



**To defence advocates appearing in London
Magistrates' Courts**

23 June 2020

Dear Sirs

Re: HMCTS Recovery Plan

London will start to list GAP and NGAP cases from the week commencing 6 July 2020.

The attached spreadsheet highlights which courts will be sitting although there may be some minor modifications in the weeks ahead.

The plan is to list new GAP and NGAP cases and to tackle the backlog of cases which has built up over the last 3 months. In terms of GAP cases 12 cases will be listed in the morning; 4 at 10am, 4 at 11 am and 4 at noon. Generally new cases will be listed in the morning although there are some exceptions to this. In the afternoon 4 backlog cases will be listed. The rest of the afternoon will be used for sentencing cases from the morning where a report has been prepared by Probation.

In terms of NGAP courts 9 cases will be listed in the morning; 3 at 10am, 3 at 11am and 3 at noon. 6 cases will be listed in the afternoon 3 at 2pm and 3 at 3 pm. Generally new cases will be listed in the morning and backlog cases in the afternoon.

You will see from the listing plan that in some instances cases are being listed in courts where they would not usually be heard:

NGAPs from Wimbledon are being listed at Lavender Hill
Some NGAPs from Croydon will be listed at Lavender Hill
Some GAP and NGAPs from Croydon will be listed at Bromley
Some GAPs and NGAPs from Westminster will be listed in City of London
Some GAPs and NGAPs from Thames are being listed in Stratford
NGAPs from Willesden are being listed at Hendon.

Defendants are being sent notices advising them of where and when their hearings are being listed, they are also being informed that it may be a different venue from where they were bailed to appear and that they should contact their legal representative before the hearing. The importance of attending at the time of their appointment has been emphasised.

Whilst I appreciate that it's not ideal the arrangements have been put in place to reduce the footfall in court houses and to maintain social distancing. Where possible cases are being listed in CVP enabled courtrooms to enable applications to be made to appear remotely. However, it's not been possible in some instances where the necessary equipment is not available.

HMCTS staff are unable to provide legal advice on how you should proceed with your case. You can get advice from Citizens Advice, a local advice agency or a solicitor.

The Legal Aid Agency have been asked to arrange duty solicitors for these courts. Where the work is listed in a different courthouse the duty solicitor will be from the scheme where the work would usually be listed so, for instance, the duty solicitor for the Croydon cases which are being dealt with at Bromley will be from the Croydon scheme.

Yours faithfully

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