

News story: Local courts and tribunals help to raise the bar on provision of refreshments

Courts and tribunals vary a lot in the refreshments they provide. Some have a selection of hot and cold food; others offer drinks; and some offer very little. This can depend on where the building is, and how many people use it; but new guidance has been issued that will help courts to be more ambitious and provide better refreshment options.

For the first time, the guidance sets a minimum standard – saying that, at the very least, all visitors to our buildings should be able to access a broad selection of good quality hot and cold drinks, even in our smallest buildings.

In most places, we are keen to offer more than this. The new guidance and sources of information we've introduced will help operational teams to explore and introduce the best approach possible for their buildings and the people who use them. This includes both best practice in getting the right catering provision in place through conventional contracts; and advice on how to source and support sustainable small-scale initiatives with local businesses or charities in buildings where a commercial arrangement with a caterer may not work.

There are lots of good examples taking place across the estate that others can learn from. For example, one small court uses local sandwich shop menus to provide a delivery service to jurors; and in other courts local catering firms bring baskets of sandwiches round at busy times, for staff and those waiting for hearings.

In one court, we've encouraged a charity which supports children coming out of the care system to set up a snack bar which both provides great food, and helps to train young people in kitchen and service skills.

By encouraging and supporting a wider range of approaches to providing refreshments on site, we expect to raise the bar on court and tribunal catering.

Susan Acland-Hood, Chief Executive of HMCTS commented:

Since joining HMCTS, I've heard a lot about court refreshments – and seen a lot too, in the visits I make every week. At the moment, what we do is inconsistent; we have too many sites with no refreshments, and what others provide is very basic.

But there are also some great examples of excellent catering – and of people doing things in really innovative ways where a conventional big contract wouldn't work. The guidance will help us

bring the rest to the standard of the best, by giving people advice, help and support to put good arrangements in place.

For further information, email us at:
changesomethingthatmatters@hmcts.gsi.gov.uk.

[Press release: All British 'eye in the sky' to tackle oil spills, illegal shipping and deforestation](#)

- The first images from a new British-made radar satellite which can see earth through clouds and the darkness of night were released today
- the satellite – supported by a grant from the government – can detect oil spills in the oceans, help spot suspicious shipping activity and monitor the effects of deforestation
- supporting the £14 billion space industry and the UK's world-leading space capabilities is a key part of the government's modern Industrial Strategy

The first images from a new satellite which can see through clouds and image the Earth round the clock to help stop illegal activity and protect the environment was unveiled today (Friday 23 November).

Science Minister Sam Gyimah saw the images from the NovaSAR-1, the first Synthetic Aperture Radar (SAR) satellite made entirely in the UK, during a visit to its makers, Surrey Satellite Technology Ltd (SSTL). SAR technology can see through clouds and image the Earth 24 hours a day. Images can be used to detect oil spills and suspicious shipping activity, and monitor deforestation.

The satellite, launched in September, tests a new platform for low-cost satellite imaging. The government invested £21 million to assist the development of NovaSAR-1 and will benefit from access to its data, significantly boosting the UK's Earth observation capabilities and providing data to start-ups at the Satellite Applications Catapult in Oxfordshire.

The images released today show Cairo and Sydney Harbour. Cropped images taken from the original picture of Sydney Harbour include Sydney Opera House, Bondi beach and a close-up image shows small boats moored in the natural harbour at Church Point, north of Sydney in a demonstration of the usefulness of SAR for detecting vessels of different sizes and types, particularly at night or through cloud cover.

The image of Cairo shows the River Nile flowing from Upper Egypt through

Cairo and down towards Beni Suef. Cropped images taken from the original show The Great Pyramids of Giza, and the Red Pyramid and Bent Pyramid near Dahshur.

Satellite view of great pyramids, Cairo. Credit: SSTL

Science Minister Sam Gyimah said:

Yet again we can see UK research and innovation that is truly out of this world. This 'eye in the sky' can capture an image a dozen times wider than the Strait of Dover and the data it provides can help crack problems from illegal shipping to alerting us to damaging pollution that needs to be countered.

This satellite, backed by a £21 million investment from the UK Government, is a great example of how we are working with the space sector through our modern Industrial Strategy to remain at the forefront of pioneering science and exploration.

Andrew Cawthorne, Director of Earth Observation at SSTL said:

The quality of the SAR images we are downloading validate the capabilities of NovaSAR's innovative low cost S-Band SAR platform and demonstrate successful delivery of valuable data for maritime, agricultural, forestry, ice-monitoring and disaster monitoring applications.

We have worked closely with the SAR experts at Airbus in Portsmouth to develop NovaSAR-1 and the whole team is delighted with these first results – the outcome of space engineering expertise, ingenuity and collaboration. I would like to thank the UK Space Agency for their support and we look forward to starting service delivery in the near future to our mission partners.

NovaSAR-1 has 3 imaging modes that create images with higher definition for precision applications including monitoring disasters and deforestation, and it also has a maritime mode and AIS receiver.

The satellite's dedicated maritime mode allows it to monitor an area of ocean 400km wide. This allows ships to be detected by radar and compared with their ship tracking data, with discrepancies between the two highlighting potentially illegal activity.

Partners signed up to receive data from NovaSAR-1 include the UK Space Agency, Australia's Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO), and the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO).

NovaSAR-1 was entirely made in Britain, being designed and manufactured by SSTL, with an SAR payload developed by Airbus Defence and Space in Portsmouth

and an Automatic Identification Receiver supplied by Honeywell Aerospace. NovaSAR-1 is operated in orbit from SSTL's Spacecraft Operations Centre in Guildford UK.

The government is backing the space sector by working in partnership with it through its [modern Industrial Strategy](#), which includes major initiatives such as the National Satellite Test Facility at Harwell and the development of the proposed commercial spaceport in Sutherland, Scotland. The UK continues to be a leading member of the European Space Agency, which is independent of the EU. This week (Monday 19 November) Business Secretary Greg Clark announced that Airbus will assemble satellite components and major parts in the UK for Eutelsat in a new [multi-million-pound deal](#) signed at the Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy. The deal will support hundreds of high quality jobs in Portsmouth and Stevenage and thousands of jobs in the supply chain – a further vote of confidence in the UK's future economy and growing space industry.

The UK is a world leader in Earth Observation technologies, which have an increasing number of down to Earth applications including through the UK Space Agency's International Partnership Programme (IPP). This programme harnesses the expertise of the British space sector to tackle problems all around the world, from predicting dengue fever outbreaks in Vietnam to improving healthcare in Nigeria through satellite connectivity. Earth Observation satellite services are estimated to support industries representing a total turnover of more than £235 billion.

[Press release: Ambitious Manchester can grow its number of dynamic and vibrant businesses](#)

Addressing a group of local success stories, Liz Truss will say that many businesses could benefit from new plans being worked on to help encourage business expansion.

Sir George Iacobescu, who helped develop Canary Wharf, is working with the government to progress and develop proposals for up to ten new development corporations or similar delivery bodies around the UK.

These are areas which could be regenerated on a large scale, boosting the local economy by offering space for housing and offices, and also bring a network of businesses together.

Successful bids could receive government funding, and Liz Truss thinks Manchester could be an ideal spot for a zone and hopes that the area will be amongst those submitting ideas.

Chief Secretary to the Treasury, Liz Truss said:

Manchester is one of the most spirited, industrious and ambitious cities in Britain and the businesses here are determined to work their way right to the top.

The Mancunians I met today want to get on with growing their businesses.

And that's why I want the best and brightest businesses to come to the government with ideas for how they would make best use of a development corporation.

These hubs could help attract quality jobs, give growing businesses the space to expand, and increase business confidence in the north even more.

The recent Budget made a number of announcements to support the the north west, helping to drive growth and prosperity for people living and working in the region.

Passengers, commuters and motorists across the north west will benefit from a £770 million increase to the Transforming Cities Fund – bringing the total fund to £2.5 billion to 2023. The fund helps create new and better transport links from city centres to the suburbs.

And £53 million was awarded to the north west to help address the blight of potholes.

Recent stats show that the north west's economy is performing well.

There are 281,000 more people in employment in the north west than in 2010 and 93,400 more businesses.

The employment rate in the north west is at a record high and exports from the north west around the world have increased over the last three years, and were worth £28.7 billion last year.

Press release: New search teams to disrupt and deter violence in prisons

- teams will work in prisons to combat drugs, drones and mobiles
- roll-out will cost £4.3 million and is the latest step in £70 million plan to combat gangs and organised crime in prison

Specialist search teams are being drafted into jails across the country to find contraband and disrupt the criminals fuelling violence behind bars, Justice Secretary David Gauke announced today (23 November 2018).

The units have already been successfully deployed in the 8 high security prisons, and their roll-out across over 100 prisons across the wider estate is the latest stage in the fight against organised crime in prison.

The specially trained teams will act on intelligence from existing and future mobile phone detecting technology and work with search dog units and other specialist searching equipment to combat threats such as drugs, drones and mobiles.

The dedicated search teams will be organised in regional hubs to be deployed to the prisons in their area. They will act on intelligence to prevent and deter any potential threats of disorder.

Moreover, evidence found on prisoners can be used to support disciplinary action in the prison or for criminal prosecution.

In the past, search teams have focused on high security jails, however this recruitment drive for over 100 specialist prison officers will mean the teams can cover prisons across the North and South of England, and Wales.

The search teams are the latest in a series of measures being taken to restore stability to the prison estate, including airport-security style scanners, phone-blocking technology, and a financial crime unit to target the criminal kingpins operating in prisons.

Justice Secretary David Gauke said:

We continue to tackle criminality in prison and today's announcement of new dedicated search teams will take the fight to gangs who deal drugs in prison and cause violence.

This is part of our multi-million pound security strategy to stop drugs getting in, find the drugs that do get in and disrupt the trade altogether. Measures like this, together with our unrelenting focus on rehabilitation, will help to ensure prisons are places where offenders can turn their backs on crime, and ultimately prevent future victims.

Earlier this year the government announced an additional £30 million investment in prisons. This included £16 million to improve conditions for prisoners and staff and £7 million on new security measures, such as airport-security style scanners, improved searching techniques and phone-blocking technology.

The investment included £1 million on a digital tool which assesses information from various law enforcement databases to create a central 'risk rating' for each prisoner – helping to identify and disrupt criminal

kingpins.

This was followed by the creation of a Financial Crime Unit with the power to freeze suspect bank accounts linked to prisoners and as a result disrupt organised crime in prisons.

Separately, we announced another £10 million investment in 10 of the most challenging prisons to curb the flow of drugs and phones, while also improving conditions and leadership at those jails. This will tackle drug supply by enhancing physical security at the jails, with investment in drug-detection dogs, body scanners, and improved perimeter defences.

This has come against a backdrop of rising prison officer numbers, with more than 4,300 now recruited and staffing levels at their highest since 2012.

In the Budget we announced an extra £30 million to be spent on further improvements to safety, security and decency in prisons – details of how this will be spent will be announced in due course.

There has also been a significant focus on prisoner rehabilitation, with the launch of the Education and Employment strategy this year to create a system where each prisoner is set on a path to employment from the outset.

And in recognition of the vital role that strong family ties have in rehabilitation, £7 million out of the £30 million announced over the summer went towards the roll-out of in-cell telephones, meaning more private time for prisoners to talk to their families.

Notes to editors

- Recruitment into the search teams has started, and is expected to continue into the new year.
- Prison officer numbers are at their highest levels since 2012, with 22,319 prison officers in post. There has been an increase of 4,364 prison officers since the 2,500 target was announced in October 2016, with a further 1,404 offered jobs/booked on training.

[Press release: UK aid makes largest ever investment to help end FGM worldwide by 2030](#)

The UK has made the largest ever donor investment to help end the devastating and harmful practice of female genital mutilation (FGM) by 2030.

International Development Secretary Penny Mordaunt today (Friday 23 November) announced a new UK aid package to support the African-led movement to end FGM

and provide better protections for vulnerable girls in some of the world's poorest countries. The announcement comes ahead of the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women on Sunday.

UK aid will provide an extra £50 million – the biggest single investment worldwide to date by any international donor – to tackle this issue across the most affected countries in Africa.

Evidence shows that the work of the grassroots activists and survivors, who have built the largest-ever movement to end FGM, has had results. Thousands of communities across Africa are abandoning the practice, and many countries now have legal frameworks in place and provide women and girls with protection and care services.

That is why UK aid will support community programmes and grassroots campaigners in African countries to carry out work in the community, support women's organisations and girls' clubs in schools where they can discuss the issue in safe spaces.

This will help change the perception of FGM, and boost the push to end the practice by 2030. Whereas previously FGM was seen as an unquestioned norm, it is increasingly viewed as a harmful practice.

International Development Secretary Penny Mordaunt said:

Somewhere in the world, every seven seconds, a girl is at risk of FGM. Inspirational, courageous African women are leading efforts to end the practice in their own countries, and thanks to them, more communities are starting to abandon the practice.

But progress is at a critical juncture and we must work to protect the millions of girls that are still at risk of being cut. We also can't end FGM in the UK without ending it globally.

I am proud UK aid is supporting the growing Africa-led movement against FGM and empowering women and girls in some of the world's poorest countries to stand against the practice. Together, we can build a safer, healthier and more prosperous world for every child.

DFID will work with governments to get laws in place banning FGM; work with religious leaders to call for an end to FGM and dispel the myth that it is a religious practice – a major barrier in many countries; and support doctors, midwives and nurses to help end FGM and care for survivors.

This approach has already seen significant success in Sudan, where prevalence of FGM is high (at 87%) but thanks to projects supported by UK aid, social acceptance of FGM is falling. Six out of 18 states have passed legislation against FGM and the Sudanese Midwifery Council has brought in new rules to ban midwives from carrying out FGM. Further support will go to UK aid's trailblazing programme in Sudan where data from community-led programmes shows social acceptance of FGM has fallen an estimated 18% in the last two

years.

A five-year UK aid funded programme will also support in-country projects across Africa focusing on prevention, protection, education and legislation to stop FGM. It will do this by training advocates and leaders to talk to women, men, girls and boys in their communities about FGM. The programme will also educate people about the impact FGM has on young girls, through workshops, dramas and community discussion groups. It will also call on communities to no longer carry out the practice.

Since 2013, DFID-supported programmes have helped:

- More than 8,000 communities, representing 24.5 million people, pledge to abandon FGM.
- The Gambia, Nigeria, Mauritania to make the practice illegal, and have supported Burkina Faso, Egypt and Uganda to strengthen their laws.
- More than three million girls and women receive FGM protection and care services.

Notes to editors

- FGM is a procedure where the female genitals are deliberately cut. It can seriously harm the health of women and girls. It is a practice that is thousands of years old which continues to be performed in many parts of Africa, the Middle East and Asia.
- DFID will provide up to £50 million in UK aid to help put an end to female genital mutilation (FGM) by 2030.

The funding will go towards in-country projects across Africa, focusing on:

- changing attitudes and the abandonment of FGM, by supporting projects working directly with communities;
- supporting grassroots activists and youth initiatives with small-grants to lead change within their communities and hold governments to account in their own countries;
- working with the United Nations and governments to get laws in place banning FGM where they are still needed;
- supporting doctors, midwives and nurses to help end FGM and care for survivors.
- A total of £15 million will go towards expanding DFID's trailblazing programme in Sudan. 'Saleema', a project run by UNICEF, has helped to reduce social acceptance of FGM by an estimated 18% in the last two years.

ENDS