

Crime news: tender opens for police station telephone advice work

News story

We are opening a tender for the delivery of Criminal Defence Direct telephone advice services from 1 June 2021.



A tender opened on 10 November 2020 for police station telephone advice work to members of the public detained on suspicion of certain criminal offences.

Who can apply?

The tender is open to any interested party that can meet the minimum requirements. These are set out on our tender pages.

We are seeking to award 2 contracts. Successful applicants will each deliver half of the service under a Criminal Defence Direct (CDD) contract.

Timescales

The deadline for submitting tenders is 9am on 14 December 2020.

Services under the new contracts will begin on 1 June 2021.

Where can I find out more?

Detailed information on the tender is available in the 'Information for Applicants' document on our tender pages.

Further information

[CDD telephone advice tender information](#)

[Criminal Defence Direct Contract 2021](#) – to view draft contracts

Environment Agency launches Flood Action Campaign 2020

Half of adults (49%) in England place more sentimental value on their homes this year compared to last year, but many people do not know that they may need to take action to protect their household memories from a flood.

According to new research commissioned for the Environment Agency's Flood Action Campaign, homes have taken on a multitude of new purposes over the past year – from workplaces (35%) and classrooms (13%) to hair salons (29%) and gyms (39%). They have also become the setting for important memories for many people, including milestone birthdays (19%), starting a new job (13%), marriage proposals (9%) and learning a new skill (15%).

The research, released to coincide with Flood Action Week (9th – 15th November), highlights how flood damage could have an even more devastating impact on victims than usual this winter.

The findings showed that one in eight (12%) people have no idea whether they live in a flood risk area, meaning millions could be at risk of being caught out by a flood. This makes it more important than ever for everyone to check their flood risk online, and for those in flood risk areas to follow the Environment Agency's 'Prepare. Act. Survive.' plan to safeguard their treasured homes and possessions.

Caroline Douglass, Director of Incident Management & Resilience at the Environment Agency said:

"Our new research shows that our homes are more important to us than ever before, meaning that the impact of a flood this winter could be even more devastating.

"While the Environment Agency is doing everything we can to prepare for the winter, the climate emergency means that we are experiencing more extreme wet weather than ever before.

"Just as they will be aware of Covid 19 restrictions, we're urging everyone to check whether they live in an area at risk from flooding and know the simple steps to remain prepared – such as moving possessions upstairs and preparing a grab bag with medicines and important documents. This will help reduce the damage and keep yourself and your family safe."

As well as demonstrating how much people value the space they live in, the research also highlighted items which have the most sentimental value in their homes and could be lost forever in the event of a flood. Over a third (39%) have kept treasured items that had been given to them by a loved one no longer alive, with the most valued items including photos of loved ones

(62%), sentimental jewellery (30%), keepsakes from children (29%) and sentimental ornaments (27%). To bring to life the impact a flood could have, the Environment Agency has created '[The Waterlogue](#)' – a new creative film showing flood damaged items and telling the impactful and sentimental story behind possessions that are lost forever.

The Environment Agency has adopted Covid-safe ways of working in helping to protect people from flooding and are calling for people to be prepared this winter. Simple steps should be taken, such as checking if you live on an area at high risk of flooding, preparing a bag with medication and important documents and moving valuable and sentimental items upstairs or to a safe place. A combination of these actions can reduce the damage caused by a flood by around 40%.

Charity regulator launches second inquiry into Rabia Educational Trust due to continued failings

Press release

Charity breached operating conditions imposed by Department for Education



The charity watchdog is investigating an educational charity for the second time after it breached operating conditions imposed by the Department for Education. The charity, which operates the Rabia School in Luton, has also failed to comply with actions set by the Charity Commission.

The regulator [previously investigated the Rabia Educational Trust in 2016-17](#), finding there had been misconduct and/or mismanagement, and issuing the trustees with a legal Order. This directed the trustees to make improvements, including to ensure compliance with the regulatory requirements of Ofsted and the Department for Education.

The Commission has since kept the charity under close review and provided further regulatory advice and guidance. Whilst some progress has been made, the trustees have persistently failed in the requirement to meet the Independent Schools Standards.

In May 2020 the charity and its chair were [convicted for breaching operating conditions imposed by the Secretary of State for Education](#). Ofsted inspectors had found evidence that the school was admitting new pupils despite being prohibited from doing so due to successive safeguarding and welfare failings.

As a result of this, and the failure to comply with regulatory advice and guidance, the Commission opened a new inquiry into the charity on 5 October 2020.

This inquiry will examine the trustees' compliance with their legal duties around the administration, governance and management of the charity, and whether the charity can be placed on a firmer footing for the future. The regulator may extend the scope of the inquiry if additional regulatory issues emerge.

It is the Commission's policy, after it has concluded an inquiry, to publish a report detailing what issues the inquiry looked at, what actions were undertaken as part of the inquiry and what the outcomes were. Reports of previous inquiries by the Commission are available on [GOV.UK](#).

Ends.

Notes to editors:

1. [View the charity's entry on the register of charities](#).
2. The Charity Commission is the independent, non-ministerial government department that registers and regulates charities in England and Wales. Its purpose is to ensure charity can thrive and inspire trust so that people can improve lives and strengthen society.

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Isotretinoin and suspected link with serious side effects: public and patients' views sought

To support a review of evidence on the possible association between the acne medicine, isotretinoin, and psychiatric and sexual disorders, a call for information has been launched today by the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA).

Patients and their families, healthcare professionals, researchers and organisations are being invited to contribute to the review through the [MHRA's call for information](#).

Isotretinoin is an effective medicine for severe forms of acne that has not responded to other treatments, however as with all medicines, there are suspected side effects, some of which can be severe.

An Expert Working Group is reviewing the available evidence relating to isotretinoin, and will advise whether the MHRA should take additional regulatory action, for example, improving the information for patients to help minimise the risks of psychiatric and sexual side effects, suspected to be associated with isotretinoin.

Dr. Sarah Branch, Director of Vigilance and Risk Management of Medicines at the MHRA, said:

We want patients taking isotretinoin to be informed of the risks and benefits and have recently issued a reminder to healthcare professionals.

All medicines can cause side effects, and we need to ensure that the benefits of taking isotretinoin outweigh the potential risks associated with this medicine. That is why we need people's help to gather information on psychiatric or sexual disorders, that they have suffered, and suspect to be associated with isotretinoin treatment.

We are asking patients, family members and healthcare professionals to contribute to the review so that the Expert Working Group has up-to-date information to consider. All information we receive will be treated confidentially.

We know this is a personal issue for anyone who suspects they have suffered psychiatric or sexual disorders with isotretinoin treatment, therefore we would appreciate any help you may be able to give us.

The MHRA will work with patients and their families, as well as healthcare professionals and organisations, to ensure everyone has an opportunity to contribute to the review. The agency is particularly interested to hear the experience of patients and families in the UK, but would also welcome contributions from those living outside the UK.

Details about the call for information, including what and how to submit, are [available here](#).

Any queries regarding the review or the call for information should email info@mhra.gov.uk or phone 020 3080 6000.

Due to its suspected side effects, isotretinoin should only be prescribed under the supervision of consultant dermatologists, to treat severe forms of acne that have not responded to antibiotics and topical treatments (creams or gels). Isotretinoin capsules are also known by the brand names Roaccutane, Reticutan, and Rizuderm in the UK.

Anyone in the UK who suspects they may have experienced a side effect with isotretinoin, or any other medicine, can submit a report to the Yellow Card Scheme. This helps makes medicines safer for everyone.

Falklands finally landmine free thanks to UK-funded team

The Falkland Islands are now finally free of lethal minefields almost 40 years after the end of the conflict during which thousands of exploding devices were laid.

A UK-funded programme which started in 2009 has completed its dangerous mission to de-mine the islands in the South Atlantic three years ahead of schedule.

The removal of the mines laid during the 1982 conflict with Argentina means the UK has now met its obligations set by the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention.

As a result the warning signs and fences that have been a feature on the islands since the end of the conflict will be removed during a local event. The removal of the last mine means there are no anti-personnel mines on British soil anywhere in the world.

Islanders will mark the moment with the detonation of the final mine and the cutting down of fences which will finally re-open their access to beaches. Games of cricket and football will be played on the beach itself, to enjoy unrestricted access.

Minister Wendy Morton, UK Minister with responsibility for the Falklands, said:

This is a huge achievement for the Islands and we must pay tribute to the brilliant team of deminers who put their lives at risk day to day removing and destroying landmines to make the Falklands safe.

Our commitment to ridding the world of fatal land mines does not end with our territories being mine free. A further £36 million of UK funding will allow demining projects across the world to continue, protecting innocent civilian lives.

The demining team from Zimbabwe, with supervising staff from British companies SafeLane Global and Fenix Insight had to struggle with the islands' challenging physical conditions, often working in remote locations and through the unpredictable and sometimes extreme Falklands weather, to achieve the goal to rid the Falklands of mines.

The UK is one of the world's leading forces in ridding the world of mines. An additional £36 million of funding has therefore been given to the UK-funded Global Mine Action Programme 2, bringing the total to £124m, to continue demining projects in Africa, the Middle East and Asia. This recognises that landmines continue to cause harm and damage lives, many years after conflicts are over.

Further detail:

- The Falklands will be officially declared landmine free on the 14 November in a local celebration. There will also be an official celebration hosted by the UK at Government House on the 17 November, where the deminers will be presented with certificates signed by Minister Morton.
- Countries benefitting from the additional £36 million of funding under the Global Mine Action Programme 2 are Afghanistan, Angola, Cambodia, Iraq, Laos, Lebanon, Myanmar, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Sri Lanka, Vietnam, Yemen, and Zimbabwe.
- GMAP2, which started in 2018, addresses the threat posed by landmines and other explosive remnants of war. By June 2020 it had cleared and confirmed safe the equivalent of 28,800 football pitches of mines and delivered mine risk education to over 2 million people.