

Land Registry

Landnet

43

August 2014

In this issue

Land
Registry's
customer
magazine



Welcome to *Landnet* 43.

We've been actively generating discussion about our proposals to become the sole registering authority for Local Land Charges in England and Wales.

At events up and down the country we've been putting our ideas to a wide range of people and inviting comment, interest and support.

In this issue we speak to solicitor Stephen Proctor about why he's in favour of a single digital register for Local Land Charges. We also report on our wider digital change programme and our move to the single government website GOV.UK as well as paying tribute to the Land Registry men who served and died in the First World War.

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Landnet can be made available in other formats on request. If you require *Landnet* in another format, please contact Customer Support by email customersupport@landregistry.gsi.gov.uk or on 0844 892 1111.

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Our Local Land Charges proposals – latest news

Over the last two months we have continued to discuss and provide regular updates about our Local Land Charges (LLC) proposals.

This follows our [announcement](#) in June of legislation for Land Registry to become the sole registering authority for LLC in England and Wales.

Members of our LLC Team went to Bournemouth in July to exhibit at the Local Government Association's annual conference. Billed as “the biggest event in the local government calendar” and regularly attracting more than 1,200 delegates, this was an invaluable opportunity to speak directly to local authorities.

Local Authority Stakeholder Manager Rhonda Griffiths said a lot of interest was shown in our proposals. “Delegates were pleased to see that Land Registry is engaging at this very early stage so that appropriate planning can take place,” she said.

As part of our wider work with local authorities we also hosted a third Discovery Day in Leeds to identify better ways of working between central and local government. Run in

Land
Registry



Local Land Charges

partnership with the Department for Communities and Local Government, the day aimed at discussing practical digital solutions alongside feedback about LLC.

This month (August) we met potential suppliers of the necessary technology at the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills to discuss and identify requirements before entering any formal procurement.

Their expertise will be vital as we aim to provide a central, digital service for LLC to ultimately improve access, standardise fees and decrease turnaround times for property professionals and the public.

We will continue to provide updates through *Landnet* and on our blog but please contact the team if you have any questions or want more information: llcproject@landregistry.gsi.gov.uk

— See our interview with solicitor Stephen Proctor on [page 7](#).

LR Connect: our new change programme

Our proposals for Local Land Charges are part of a new change programme – LR Connect – designed to deliver our Business Strategy and fulfil our aim of becoming a fully digital organisation.

We'll be working with our customers, staff and stakeholders to see how we can use technology to improve what we do and make interacting with us easier and more efficient.

Along with enhancing our existing digital services, streamlining processes and looking at what we can automate, we'll be developing new digital services and tools based upon customer needs.

Throughout our transformation we'll continue to safeguard the integrity of the register. It will always be our priority to ensure the security of the data we hold is not compromised and we will continue to aspire to deliver the highest level of customer service.

If you have any questions about or suggestions for the programme please email lconnect@landregistry.gsi.gov.uk



Centralising some of our work

Over the next few months we will gradually centralise the processing of pre-registration applications and first registrations.

While centralisation may change *where* we process an application, customer relationships with our dedicated customer teams will be unaffected by this work.

This is the next step in the development of our service – a development which has been going on over the last few years. For a number of years our customer teams have been the first point of contact for many of our customers, and have carried out the processing of their applications.

The subsequent success of our digital services such as e-DRS and MapSearch means we are able to take the next step in improving our processes by sending all applications for pre-registration services such as official copies to single offices.

We have also moved the processing of first registrations to four of our 14 offices. Our intake of first registrations continues to fall.

Another step we will be taking is to start scanning applications at the beginning of our registration process.

Our website has moved to GOV.UK

Our website has now completed its move to the single government website GOV.UK.

Existing web addresses and bookmarks – including for our [practice guides](#) – will continue to take you to the right place.

Anything which appeared on our former website but hasn't moved to GOV.UK can still be found in [The National Archives](#).

The [Land Registry portal](#) for Business e-services customers

and our [Find a property](#) service are unaffected.

GOV.UK is designed to be the place to find information on all government services.

You'll find that searches of the website for material about land registration and related topics will often display relevant results from other departments and agencies as well as Land Registry.

For example, the Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs offers guidance on the voluntary registration of land as a town or village green.

Changes to our phone numbers

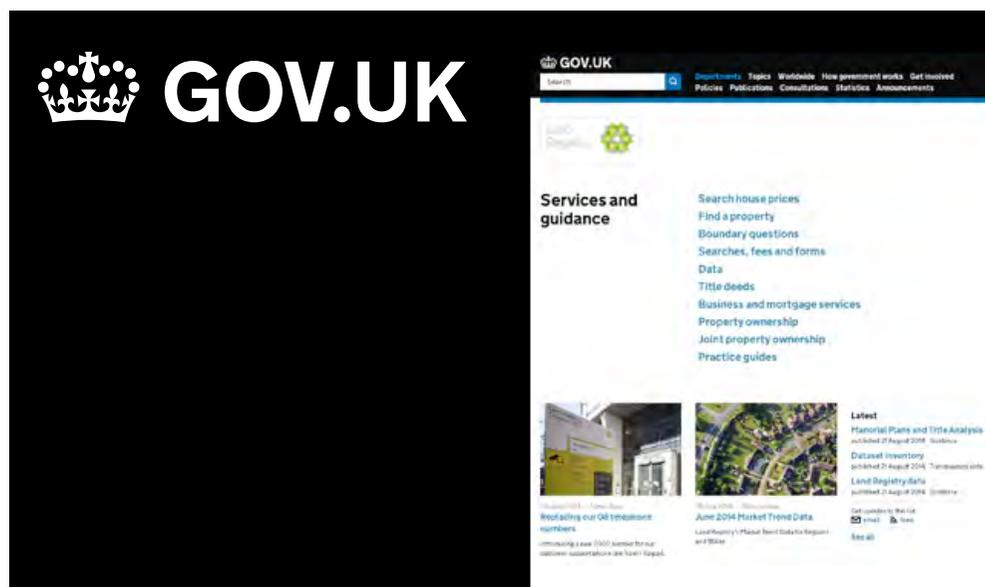
On 1 August we introduced a new '0300' number for our Customer Support phone line.

This means that if you want to call Customer Support, you can use a number that is charged according to the standard national rate.

We have also introduced new '0300' numbers for a number of our other service lines. The full list of new numbers is below.

- Customer Support: 0300 006 0411
- Customer Support for Welsh speakers: 0300 006 0422
- Bankruptcy enquiries: 0300 006 6107
- Commercial Services team: 0300 006 0478

If you do call our existing '08' number for any of these lines, for the next six months you will still be put through. At the end of this six-month period we will withdraw these numbers completely.



Appointments for our customer information centres

We are now operating a mandatory appointment-only system in our customer information centres (CICs).

We also now need 72 hours' notice to make an appointment so customers who visit without one will be turned away.

If you're advising clients to visit one of our CICs, please make sure you tell them they must contact us first to make an appointment.

They can do this by completing our [online contact form](#) or by calling us on 0300 006 0411.

Annual Report and Accounts 2013/14

Our Annual Report and Accounts 2013/14 are now [available on our website](#).

They tell the story of a year in which:

- our total revenue rose by 9.8 per cent to £381.3 million
- the number of applications we received rose by 16 per cent to 26.3 million (22 million electronic)
- we achieved 13 of our 15 targets, including quality of registration work (98.4 per cent), customer satisfaction (98 per cent), speed of service and the availability of electronic services (99.7 per cent)
- our total net indemnity payments fell to just over £9 million, thanks in part to a highest-ever annual recovery of £2.2 million
- our Property Alert service won the Innovation in Business category in the Real IT awards
- we cut our carbon emissions by 9.9 per cent.



Law Commission land registration project

The Law Commission is due to start work on a land registration project later this year and expects to publish its report, making recommendations for reform, accompanied by a draft Bill late in 2017.

The Land Registration Act 2002 was implemented following a joint project between the Law Commission and Land Registry.

The [commission's new project](#) comprises a wide-ranging review of the 2002 Act, with a view to amendment where elements of the Act could be improved in light of experience with its operation.

- *Landnets* 36 to 41 carried a series of articles about developments during the decade since the Land Registration Act 2002, including focuses on [notices and restrictions](#), [easements and overriding interests](#), [adverse possession](#), [charges and priorities](#), [leases](#) and [disputes procedure](#).

Form RQ(Co) – a free security measure for companies

Form RQ(Co) is a new free security measure for companies who own registered property.

It allows them to ask Land Registry to enter a counter-fraud restriction on up to three registered titles.

Once a restriction has been registered, only a solicitor or other professional conveyancer can certify they are satisfied the company transferring, leasing or mortgaging the property is the same company as the registered owner. Only then will any new sale, lease or mortgage be registered.

The solicitor or conveyancer must also certify that they have taken reasonable steps to establish that anyone who executed the deed on behalf of the company held the stated office (ie director, secretary or manager) at the time of execution.

If the restriction is required for any additional registered titles an

application can be made for this using form RX1 with the relevant fee.

Further details about the form RQ(Co) process are available in our [Questions and answers](#).

To request the counter-fraud restriction simply complete [form RQ\(Co\)](#) and send it to us by:

Email

rq-request@landregistry.gsi.gov.uk

Post

Citizen Centre – RQ(Co)
Land Registry Wales Office
Tŷ Cwm Tawe
Phoenix Way
Llansamlet
Swansea
SA7 9FQ

Document Exchange (DX) system

Citizen Centre – RQ(Co)
Land Registry Wales Office
DX 82800 Swansea (2)

Please do not send form RQ(Co) to us with any other type of application.

Land Registry
Request for a restriction
by a company

RQ(Co)

Please send the completed form by post to:

Citizen Centre – RQ(Co)
Land Registry Wales Office
Tŷ Cwm Tawe
Phoenix Way
Llansamlet
Swansea
SA7 9FQ

DX No: 82800 Swansea (2)

You can also send this form by email to rq-request@landregistry.gsi.gov.uk. If you choose to send this by email please be aware that the information we receive from you over the internet is not encrypted and may not be completely secure.

The restriction set out in section 4 is designed to help prevent forgery. It does so by requiring that a conveyancer certify they are satisfied that the company transferring or mortgaging the property is the same as the owning company and that anyone signing as an officer of the company held that office at the time.

Provide the contact address of the company requesting the entry of the restriction. Where a conveyancer lodges this form, these details must be those of the company, not those of the conveyancer.

1 The company making the request:

Name of company: _____
Company Registration Number: _____
Property number/name: _____
Street name: _____
Town: _____ Postcode: _____
County: _____
Phone no: _____
Email address: _____

You can make this request in respect of up to three registered titles. If you want this restriction to be entered for any additional titles, you need to make an application in respect of those titles in form RX1 accompanied by the appropriate fee.

If there are several properties included in a single title you only need to show one of these.

2 Property address(es) comprised in the registered title:

a Property number/name: _____
Street name: _____
Town: _____ Postcode: _____
County: _____

b Property number/name: _____
Street name: _____
Town: _____ Postcode: _____
County: _____

c Property number/name: _____
Street name: _____
Town: _____ Postcode: _____
County: _____

3 Title number:

a: _____
b: _____
c: _____

For official use only
Land Registry TIS
code **RXC**

1 of 2 Form RQ(Co) (Introduced 5/14)

“The conveyancer can identify any issues at the earliest opportunity”



Stephen Proctor

Gavin Curry talks to solicitor Stephen Proctor about Local Land Charges and conveyancing

Stephen Proctor believes that buying a property could one day be as straightforward as buying a car – with its history as readily available as any vehicle’s.

That’s why the experienced solicitor is a supporter of Land Registry’s proposals to create a single digital register for Local Land Charges and offer a standardised search service.

“It’s about ensuring we have up to date, accurate and readily available information,” said Stephen, who is taking up a new role as a Property Partner at Harrowells Solicitors in North Yorkshire on 1 September.

“You are ensuring that all the Local Land Charges information

is centrally collated and available for immediate download so the conveyancer can identify any issues at the earliest possible opportunity.

“That is a big benefit and goes a long way to reducing the risk of things being brought up late on in a transaction and which can cause delay, or worse.”

Stephen, who has led the conveyancing department at Jordans in West Yorkshire for the past nine years, believes this is one of the keys to a faster conveyancing process.

“The local search should be one of the first things you do,” he said. “If there’s something that needs resolution you had better have enough time to sort it out. If there’s something missing, let’s deal with it now.”

Quick turnaround

The new register will help meet clients’ increasing expectations of a quick turnaround in a digital age.

“Our profession has progressed from the quill to the biro to the laptop and beyond,” said Stephen. “The expectation used to be that letters would be responded to within a few days. Now it’s unacceptable to fail to reply to an email almost by return.

“Clients expect quick responses and are all too prepared to challenge professionals in ways that would have been unthinkable a couple of decades ago.

“While they are, of course, entitled to expect a good service, what is commonly understood as a ‘service’ is not the same as what the conveyancer always understands.

“To a client, ‘service’ means buying or selling a property quickly, being able to speak to the solicitor when they need to and not being passed from pillar to post to get the simplest of answers to their queries.

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“However, a solicitor would traditionally think that a good service is about making sure that the title to the property is OK. Many clients take this for granted and don’t share this view – or even know about it!

“In many respects, this is why the comparison with buying a car isn’t that far fetched. Many clients approach buying houses and cars with the same mind set. In both cases they see what they like, want to buy it and don’t want to know all the technical detail – they just want to know when they can have it.

“Could you imagine what it would be like if you wanted to buy a new car but had to wait several weeks while an emissions certificate was tracked down?

“Similarly, with a house, everything you could ever want to know about a house should be kept in one place. The provision of Local Land Charges information by Land Registry is but one step in that direction, albeit an important one, and possibly could signal a wider intent to reach that goal one day.”

Working collaboratively

However all stakeholders need to see – and experience – the benefits.

“Land Registry can work together with local authorities and the

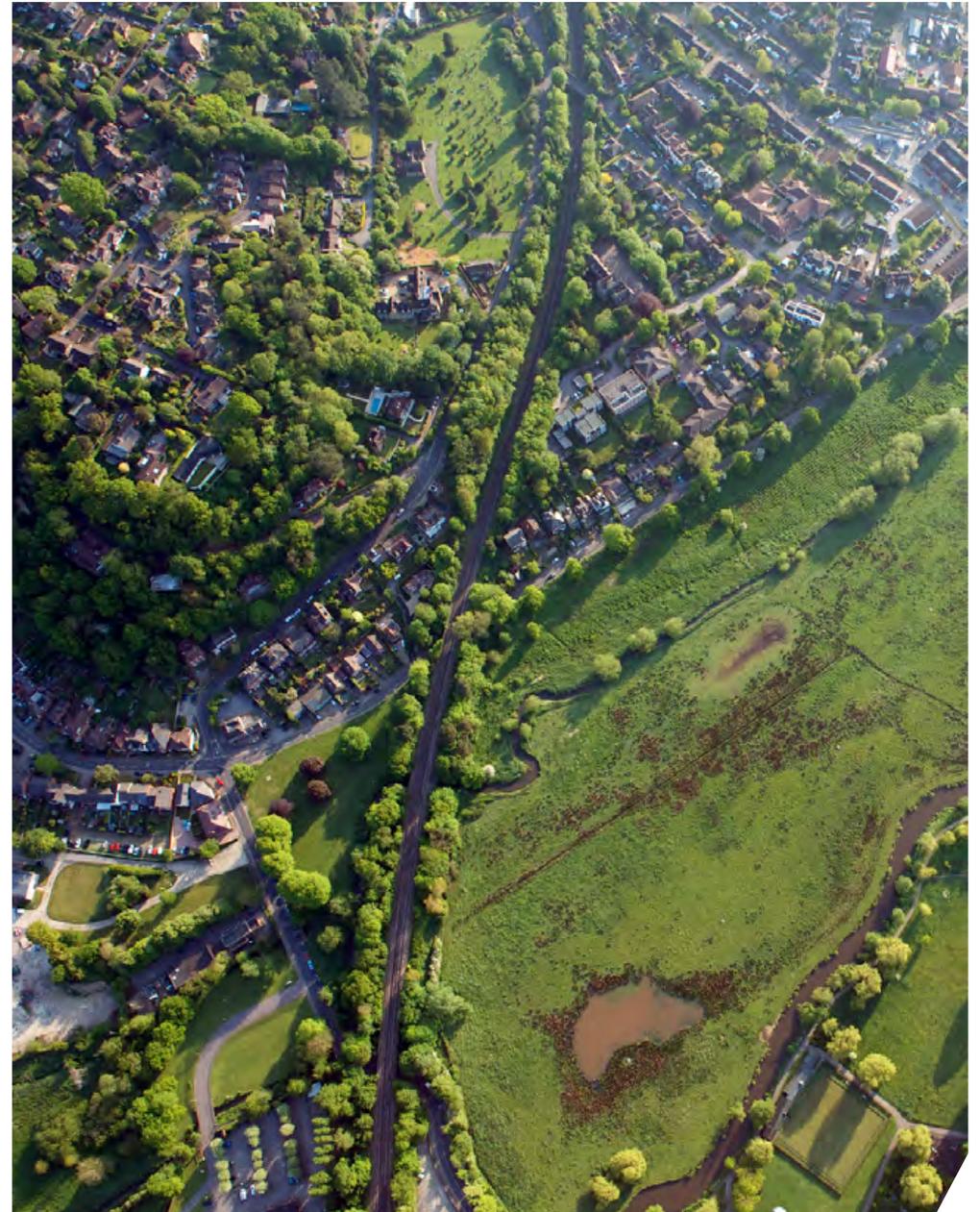
search agencies in a positive and collaborative way,” said Stephen.

“Local authorities might see the new register as a challenge and personal search companies may see it as competition. My view is they should see it as an opportunity to work hand in glove with Land Registry.

“We won’t be losing the local authorities’ local knowledge and records because they will still need them for their own purposes. The personal search companies will still provide a wide range of information, an additional part of which, but still not all, will be available from Land Registry.”

Ultimately, whatever the opinions of the information providers, Stephen believes Land Registry’s proposals will help achieve what should be everyone’s aim in conveyancing: serving the client as well as possible.

“We want people to be able to move home with reliable accurate information within the swiftest possible time.”



Service and sacrifice: Land Registry staff in the First World War

Britain's declaration of war on Germany on 4 August 1914 brought a united response from Land Registry's staff.

Chief Land Registrar Sir Charles Fortescue Brickdale recorded how "while enlistment was voluntary, every man of military age applied for and obtained leave to volunteer for active service.

"Afterwards, when the age limits were extended, there were only nine men of military age – all declared unfit for general service – who were not with the colours, all but one of these being over 30, four over 40, seven married, two not called up."

Out of a total of 220 male members of staff of military age, 108 served on land and sea and in the air during the First World War, 20 as officers.

Many who were over military age or unfit joined the anti-aircraft or ambulance corps, or became Special Constables or volunteers.

Of those men who served 13 died during the war and another of his injuries in 1921. A further 16 were wounded, one was taken prisoner and two were interned in Holland after the defence of Antwerp.

The men who died are all remembered on a memorial plaque in the foyer of Land Registry's former Head Office building in Lincoln's Inn Fields in central London.

The building is now in the ownership of the London School of Economics but every Remembrance Day a group of people from Land Registry return to lay a wreath.

It was Land Registry's only office in August 1914 so probably all the men who volunteered, served and died would have passed through the foyer.

The previous December a flag had been raised above the recently completed building by Sir Charles to mark its opening and the 50th anniversary of the organisation.

Little can he have then expected how soon government buildings would be lowering their flags in mourning.

cont'd





The men remembered on the memorial

(We know more about some than others.)

Archibald Brasnett, attendant, reservist with the Royal Regiment of Artillery, died of wounds on 25 April 1917

Thomas Bull, attendant

Henry Ferguson, scrivener (drafted contracts and other legal documents)

Alexander Glen, joined the London Regiment, died in battle on 25 April 1915

Alexander Grindlay, assistant clerk, joined the Royal Army Medical Corps and then the Royal Scots, died on 24 March 1917

Reuben Hayns, joined the Manchester Regiment, died of injuries on 24 January 1918

George Kemp, clerk, joined the London Regiment, died in action on 6 December 1917

Leonard Kirby, joined the London Regiment, died in action on 28 March 1918

Ernest McDouall, clerk, joined the London Regiment, injured, discharged on 18 October 1918, died in 1921

William Mason, map labourer

William Peterson, clerk, joined the London Regiment, died on 7 October 1916

Alfred Russell

Arthur Smith, attendant, joined the Royal Engineers, died on 17 June 1917

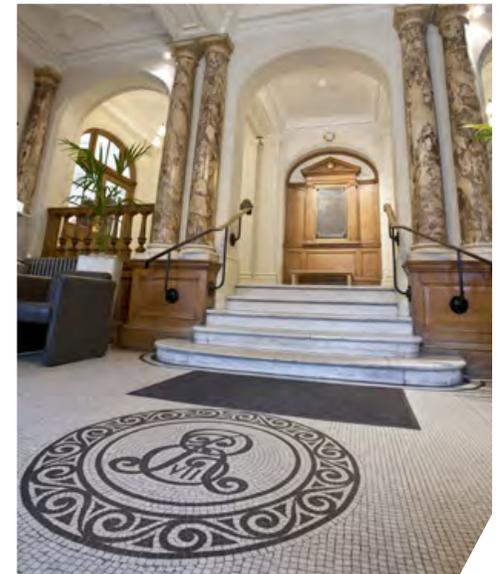
William Webb, joined the London Regiment, died on 22 March 1918



The memorial (above) in the foyer at 32 Lincoln's Inn Fields (below)



Arthur Smith





Practice guides

You can find the latest versions of all our [practice guides](#) on our website.

A number of changes have been made to [Practice Guide 16 – Profits a prendre](#) to clarify our practice. In particular, this edition provides more information about the registration of discontinuous leasehold profits a prendre and clarifies the documents that need to accompany an application to register a profit.

Section 4.3 of [Practice Guide 18 – Franchises](#) has been amended to expand on the difference between a relating and an affecting franchise and 4.4 to explain the extent that can be registered for an affecting franchise. Section 5 has been updated to clarify the documents that should accompany an application for first registration. In addition there is a new section 8 to explain the class of title that may be granted.

Section 2.1.1 of [Practice Guide 26 – Leases – determination](#) has been amended to clarify our practice when an application to determine a registered lease does not include reference to a registered reversionary title.

A new section 2.2.10 has been added to [Practice Guide 75 – Transfer under a chargee’s power of sale](#) confirming that a disclaimer entry will be cancelled automatically on registration of a transfer under power of sale.

[Practice Guide 77 – Altering the register by removing land from a title plan](#) is a new guide about the removal of land from within the red edging on another person’s title plan. Occasionally we change the position of the red edging just to include land (where, for example, the registered proprietor shows that the land to which they have title includes this additional land, and the land is not within anyone else’s registered title) but almost always the application involves land being removed from the red edging on another person’s title plan.

The guide explains:

- when an application can be made for alteration of the register by the removal of land from within the red edging on a title plan
- how the application is made
- what happens after the application is made
- statutory indemnity and when it might be paid in this context.

Annual Report and Accounts

Read our [2013/14 Annual Report and Accounts](#).

Independent Complaints Reviewer’s annual report for 2013/14

Our [Independent Complaints Reviewer’s annual report for 2013/14](#) describes how we responded to the issues upheld by our complaints reviewer.

Landnet archive

Read [past issues of Landnet](#).