

## **Press release: Brighton drug-dealer jailed after Solicitor General's intervention**

A man who dealt drugs to the Brighton party scene has today had his sentence increased after the Solicitor General, Robert Buckland QC MP, referred it to the Court of Appeal for being too low.

Police were called to the flat of Daniel Lewis, 30, after Aimee Spencer, 27, fell from his kitchen window, sustaining injuries which resulted in her death. Lewis was under the influence of drugs when police arrived, and a search of the flat revealed large quantities of drugs and drug-related paraphernalia.

They also found information which led them to a rented garage where Lewis was storing more drugs. The drugs found included high-purity cocaine and prescription medications.

Lewis was originally sentenced in November 2018 to 2 years imprisonment suspended for 2 years at Lewes Crown Court. He was also ordered to complete 300 hours of unpaid work, 15 days of rehabilitation activity requirements, and to be on curfew for 4 months. The Court of Appeal has today jailed Lewis for 3 years.

Commenting on the increase, the Solicitor General said:

“By selling large quantities of dangerous, high-purity drugs, Lewis was destroying the lives of others to support his own lavish lifestyle. I am pleased that the Court of Appeal has seen fit to bestow a custodial sentence on him today.”

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## **Press release: Minister for Europe calls for investigation into persecution of LGBT community in Chechnya**

The Minister for Europe's remarks come following further disturbing reports of the continued persecution of LGBT people in Chechnya, concerns which previously surfaced in 2017.

The most recent reports suggest that a further 40 individuals have been detained, alongside two deaths in custody following torture. These must be investigated urgently.

FCO Minister Sir Alan Duncan said:

The persecution of LGBT people in Chechnya is utterly appalling. Recent reports indicate that two people have died in custody following torture, and a further 40 remain in detention – all simply for their sexual orientation. Persecution for being LGBT, in any country in the world, is abhorrent.

The Russian authorities must protect their people from these human rights abuses, and conduct a credible investigation into these reports immediately. There should be no climate of impunity for those who commit these abuses.

We and the international community have repeatedly called for the Russian Government to conduct an investigation and hold those responsible for human rights abuses in Chechnya to account, including through the 2018 OSCE Moscow Mechanism.

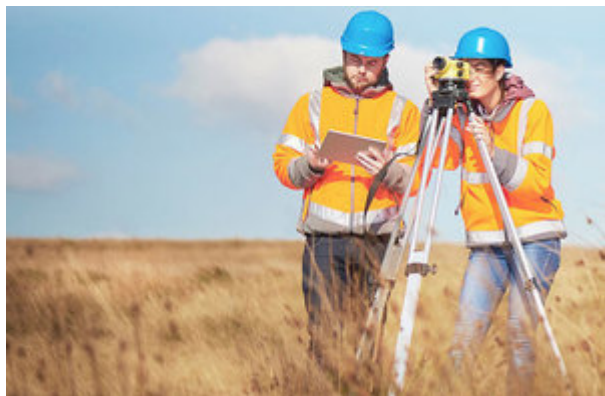
All decent people very much hope that Chechnya can put an end to this sort of barbaric persecution and step into the modern world of civility and tolerance.

Following similar reports in 2017, the OSCE Moscow Mechanism, invoked by the UK and 15 other countries in 2018, set out recommendations to Russia. We urge the Russian Government to implement these recommendations as a matter of urgency, and to uphold its international human rights obligations to its people.

**Further information**

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**[News story: Welsh Government launches policy to deal with radioactive waste](#)**



Engineers at work – Peirianwyr yn gweithio

Geological disposal is one of the UK's largest ever environmental protection projects, which will provide a safe and secure long-term solution for the disposal of higher activity radioactive waste.

In support of the [Welsh Government's policy announcement](#), RWM has published information for communities including:

In addition, we have also launched a consultation on how we will evaluate sites in Wales:

A community meeting – Cyfarfod cymunedol

Anyone interested in learning more about geological disposal and what it could mean for their community should visit our [website](#) or contact RWM via [gdfenqcymru@nda.gov.uk](mailto:gdfenqcymru@nda.gov.uk)

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## **[Press release: St Helens estate agent jailed for 4-and-a-half years](#)**

Richard Charles Hall (45), from Ecclestone, St Helens, was sentenced on Monday 14 January at Liverpool Crown Court following a joint investigation between the Insolvency Service and Merseyside Police. In total, he was found guilty of seven offences.

Across two trials, in October and December 2018, the court heard that Richard Hall traded as an estate agent through the company Brooklands Sales and Lettings Limited.

However, Richard Hall defrauded several people to the value of more than £40,000 through his business dealings.

Richard Hall also dishonestly sold Brooklands Sales & Lettings Ltd in May 2014, claiming he owned the full company, despite having received investment from a third party. Furthermore, Richard Hall sold the business just two months before he was made bankrupt for a second time.

The court then heard that Richard Hall had first been made bankrupt in 2012, with the restrictions lifted in 2013. But when he was made bankrupt for a second time in July 2014, he attempted to undermine the Official Receiver's investigations into his affairs.

He tried to conceal a bank account from the Official Receiver and his shares in Brooklands and once investigators found the account, they discovered Richard Hall was operating a sole trader company called Brooklands Sales alongside the company he had sold unbeknownst to the new owners of Brooklands.

He then continued to thwart the Official Receiver's investigations into his bankruptcy. He told investigators that he never held shares in Brooklands, even though his name was on the public Companies House register.

And at court, he produced banking material intending to convince the Court that he had paid back monies for the sale of Brooklands.

His Honour Judge Watson QC commented that there should be a high degree of trust and integrity in estate agents but that in this case, Hall had lied and exploited others, while abusing his position of trust and responsibility.

The Judge added that Hall deliberately withheld important information from the Insolvency Service by concealing property then deliberately tried to pervert the course of justice

Prior to his sentence, Richard Hall had received a suspended prison sentence in 2013 for possessing an offensive weapon in a public place and in 2015 he was also convicted of a battery offence.

John Fitzsimmons, Chief Investigator of Criminal Investigations for the Insolvency Service, said:

Richard Hall's behaviour has been deceitful and calculating throughout, whether that was defrauding landlords or undermining the Official Receiver from doing their job.

This has been an extensive investigation covering many areas of criminality and we welcome the sentence handed down by the courts, which we hope serves as a warning to those who think they can renege on their responsibilities toward the Insolvency Service when bankrupt.

Detective Inspector Steve Ball, Merseyside Police, said:

We are pleased that Richard Hall has been sentenced and hope it brings some comfort to the victims of his crimes that he is now behind bars.

Hall played on peoples trust, defrauding them of large sums of money and exploiting them for his own financial gain. This sentencing brings to an end an extensive investigation carried out together with the Insolvency service and I hope it reminds the public that we will always act on information about fraud to bring offenders to justice.

Victims may sometimes feel embarrassed about coming forward but I want to reassure people that we will treat any allegations with sensitivity and compassion, through specialist officers and alongside our partners.

If you have, or are being subjected to fraud, or feel like you, or someone you care for, is being scammed, please get in touch.

The first trial took place at Liverpool Crown Court on 9 October 2018 in connection with the landlord frauds. Richard Hall was found guilty of three fraud offences.

The second trial, also at Liverpool Crown Court, followed on 10 December 2018 and was held in connection with a further fraud offence, two counts of obstructing the Official Receiver by perjury and doing an act with intent to pervert the course of justice.

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 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](#).

You can also follow the Insolvency Service on:

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## News story: Mission Christmas 2018 – Update

Five charities have benefited from donations generated by the Sellafield Ltd Christmas Campaign 2018.

The main Christmas charity that was supported in Cumbria was CFM's 'Cask4Kids Mission Christmas' appeal, to make sure every local child wakes up with a gift on Christmas day.

The charities that the Warrington office supported were: Home Start Warrington, Families and Wellbeing Toy Appeal, Room at the Inn and the Y project.

This was the total amount raised:

1. Shoebox appeal for the elderly on behalf of AgeUK – 280 shoe boxes full of gifts sourced and delivered by Sellafield Ltd apprentices to elderly care home residents in the local area of Workington, Cockermouth, Whitehaven, Egremont and Millom. An additional £289.42 was handed over to AgeUK from a cake sale.
2. Cask4Kids 'Mission Christmas' – £20,675 worth of gifts and £1,609 cash donations which helped over 318 children and equated to 948 gifts in total.
3. Home-start Warrington – Christmas Eve hampers for 37 children.
4. Families and Wellbeing Toy Appeal – 600 gifts from Sellafield and supply chain partners were collected from around the Warrington area, which helped 390 children.
5. Room at the Inn, Warrington – Hundreds of tins and toiletries donated and cash from the Christmas Jumper day for the Room at the Inn and the Y project, bringing their total up to £800 of donations.

Katie Jones, charity manager for CFM, said:

We are over the moon with the contribution of gifts and toys from the people at Sellafield Ltd and in the supply chain.

The quality of gifts donated is amazing and makes a huge difference to those children who would have, without our help, received very little or nothing at all on Christmas morning.

I know that some donations will have gone in to drop off points in the local area, so the total contributions are no doubt more.

The total number of children helped through Mission Christmas 2018 was 8,031 which was an increase of 143 from 2017.

Sandra Dempsey from Age UK West Cumbria said:

Can I say a huge thank you to everyone involved in this project. The generosity of your staff and the hard work and effort of the wonderful apprentice team were appreciated by us all here at Age UK West.

Community liaison officer Pauline Deans, Sellafield Ltd said:

We are overwhelmed with everyone's generosity. We're glad that children in our local area could wake up on Christmas morning to a gift under the Christmas tree and that homeless people can enjoy a hot meal and a roof over their head at Christmas, thanks to everyone's kind donations.