

# King George III's watch at risk of leaving the country

- Bar is to allow time for a UK gallery or institution to potentially come forward and save the work for the nation
- Culture Minister Caroline Dinenage said: "with the nation captivated by Bridgerton, there is no better time for this watch owned by George III to come to light"

An exceptionally rare example of a Breguet Four Minute Tourbillon watch, owned by King George III is at risk of leaving the country unless a UK buyer can be found to save the work for the nation.

Valued at £2,000,000, plus VAT of £400,000, the watch was made in 1808 for His Majesty King George III and is thought to be one of fewer than ten tourbillon watches known to exist.

Designed and made by the pre-eminent watchmaker Abraham-Louis Breguet, the watch was designed to keep good time with a mechanism to stabilise and protect the movement from being disturbed by daily use. Its austere beauty and innovative mechanism represents a pinnacle of horological technology.

The watch at risk of export was part of the collection of King George III and Queen Charlotte. The King was a keen horologist and, as well as engaging leading horologists of the day, he actively involved himself in the creation of pieces that he commissioned. The Royal Collection holds manuscripts written in the King's hand in which he details the procedure for assembling and disassembling watches.

Watches of this style are not currently represented in any public collection in the UK and this is thought to be one of less than ten known to survive.

Culture Minister Caroline Dinenage said:

With the nation captivated by Bridgerton, there is no better time for this watch owned by George III to come to light. This rare specimen is beautifully crafted and would make an excellent addition to a UK collection. I hope that a buyer can be found so that the public can continue to be inspired by this exciting period of our history.

The Minister's decision follows the advice of the Reviewing Committee on the Export of Works of Art and Objects of Cultural Interest (RCEWA). The committee noted that the watch was an outstanding technical accomplishment, demonstrating Breguet's skill as a watchmaker and embodied the Enlightenment values of early 19th century Britain.

Committee Member Pippa Shirley said:

This watch is a tour-de-force of the art of horology. At the very cutting edge of technology, the beauty of its mechanism is matched by the restrained elegance of its case, all of which would have been prized by its original owner King George III, an astute collector and active horologist.

This important type of watch is not currently represented in any national collection. With fewer than ten thought to still exist, the opportunity to save this pristine example for the nation, with its rich connection to the social and political history of Britain and Europe, simply must not be missed. Its loss from Britain would be a misfortune.

The RCEWA made its recommendation on the grounds of the watch's outstanding significance for the study of British collecting, horology and the social and political history of Britain and Europe.

The decision on the export licence application for the watch will be deferred until 28 April 2021. This may be extended until 28 September 2021 if a serious intention to raise funds to purchase it is made at the recommended price of £2,000,000 plus VAT of £400,000.

ENDS

## **Notes to editors**

Organisations or individuals interested in purchasing the watch should contact the RCEWA on 0845 300 6200.

Details of the watch are as follows:

- Certificate No. 4178 issued by the Breguet firm in Paris on 29 June 1808 shows that this watch was issued to their agent in London, Recordon, for King George III. The watch was signed by Recordon, rather than Breguet, perhaps to disguise the sale to the British King during the Napoleonic Wars.
- The watch is an early example incorporating Breguet's tourbillon, possibly Breguet's single greatest contribution to the field. He conceived the idea while in Switzerland between 1793-1795, in exile from the Reign of Terror in Paris. It was patented on June 26, 1801 and was finally put into commercial production in 1805.
- The escapement, the beating-heart of a watch responsible for controlling its timekeeping, is subject to varying forces as it moves about in normal use, which can adversely affect timekeeping. Breguet sought to reduce these positional errors by incorporating the tourbillon which caused the entire escapement assembly to rotate continuously through 360°, the word "tourbillon" translating as "whirlwind". Breguet excelled

at knowing what his customers wanted and watches fitted with tourbillons were and are highly prized. Breguet sold 35 tourbillon watches between 1805 and 1823 and less than ten survive, thus making them rare and coveted pieces. It includes a thermometer, seconds, stopping seconds and a state of wind indicator and has a high quality gold case.

Provenance: Malcolm Gardner, lent to the Five Centuries of British Timekeeping Exhibition, 1955 Property of a Gentleman, Sotheby's 9th November 1999, lot 78 Current private collection

The Reviewing Committee on the Export of Works of Art and Objects of Cultural Interest is an independent body, serviced by The Arts Council, which advises the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport on whether a cultural object, intended for export, is of national importance under specified criteria.

The [Arts Council](#) champions, develops and invests in artistic and cultural experiences that enrich people's lives. It supports a range of activities across the arts, museums and libraries – from theatre to digital art, reading to dance, music to literature, and crafts to collections.

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## **Government's multimillion-pound support scheme for airports opens today**

- airports and ground handlers in England will be eligible to receive up to £8 million each
- significant investment to ease pressure on airports hit by the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic
- scheme reflects the sector's valuable contribution to the UK economy

Airports across England are set to receive a boost as the government's financial support scheme opens for applications today (29 January 2021).

Commercial airports and ground handlers will be able to apply for up to £8 million each to support with fixed costs while travel restrictions remain in place. The financial relief will help airports and ground handlers to cover losses on costs including airfield operations, contracted services such as airfield and runway maintenance, and business rate bills.

The investment will help airports and ground handlers, following the introduction of international travel restrictions designed to protect public health and prevent the spread of COVID-19. Recognising the crucial role the sector plays and its contribution to the UK economy, the scheme will support

the aviation industry while the government continues to roll out its vaccination programme.

Transport Secretary Grant Shapps said:

A thriving aviation industry has been central to the success of this country and while we recognise the testing conditions airports are currently facing as a result of the pandemic, I believe that the sector will be ready to bounce back once restrictions are lifted.

Today's scheme is another step in the right direction, providing vital support for an industry that is raring to get back to business, once it is safe to do so.

Aviation Minister Robert Courts said:

The aviation sector plays a crucial role in our economy, contributing £22 billion directly to the UK economy and supporting around half a million jobs.

We are well aware of the challenges facing the industry, however, this scheme will give airports and ground handlers in England a boost, helping them continue to prepare for a future when international travel is ready to take off again.

Airports and ground handlers will be able to [apply to the Airport and Ground Operations Support Scheme online](#) and, if successful, should receive their funding by the end of the financial year. The financial support scheme, which follows the government's extension of the [Job Retention Scheme](#), is open for applications from today until 21 February 2021.

The government has also provided flexibility to airlines to support them during this difficult time – extending the waiver of the '80:20' slot usage rule in time for the summer scheduling season. This removes the requirement for airlines to operate flights at least 80% of the time to retain their slots, to reflect the current low demand for air travel.

This not only helps airlines' finances but reduces the environmental impact of 'ghost flights' while ensuring that the slots allocation system works in the interests of air passengers.

The government acknowledges the severe impact that the COVID-19 pandemic has had on the travel sector as a whole and continues to provide support while international travel is paused.

[National restrictions for England](#) introduced on 6 January 2021 continue to remain in place, meaning that everyone must stay at home unless travelling for a very limited set of reasons.

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## **Clothing boss jailed for failing to keep adequate accounts**

Ezazali Ahmed Namaji (40), of Osbourne Road in Leicester, was the sole director of Miss Pebbles Clothing Ltd, a cut and trim garment manufacturer incorporated in February 2015.

The company traded from premises in Layton Road, Leicester, and employed up to 50 people until March 2016 when Ezazali Namaji placed the business into liquidation, owing the funds to the tax authorities and a further £44,000 to other creditors.

An Insolvency Service investigation found that the defendant had not kept adequate accounting records which meant the liquidator could not ascertain where cheque and debit card withdrawals totalling more than £983,000 had been spent.

Furthermore, during its 13 months of trading, Miss Pebbles Clothing failed to pay tax liabilities of more than £300,000. Some of this amount related to national insurance and PAYE payments after it was found the director was taking contributions from employees without passing them on.

On 23 December Ezazali Namaji was sentenced to six months imprisonment at Leicester Crown Court after pleading guilty to failing to keep adequate accounting records. The defendant has also been banned from being a company director for a period of five years.

Glenn Wicks, Chief Investigator for the Insolvency Service, said:

Ezazali Ahmed Namaji was a negligent company director who failed to maintain company records. When Miss Pebbles Ltd ceased trading, it left serious losses of almost £345,000, with more than £301,000 alone owed to the tax authorities.

Namaji's unscrupulous conduct is a serious offence and this sentence should serve as a stark warning to others that we will investigate those that think they can flout their responsibilities as directors and cause harm and loss to the public purse.

Ezazali Ahmed Namaji is of Leicester and his date of birth is May 1980.

MISS PEBBLES CLOTHING LTD Company number 09445941

The sentence result was announced at Leicester Crown Court by Mr. Recorder Upward QC

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](#).

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

You can also follow the Insolvency Service on:

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## **Government strengthens anti-social behaviour guidance to ensure protection for victims**

The guidance relates to the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014, which provides police and local authorities with a range of tools and powers to respond quickly to anti-social behaviour (ASB) and ensure victims have a say in the way that complaints are dealt with.

A key part of this is the Anti-Social Behaviour Case Review (also known as the Community Trigger), which gives victims of persistent anti-social behaviour the ability to demand a formal case review where the local threshold is met – an important safety net in ensuring that victims are fully supported.

The strengthened guidance builds on previous updates to make sure there is a greater focus on the impact of anti-social behaviour on victims. It provides greater clarity on the process of the Anti-Social Behaviour Case Review, highlighting that relevant bodies should always consider inviting the victim or, if more appropriate, their representative to case review meetings to help the panel understand their perspective. It also explains that local areas can have independent chairs at review meetings to provide an external view on the case.

These requirements align with recommendations from the 2019 Victims Commissioner report.

Safeguarding Minister, Victoria Atkins said:

Victims must be front and centre of the approach police and local agencies take when tackling anti-social behaviour.

We know that powers are already being used to good effect and this guidance provides even greater clarity for local agencies.

We are determined to create safe and peaceful communities where

people can thrive and perpetrators of anti-social behaviour are robustly dealt with.

The updated guidance also highlights existing requirements on local agencies including that:

- local areas must carry out a review of the response to anti-social behaviour complaints if an application is made and the locally defined threshold for a review is met
- they must respond to the victim at particular milestones in the process, including with the outcome of the review
- they must publish specified information at least every 12 months about the Community Trigger, including the number of reviews that have been carried out
- they must publish details of the Community Trigger procedure in their area to ensure that victims are aware that they can apply in appropriate circumstances

In addition to the guidance for local agencies, there is further information available on the [Community Trigger webpage on GOV.UK](#).

These resources are part of a wider government commitment to ensuring ASB is dealt with effectively.

The Home Office works with partners through the ASB Strategic Board, which brings together the National Policing Lead, the Local Government Association, the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners, other Government departments and community sector organisations to ensure that the relevant powers are being used robustly, and to learn from examples of good practice.

We have also provided over £12 million funding in 20/21 for the continued development of the Single Online Home – a web platform which enables members of the public to report crimes online 24/7. As it is rolled out, the Single Online Home is making it easier for the public to report a wide range of crimes, including ASB.

Our £45 million Safer Streets Fund is supporting areas that are disproportionately affected by crimes such as burglary and many of these schemes will also help in tackling anti-social behaviour through crime prevention measures like improved street lighting and CCTV. This includes £20 million announced yesterday (28 January) to tackle these crimes and ensure the police have the powers, tools and resources they need to cut crime and make people feel safer in their community.

All this work is in addition to our commitment to recruit 20,000 additional police officers to provide law enforcement with the resources they need to keep our streets and communities safe.

‘Anti-social behaviour’ is a broad term which includes behaviour which has caused or is likely to cause harassment, alarm or distress to a member or members of the public.

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# **International Day of Education 2021: Joint statement**

Madame Chair,

I am pleased to give this statement on behalf of Albania, Andorra, Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Republic of Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Moldova, Mongolia, Montenegro, Netherlands, North Macedonia, Poland, Portugal, Romania, San Marino, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Ukraine, the United Kingdom, USA and my own country Norway.

The International Day of Education was proclaimed by the UN General Assembly in 2019, as a reminder of education's foundational role for peace and development. On this occasion, two years on, we commemorate the tireless efforts of teachers, school administrators, government officials and other dedicated individuals who have made possible that children and youth continue to learn even against the largest disruption of our education systems due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The closure of schools has affected the lives of 1.6 billion students in more than 190 countries. Education is a human right, independently of any crisis and must therefore be an important part of the response to the covid-19 pandemic. School closures have in many cases stripped children of the opportunity to learn, a safe space and even meals. For girls, the probability of early marriage and early pregnancies has increased. Research also indicates that education inequalities have increased, as schools increasingly have needed to rely on distance education. Access to internet, computers, TV and radios, or a quiet room to study in, is not equal. Children with disabilities are often affected harder than their peers.

COVID-19 has exacerbated further the difficulties faced by those living in crisis-affected regions, where education is one of the first to be impacted by violence and conflict. Today more than ever, we must ensure that schools remain safe places, free of conflict and violence and protected from attack.

Education contributes to the maintenance of peace and security, as it provides stability and hope for a better future for children in conflict and post-conflict settings. Several of our field missions support education as a part of the comprehensive approach to security – and in Central Asia the OSCE Academy delivers high quality higher education to people of the region. The pandemic has also shown us that education systems worldwide need to have the tools and resources suitable for the 21st century. Bridging the digital divide will however be a long-term endeavour. Low-tech and no-tech solutions for distance learning will continue to be important to ensure that the

poorest and most marginalised learners remain connected to the education system.

The crisis should also be seen as an opportunity. Increased competence in distance education and new digital solutions may provide exciting opportunities also after the pandemic, and our preparedness is increase should we experience a similar crisis in the future.

Madame Chair,

As Participating States are focusing on the immediate public health, economic and social welfare responses in tackling the impact of the pandemic, it will be important to ensure that learning continues in an equitable way. This is a prerequisite for the long-term stability.