



**HM Courts  
& Tribunals  
Service**

**Michael Ross  
Property Chamber Support Officer  
10 Alfred Place  
London  
WC1E 7LR**

**T 020 7446 7749  
F 020 7580 5684  
E [Michael.Ross@rpt.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:Michael.Ross@rpt.gsi.gov.uk)**

**[www.justice.gov.uk](http://www.justice.gov.uk)**

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Property Chamber Users Group

Dear Member

## **ESTABLISHMENT OF THE PROPERTY CHAMBER**

This letter is intended to bring you up to date with developments surrounding the establishment of the First-tier Property Chamber within HM Courts & Tribunals Service. It is being sent to all those stakeholder groups who have an interest in the tribunals that will make up the Chamber, and it is planned to send out further bulletins in the course of the next few months.

The Chamber is the latest part of the unified tribunals structure to be created. It will be established, subject to Parliamentary approval, on 1 May 2013. It will take over the jurisdictional functions of the Residential Property Tribunal Service, the Agricultural Land Tribunals and the Adjudicator of the Land Registry. Those bodies will be wound up on 1 May. The regional structures of RPTS and the ALTs will be preserved for the present, although they will no longer have a statutory basis. The three bodies will become part of the new Chamber, and their heads will become Principal Judges, with the Chamber headed by a new Chamber President. All current judicial office holders (legal and non-legal members) will map across to become judges and members of the First-tier Tribunal.

Our aim will be to make the transition as seamless as possible for users. The administration of cases is not affected by the creation of the new Chamber, and users should continue to send their applications to the office they deal with now, unless otherwise advised.

However, and again subject to Parliamentary approval, there will be a new set of tribunal procedure rules coming into force on 1 May. These rules will govern all proceedings within the Chamber. You may be aware that the Tribunal Procedure Committee consulted on a draft over the summer and they are currently considering the responses they have received. The main change in the rules will be that all appeals from residential property and agricultural land tribunals relating to premises in England will go to the Upper Chamber. Currently, only appeals from leasehold valuation and residential property tribunals in RPT adopt this route.

There will be transitional arrangements for cases begun before 1 May, which will permit tribunals to choose whether to continue to apply the old rules in relation to those cases.

Amendments will be made to the Chambers Order to establish the new Property Chamber and to allocate to chambers of the Upper Tribunal appeals from decisions of the Property Chamber. Appeals relating to land registration will go to the Tax and Chancery Chamber and all other appeals will go to the Lands Chamber.

For RPT cases which attract a fee at application and hearing stages, there will, again subject to Parliamentary approval, be a revised scale. The revisions will simply bring the levels into line with inflation since the fees were introduced.

Revised forms, letters and guidance for the new Chamber are currently being prepared, and should be available on the Justice website in advance of 1 May. HMCTS IT systems will also be updated to reflect the new rules.

Any comments or questions should be directed to me at the above address or to Tom Rouse at [thomas.rouse@rpt.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:thomas.rouse@rpt.gsi.gov.uk).

Yours sincerely

**MICHAEL ROSS**