

Before we turn to the panel, I'd like to speak briefly about why what we're discussing today is so important to us all.

There's a saying you may have heard that 'demography is destiny'. In the long run, big demographic trends dwarf most of the day-to-day issues governments spend their time thinking about.

Well there's no bigger trend in the world today than the move to urbanisation. By 2050, it's expected three-quarters of the world's people will live in cities.

It's easy to forget how new this is, but for hundreds of thousands of years we humans have been rural. It is no longer true, and we haven't even begun to get used to it.

This change is especially significant in China – Shenzhen, across the bay, had 30,000 people 40 years ago. Now its daytime population is 18 million.

Even in long-urbanised countries like the UK, city living is back. From the 1930s to the '80s London, like many cities, experienced a long, slow population decline as people moved out and commuted in.

Most commentators thought this was permanent, that it was inevitable. The so-called 'hollowing out' of major cities in this period is where the negative stereotype of inner cities took hold.

But now London's population is bigger than ever, and those who do live in London are more likely to live towards the centre. The inner city is now wealthier than ever before. This is a pattern repeated right across the world.

It's very clear city living presents unique opportunities and unique challenges. People who live in them are healthier and wealthier than those who don't. And smart cities – the melding we have now of that digital technology and data science to improve our urban environment – is what we will need to harness those opportunities.

We in Britain are genuine believers in the power of smart cities. We're early adopters: Manchester's MediaCityUK is, as I would call it, a 40-acre sandbox, testing in miniature what the smart cities of the future might look like.

We've supported our belief with significant funding – we recently created a £1.7 billion [Transforming Cities Fund](#).

Importantly, we understand that smart cities don't just need funding – they need data. London now releases 700 separate types of datasets to help developers and entrepreneurs create solutions to London's problems.

And for those of you who were here for Professor Dame Wendy Hall's speech earlier you will have heard that that access to information is fundamental to city development.

We've already seen tangible benefits from this: the CityMapper App, which helps users navigate with real-time data, began when London's transport authority published datasets they already held for internal planning. It's now available in 33 cities around the world, including here in Hong Kong.

They're continuing to innovate: quite a few transport companies have launched their own apps, but CityMapper must be the only app to launch its own bus service.

But we're not just here today to talk about smart cities. I am sure all of us here agree on the benefits. We're specifically here to discuss how we make sure the smart cities of the future are based on the individual and improving

the lives of individual citizens.

Earlier, I talked about how predictions of London's population decline had been wrong. We should be humble about our power to predict the future and foresee every consequence: because we cannot relive the mistakes of the urban planners of the 1950s and '60s.

That means starting with the individual citizen and what they actually want and need. That's easier said than done, and I'm sure the fantastic panel will offer insight and suggestions.

But let me give you 2 thoughts, to kick off the discussion.

One: technology is not the solution, it really is only part of the solution.

Improved technology only works if it's part of an improved process.

In Britain we've been lucky, because citizen-centred technology has come exactly at the right time for us.

Since 2010 we've had a big drive to make every public service 'digital by default'.

But because there'd already been a strong desire to redesign public services around users, since at least the early '90s, digitalisation came as a natural, organic outgrowth of something we were already doing, not something we just bolted-on.

Two: as the saying goes, when you have a hammer, every problem is a nail. But technology should always be a solution to a problem, it should not be a solution looking for a problem to retrofit.

In the UK we look at the practical, day-to-day problems people face – is their bin collected on time; is their train overcrowded at rush hour – and we see how technology can help.

For example, every city lacks space. But Ordnance Survey, and I know the team is here today, is releasing its geospatial data, so we can make better use of the space we have.

Every city suffers from congestion. But Northern Ireland's Seesense has developed a bike light that flashes more brightly at junctions. That makes cycling safer, so more people cycle – so we can make better use of the infrastructure we already have and lead healthier lives.

And every city is more polluted than the countryside around it. That's why in Bristol and Milton Keynes we're using sensors to monitor air pollution, and why Glasgow is pioneering smart grid technologies.

Urbanisation is one of the most important trends in the world today. We need to see this trend as an opportunity, not a threat. But it's only by making our cities smart, understanding how we can apply that technology that we can take full advantage.

In Britain we're already taking advantage – and our technology companies, consultancies, architects and planners can help you take advantage too.

But we should always remember: smart cities are not about making our cities 'fit for the future' – they're about making the future fit, for the future of our citizens.