HM Courts & Tribunals Service

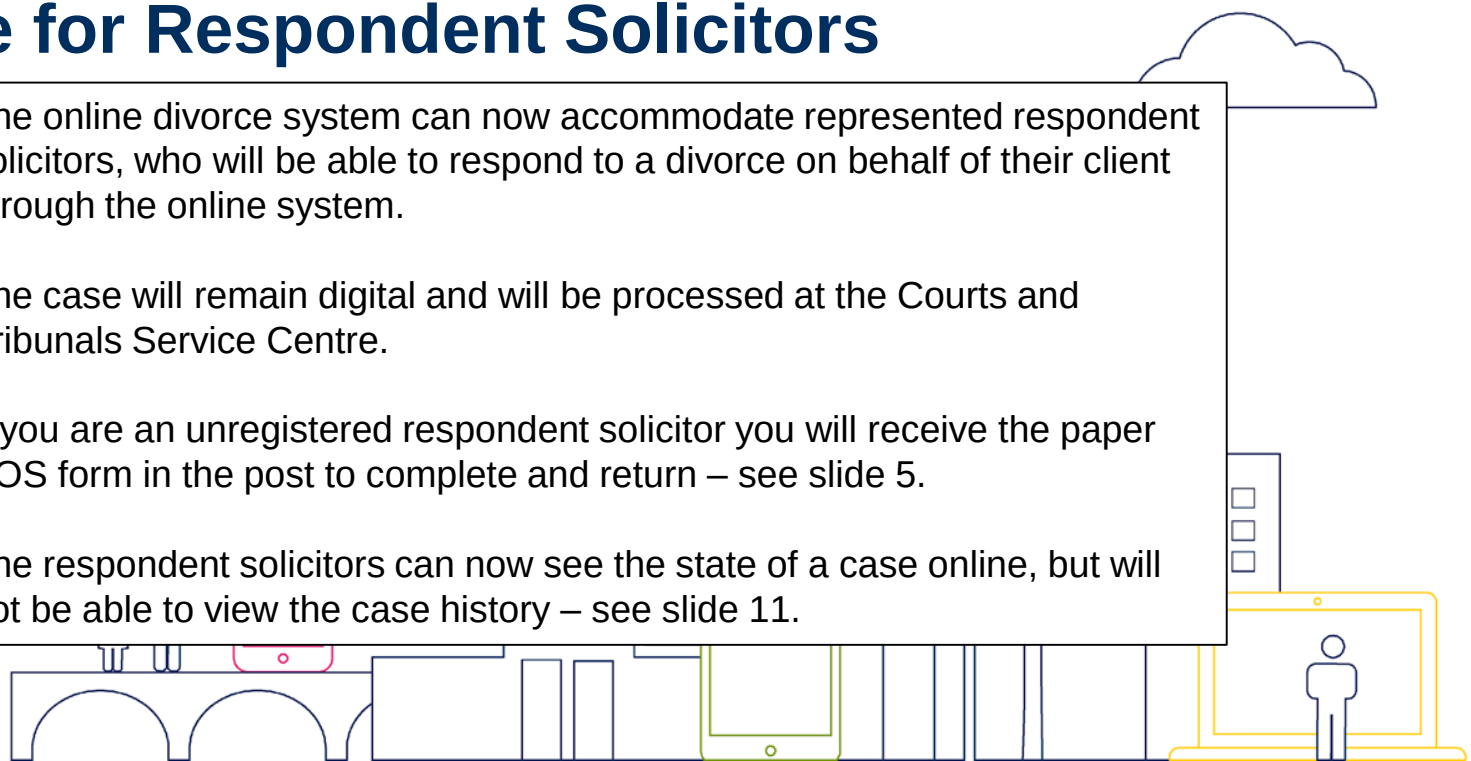
A Guide for Respondent Solicitors

The online divorce system can now accommodate represented respondent solicitors, who will be able to respond to a divorce on behalf of their client through the online system.

The case will remain digital and will be processed at the Courts and Tribunals Service Centre.

If you are an unregistered respondent solicitor you will receive the paper AOS form in the post to complete and return – see slide 5.

The respondent solicitors can now see the state of a case online, but will not be able to view the case history – see slide 11.



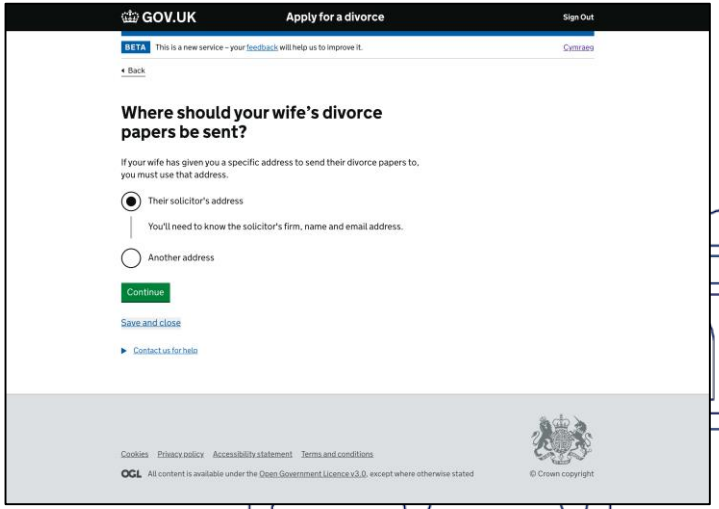
Jun 2021

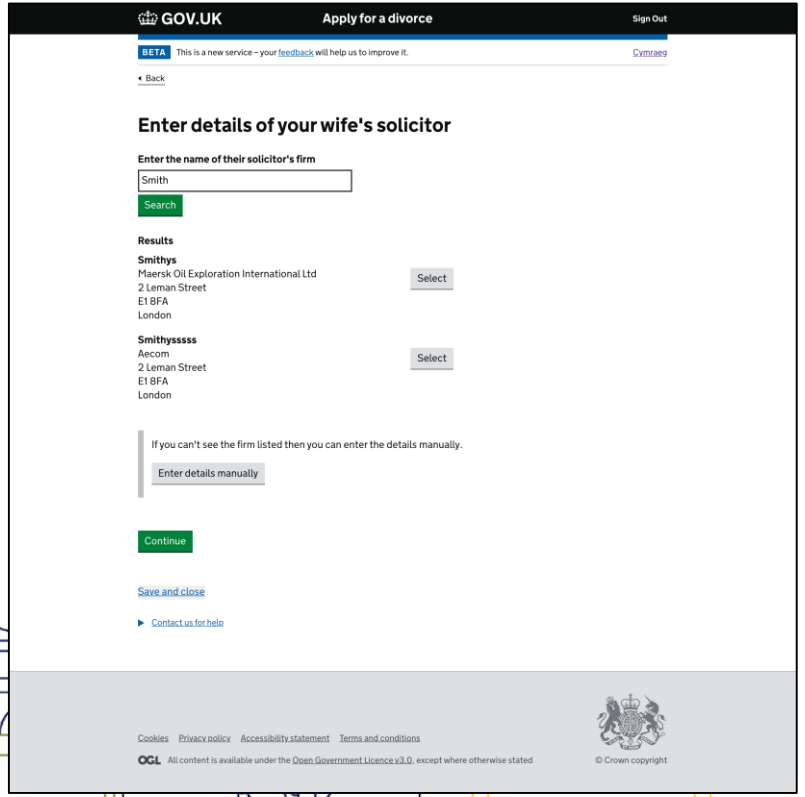
HM Courts & Tribunals Service

Respondent Solicitors: How the case is assigned to your firm

When a litigant in person is submitting the divorce application, they will be asked whether the respondent is represented by a solicitor.

The petitioner will be able to enter details on the respondent solicitor's organisation by using the search field, and searching for the correct firm.

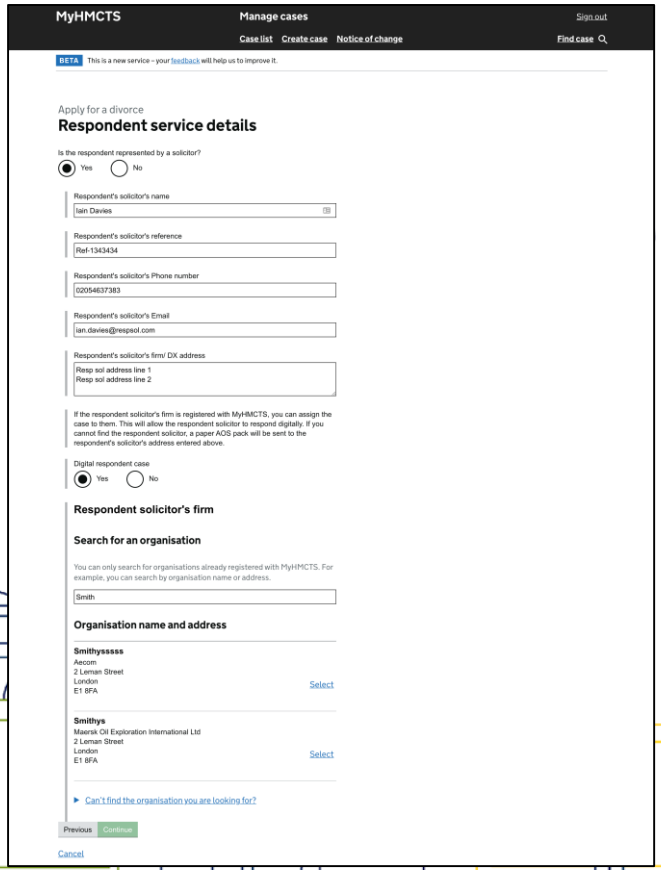




HM Courts & Tribunals Service

Respondent Solicitors: How the case is assigned to your firm

The Petitioner Solicitor can select that the respondent is represented. If the details that have been entered for the respondent solicitor returns no results, this may be because they are not registered with MyHMCTS. The petitioner's solicitor will be able to enter the details manually.
NB there is a 'bug' currently which means the CAA for the registered respondent solicitor can view the cases prior to submission to avoid this either select and record that the solicitor is not a digital solicitor and they will then receive paper outputs or do not add them until you are ready to submit the divorce application.



HM Courts & Tribunals Service

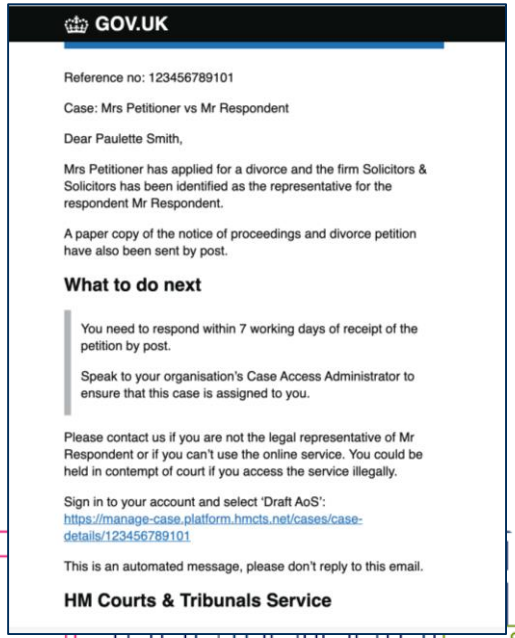
Digital Respondent Solicitors: How the case is assigned to your firm

After the petition has been submitted, the case is checked and issued by court staff.

The respondent solicitor will always receive the formal ‘notice of proceedings’ through by post.

Additionally, if a digital solicitor was selected they will receive a ’notice of proceedings’ email.

The notice of acting email advises the solicitor to contact their organisations’s CAA (Case Access Administrator) so that the case can be assigned to them.



GOV.UK

Reference no: 123456789101

Case: Mrs Petitioner vs Mr Respondent

Dear Paulette Smith,

Mrs Petitioner has applied for a divorce and the firm Solicitors & Solicitors has been identified as the representative for the respondent Mr Respondent.

A paper copy of the notice of proceedings and divorce petition have also been sent by post.

What to do next

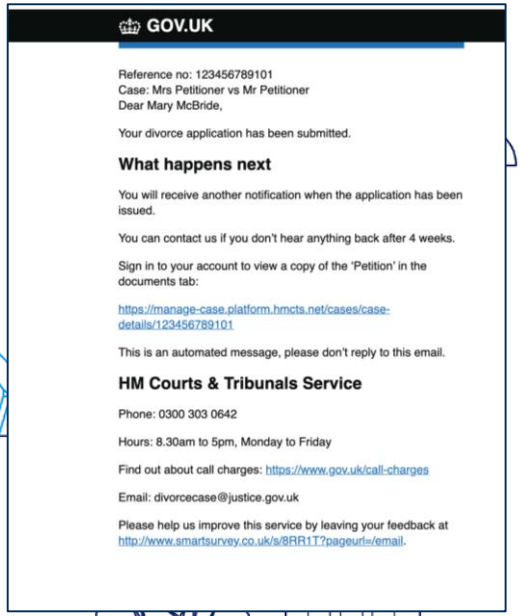
> You need to respond within 7 working days of receipt of the petition by post.
>
> Speak to your organisation’s Case Access Administrator to ensure that this case is assigned to you.

Please contact us if you are not the legal representative of Mr Respondent or if you can’t use the online service. You could be held in contempt of court if you access the service illegally.

Sign in to your account and select ‘Draft AoS’:
https://manage-case.platform.hmcts.net/cases/case-details/123456789101

This is an automated message, please don’t reply to this email.

HM Courts & Tribunals Service



GOV.UK

Reference no: 123456789101
Case: Mrs Petitioner vs Mr Petitioner
Dear Mary McBride,

Your divorce application has been submitted.

What happens next

You will receive another notification when the application has been issued.

You can contact us if you don’t hear anything back after 4 weeks.

Sign in to your account to view a copy of the ‘Petition’ in the documents tab:

https://manage-case.platform.hmcts.net/cases/case-details/123456789101

This is an automated message, please don’t reply to this email.

HM Courts & Tribunals Service

Phone: 0300 303 0642

Hours: 8.30am to 5pm, Monday to Friday

Find out about call charges: https://www.gov.uk/call-charges

Email: divorcecase@justice.gov.uk

Please help us improve this service by leaving your feedback at http://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/8RR1T?pageurl=/email.

The petitioner’s solicitor will also receive an email to notify them the petition has been submitted.

HM Courts & Tribunals Service

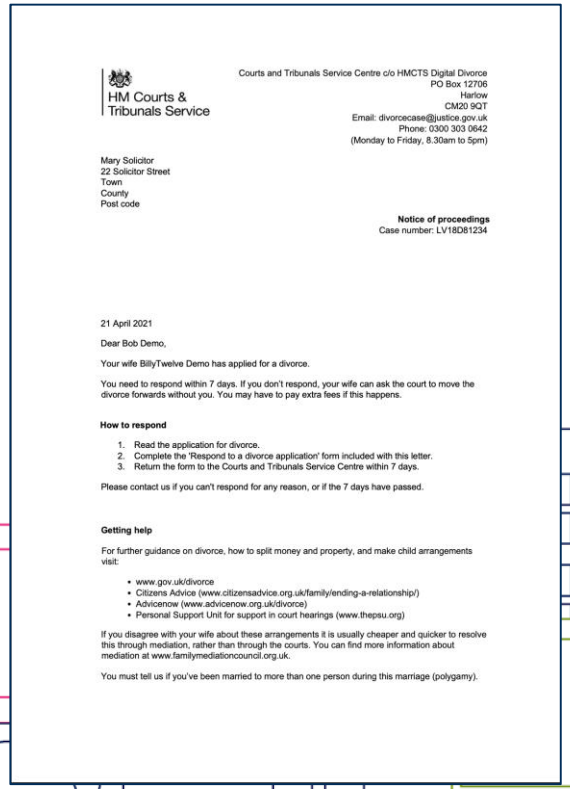
Respondent Solicitors: If you are not a registered respondent what will happen

After the petition has been submitted, the case is checked and issued by court staff.

The unregistered respondent solicitor will receive their formal 'notice of proceedings' through by post.

The notice of proceedings will also include the paper AOS for completion

Further communication will then be sent out via post e.g. entitlement order, decree nisi and absolute



HM Courts & Tribunals Service

Courts and Tribunals Service Centre c/o HMCTS Digital Divorce
PO Box 12706
Harlow
CM20 9QT
Email: divorcecase@justice.gov.uk
Phone: 0300 303 0642
(Monday to Friday, 8.30am to 5pm)

Mary Solicitor
22 Solicitor Street
Town
County
Post code

Notice of proceedings
Case number: LV18D81234

21 April 2021

Dear Bob Demo,

Your wife BillyTwelve Demo has applied for a divorce.

You need to respond within 7 days. If you don't respond, your wife can ask the court to move the divorce forwards without you. You may have to pay extra fees if this happens.

How to respond

1. Read the application for divorce.
2. Complete the 'Respond to a divorce application' form included with this letter.
3. Return the form to the Courts and Tribunals Service Centre within 7 days.

Please contact us if you can't respond for any reason, or if the 7 days have passed.

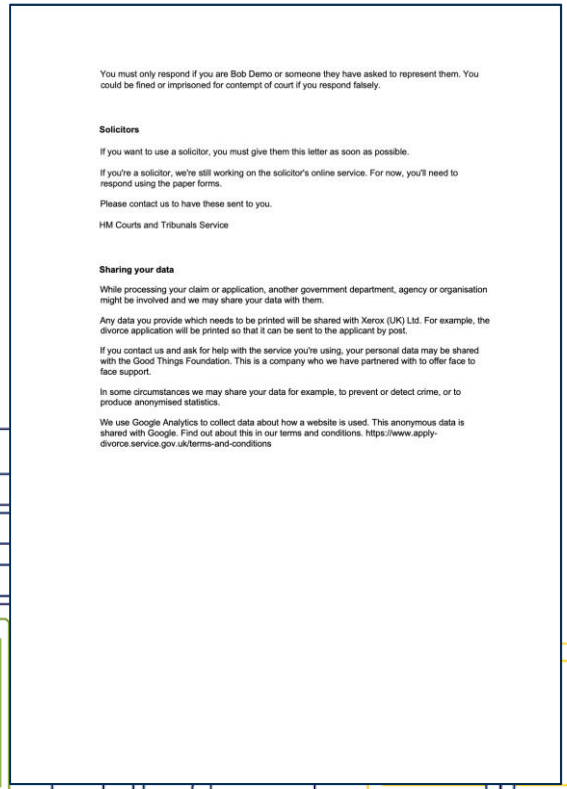
Getting help

For further guidance on divorce, how to split money and property, and make child arrangements visit:

- www.gov.uk/divorce
- Citizens Advice (www.citizensadvice.org.uk/family/ending-a-relationship/)
- Advicenow (www.advicenow.org.uk/divorce)
- Personal Support Unit for support in court hearings (www.thepsu.org)

If you disagree with your wife about these arrangements it is usually cheaper and quicker to resolve this through mediation, rather than through the courts. You can find more information about mediation at www.familymediationcouncil.org.uk.

You must tell us if you've been married to more than one person during this marriage (polygamy).



You must only respond if you are Bob Demo or someone they have asked to represent them. You could be fined or imprisoned for contempt of court if you respond falsely.

Solicitors

If you want to use a solicitor, you must give them this letter as soon as possible.

If you're a solicitor, we're still working on the solicitor's online service. For now, you'll need to respond using the paper forms.

Please contact us to have these sent to you.

HM Courts and Tribunals Service

Sharing your data

While processing your claim or application, another government department, agency or organisation might be involved and we may share your data with them.

Any data you provide which needs to be printed will be shared with Xerox (UK) Ltd. For example, the divorce application will be printed so that it can be sent to the applicant by post.

If you contact us and ask for help with the service you're using, your personal data may be shared with the Good Things Foundation. This is a company who we have partnered with to offer face to face support.

In some circumstances we may share your data for example, to prevent or detect crime, or to produce anonymised statistics.

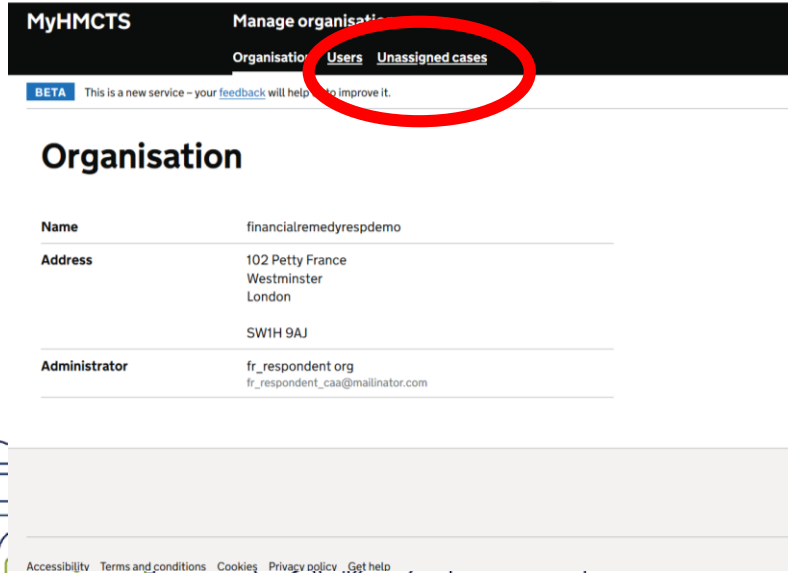
We use Google Analytics to collect data about how a website is used. This anonymous data is shared with Google. Find out about this in our terms and conditions. https://www.apply-divorce.service.gov.uk/terms-and-conditions

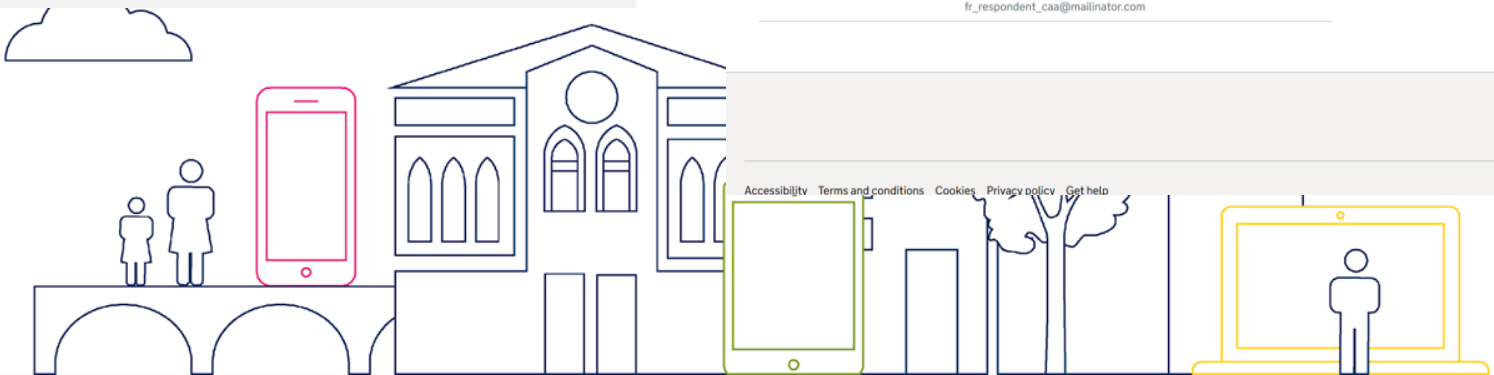
HM Courts & Tribunals Service

Digital Respondent Case Access Administrato

The Case Access Administrator will need to log into ***manage-org.platform.hmcts.net*** to assign the case to a solicitor in their firm. Please ensure you are using Chrome or Firefox as your browser.

You will be able to find the cases assigned to your organisation through clicking on the ‘assigned cases’ tab.





HM Courts & Tribunals Service

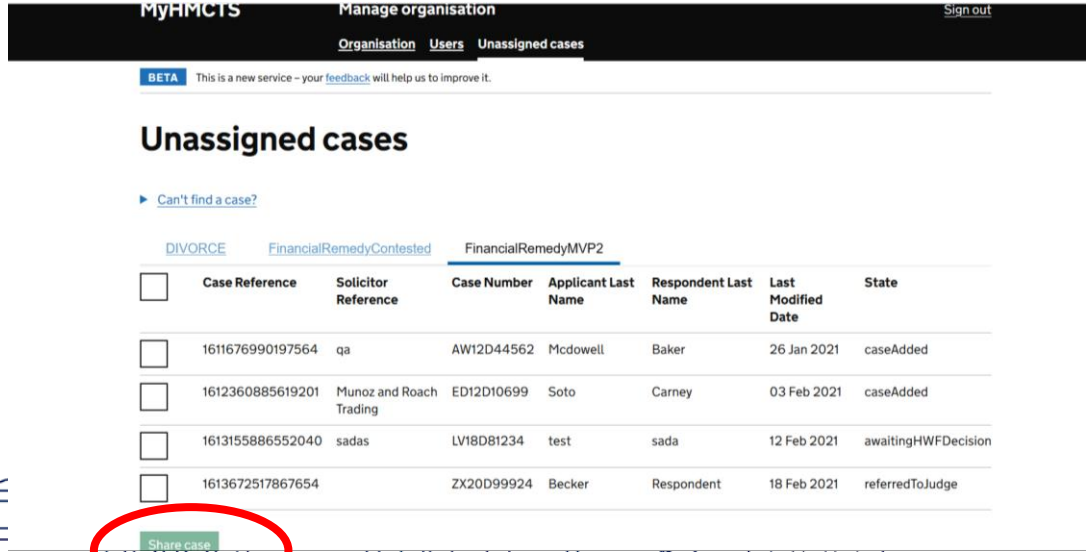
Case Access Administrator

You can click on a tab for each case type that has unassigned cases, e.g. ‘Divorce’ and ‘Financial Remedy Consented’.

Click on ‘Divorce’ to see all the unassigned Divorce cases.

Tick the box next the case you want to assign and click on the ‘Share Case’ button.

You can also tick and share multiple cases.



HM Courts & Tribunals Service

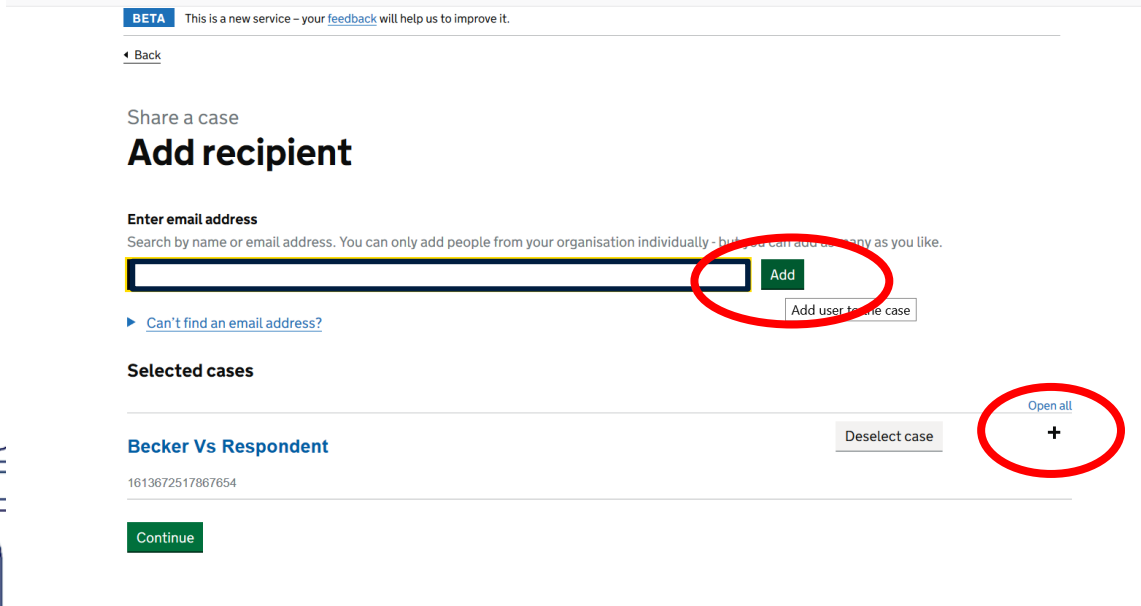
Case Access Administrator

Enter the email address of the solicitor you want to give case access to click on the ‘Add’ button.

You can give access to more than on solicitor.

Once you have added all the solicitors who need access you can click on the ‘+’ next to the case to check you have added everyone that needs access.

If you have added all the solicitors required click on ‘Continue’.

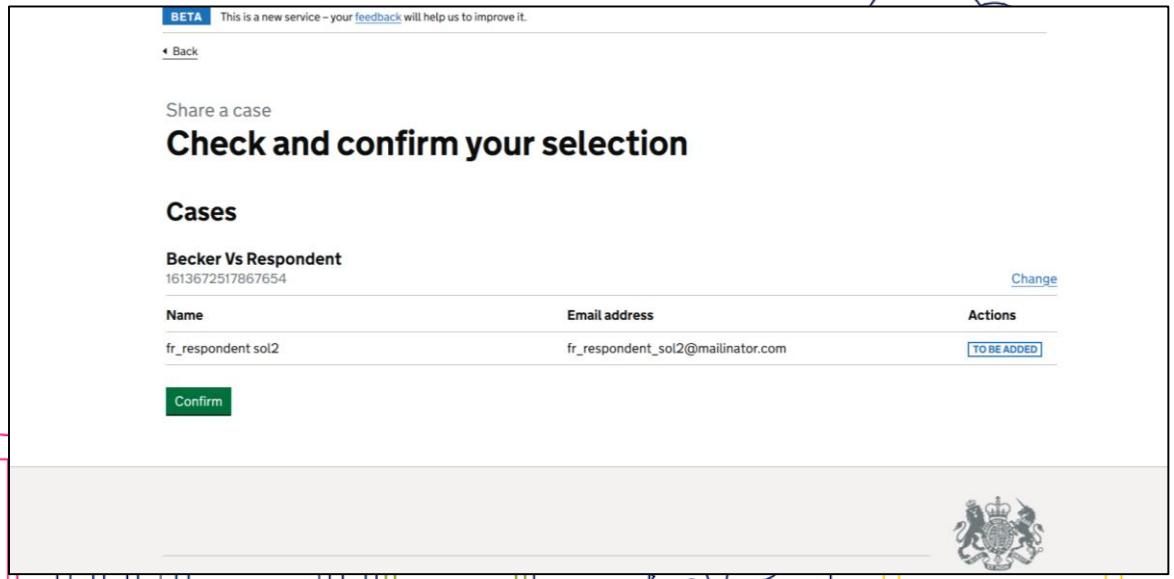


HM Courts & Tribunals Service

Case Access Administrator

You will be able to check you have the correct case. If you need to, you can click on ‘change’ which will allow you to go back to the Case List and select a different case.

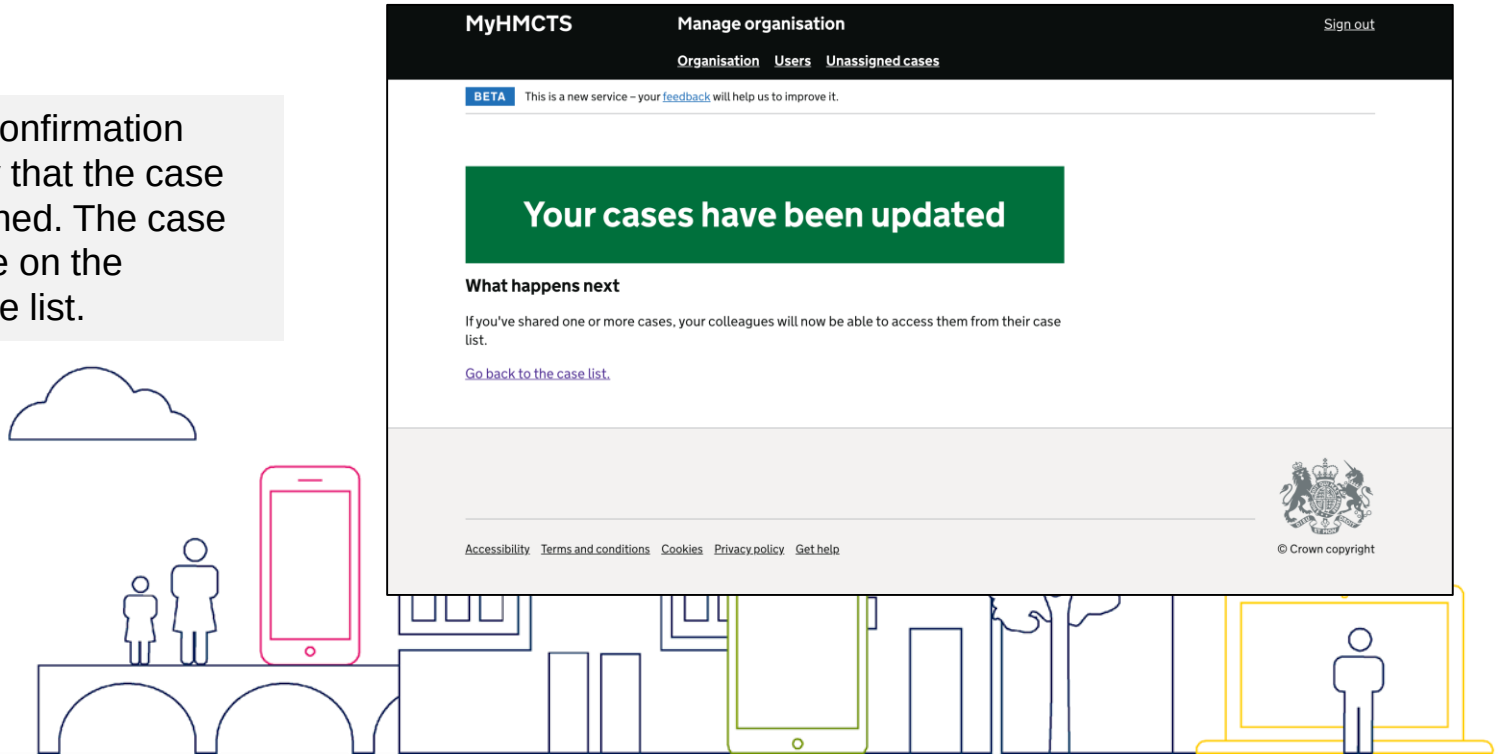
If you are happy, you can click Confirm.



HM Courts & Tribunals Service

Case Access Administrator

You will see a confirmation message to say that the case has been assigned. The case will no longer be on the unassigned case list.

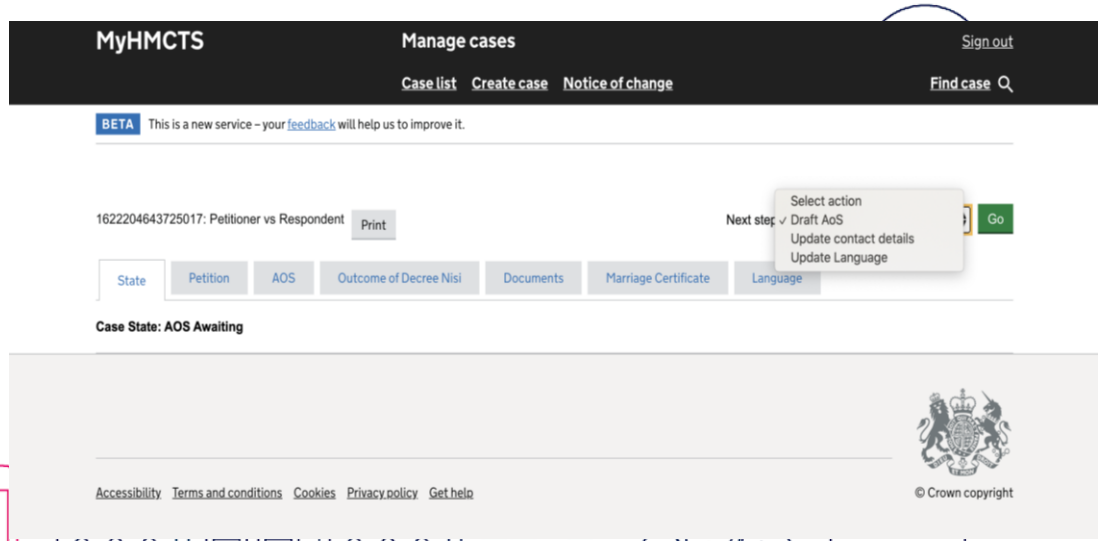


HM Courts & Tribunals Service

Drafting the Acknowledgement of Service

The respondent solicitor can now log into the online system and access the case that they have been assigned.

They can see the state the case is in and click on ‘Draft AOS’ to start the Acknowledgement of Service.

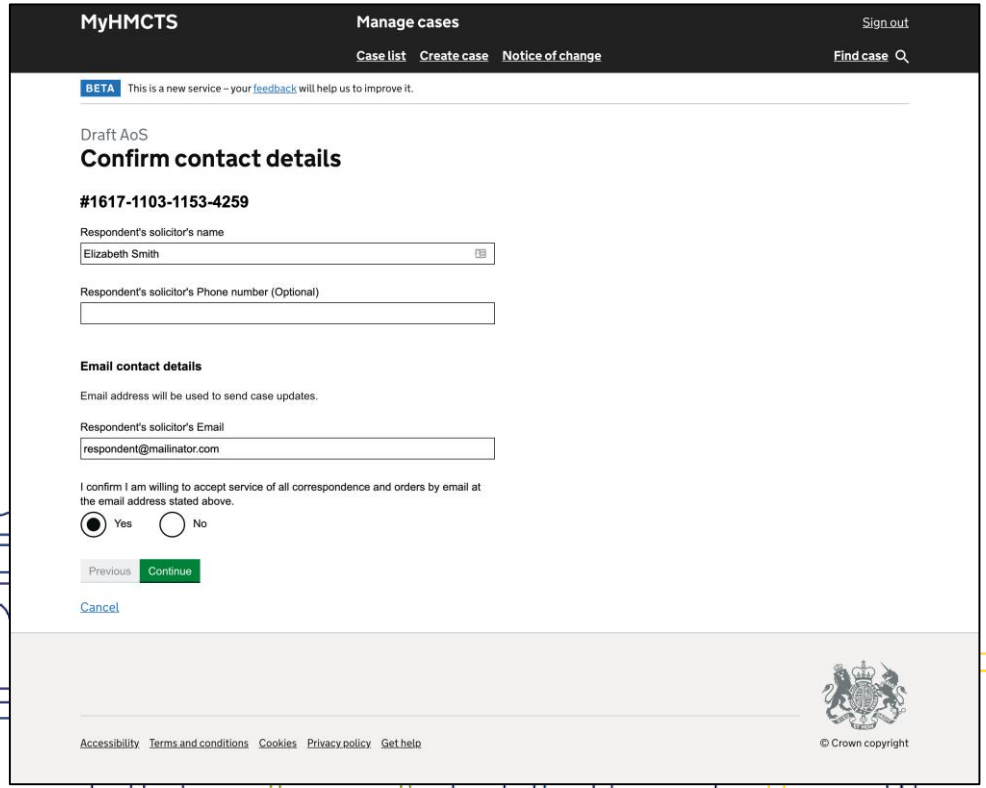


HM Courts & Tribunals Service

Drafting the Acknowledgement of Service

On the first page of the AOS response the Respondent Solicitor is required to confirm their contact details.

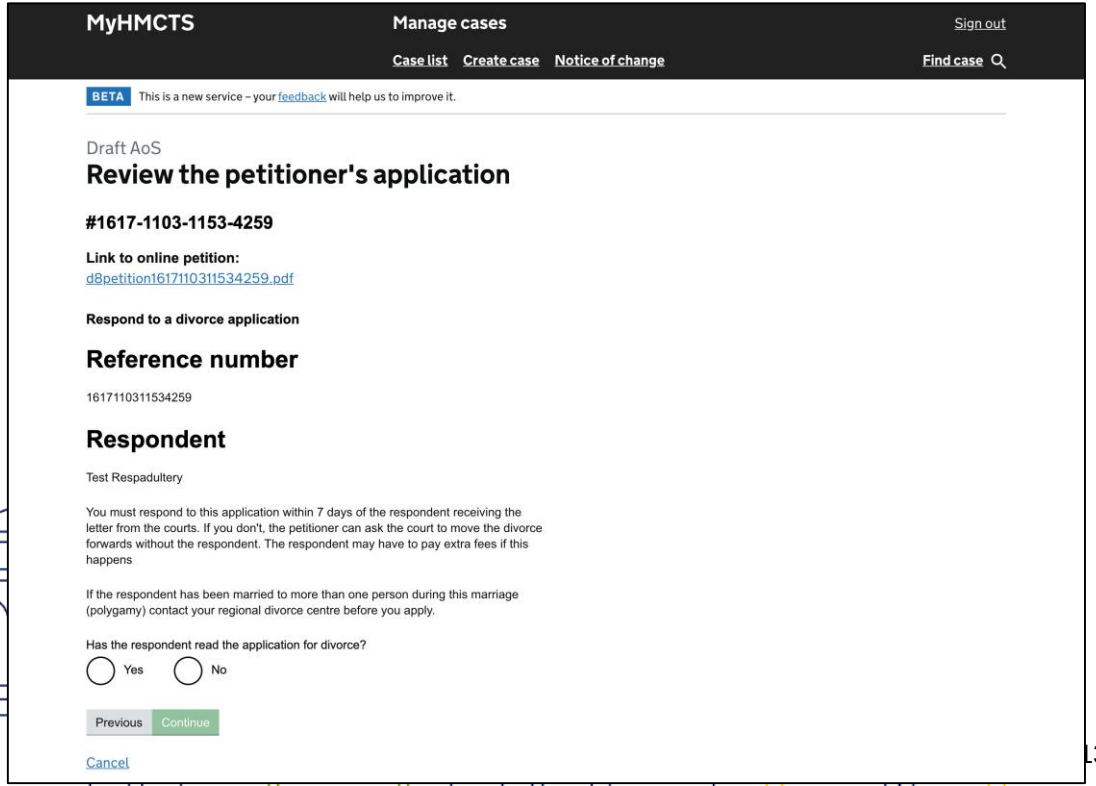
The email address is especially important, as this will be used for future case updates including the CoE, DN Approval and Divorce Granted notifications.



HM Courts & Tribunals Service

Drafting the Acknowledgement of Service

As a respondent solicitor, you will be able to review the petitioner's application for divorce and confirm whether the respondent has read the application for divorce before proceeding.

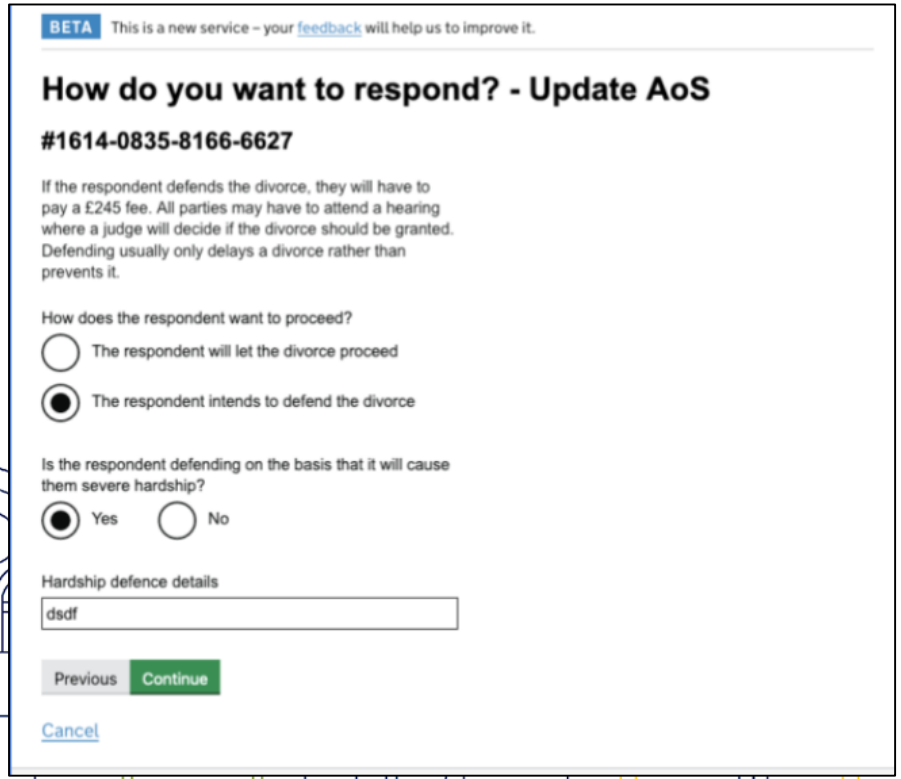


April 2021

HM Courts & Tribunals Service

Drafting the Acknowledgement of Service

You will be asked how you wish to respond to the Divorce on behalf of your client and you will be asked to provide details on how to proceed.



HM Courts & Tribunals Service

Drafting the Acknowledgement of Service

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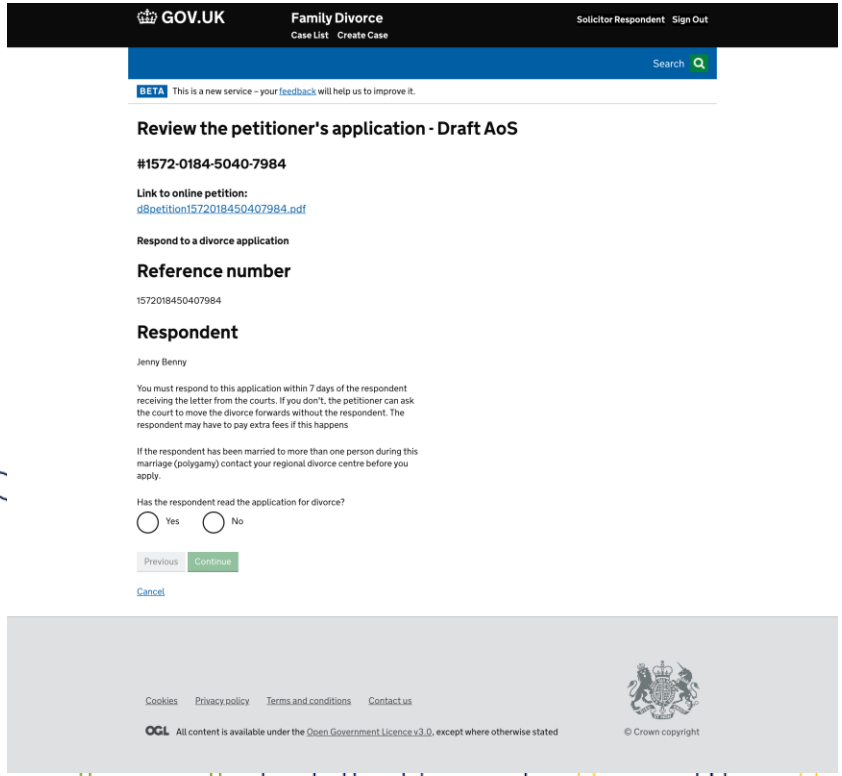

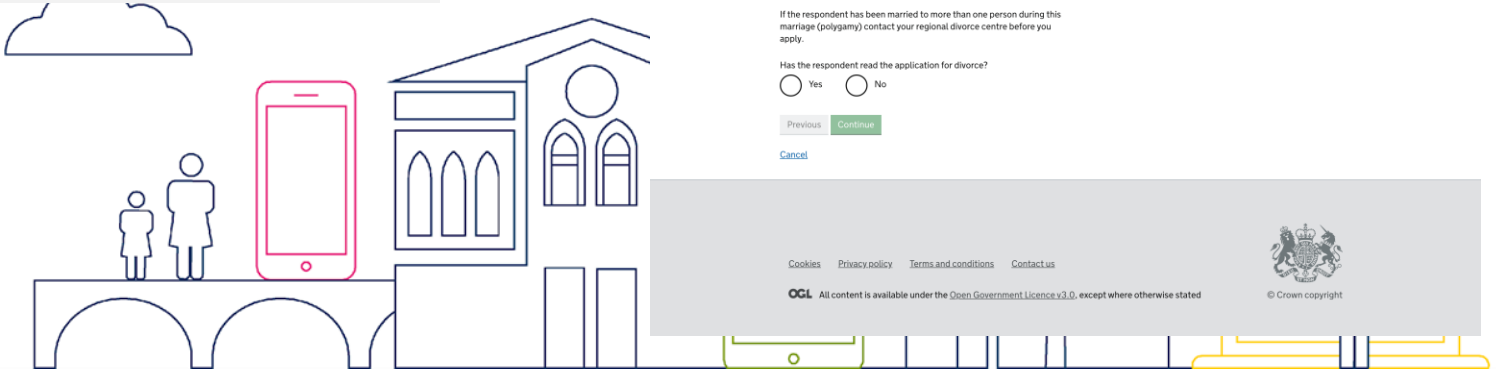

April 2021

HM Courts & Tribunals Service

Drafting the Acknowledgement of Service

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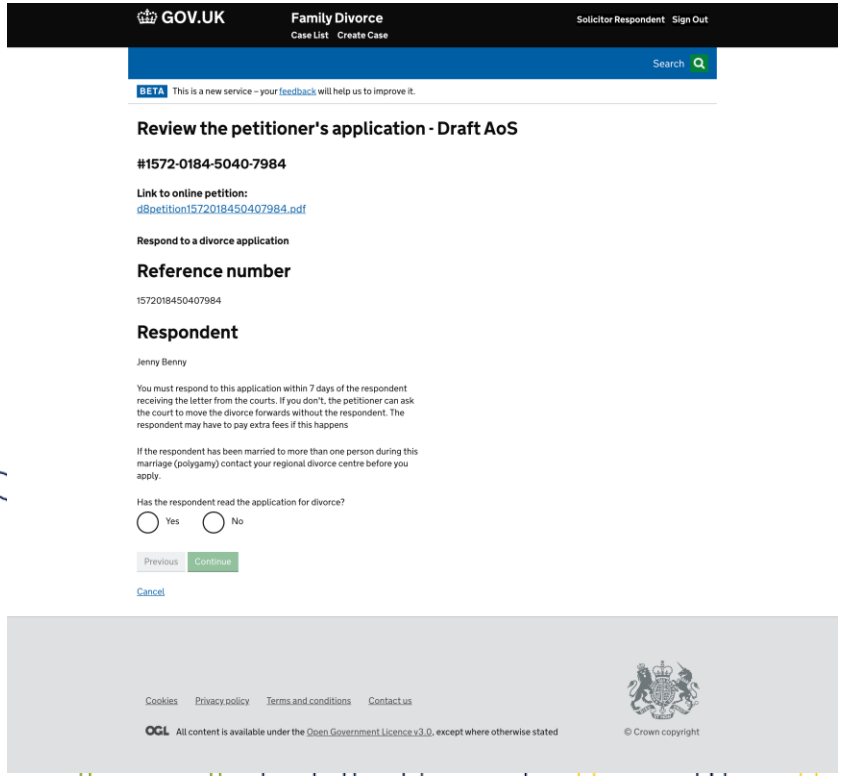

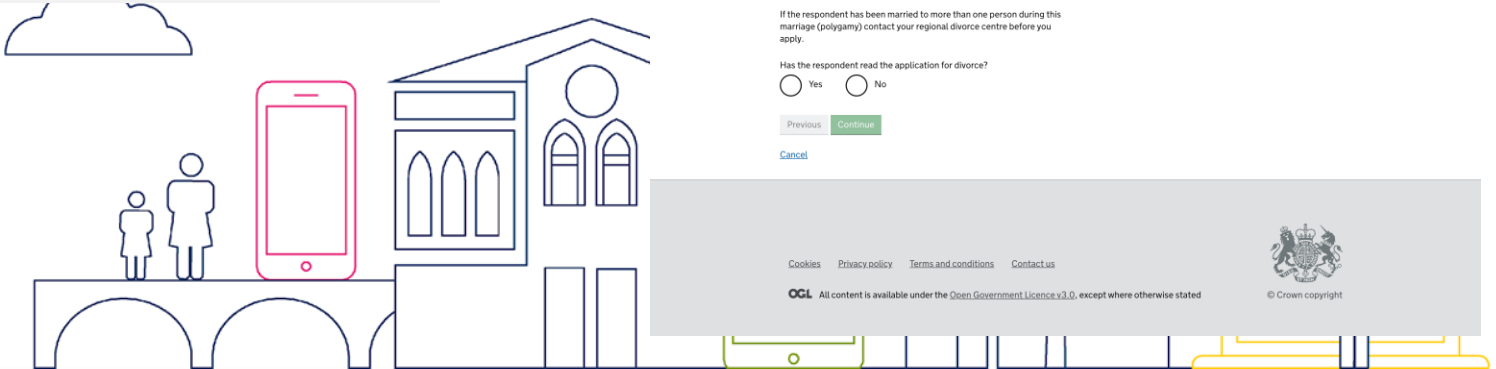

April 2021

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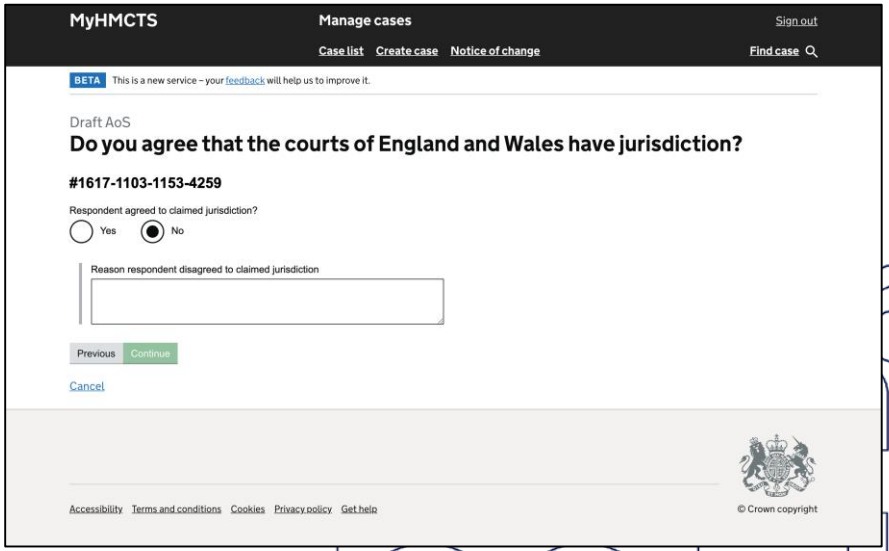
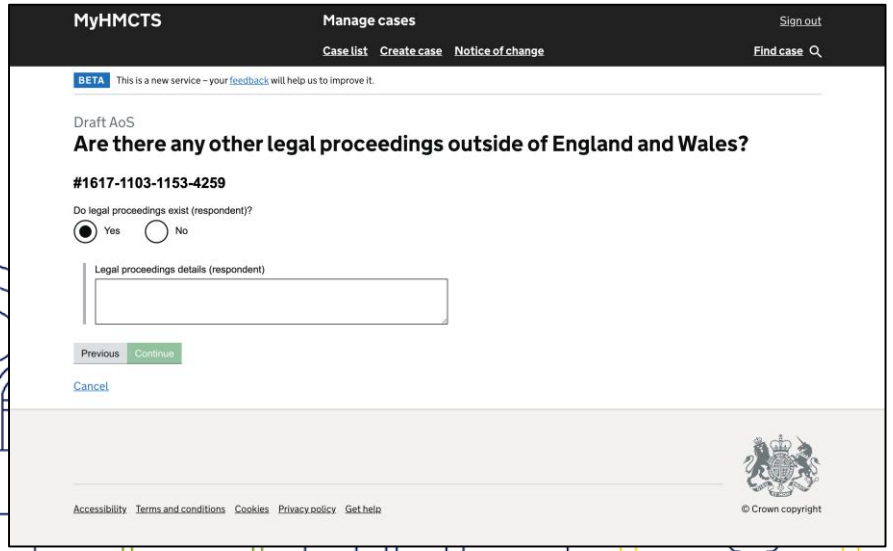
Drafting the Acknowledgement of Service

You will be asked to complete screens on the Jurisdiction of the respondent and other legal proceedings outside of England and Wales.





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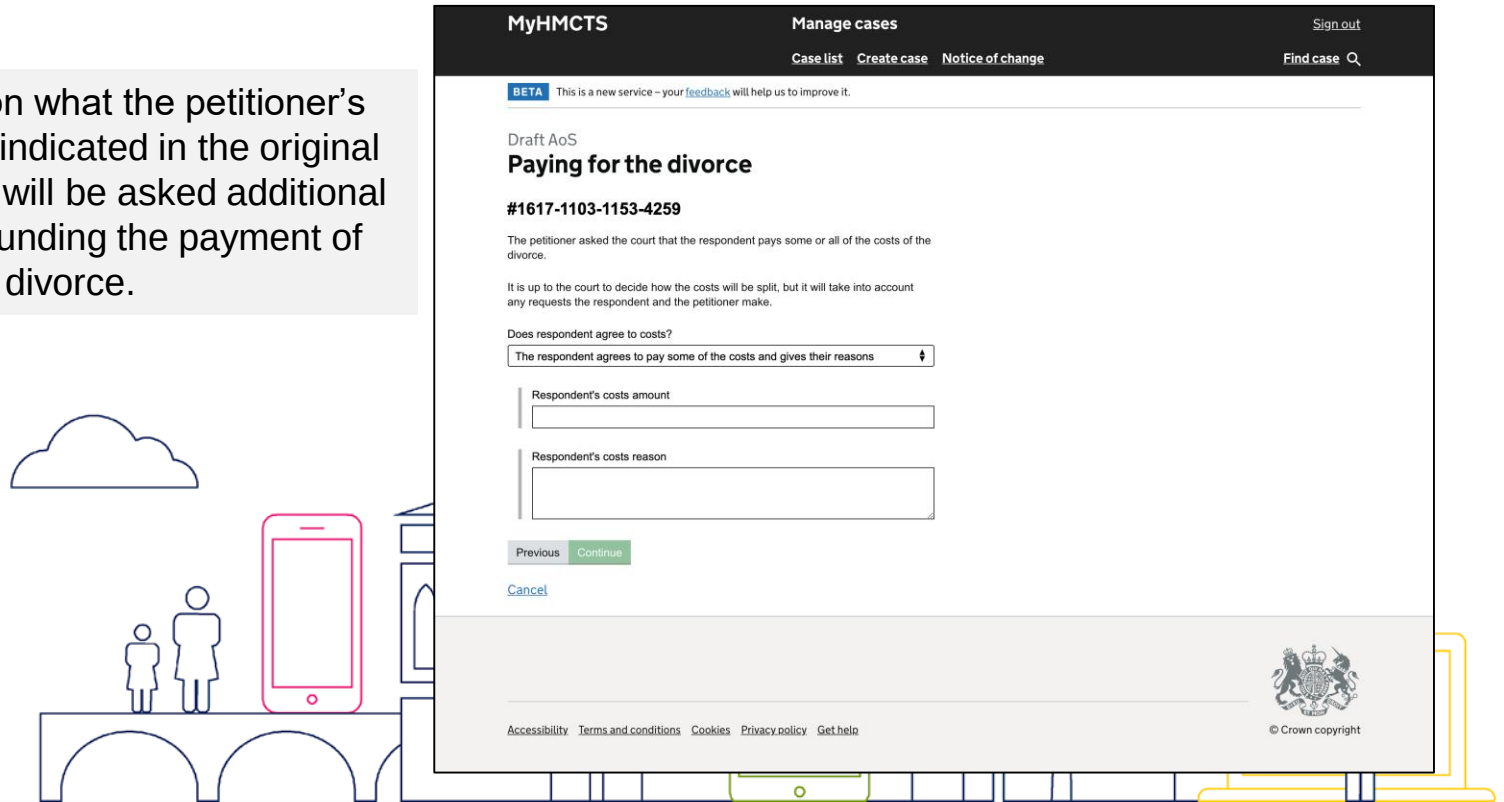
Drafting the Acknowledgement of Service

Depending on what the petitioner's solicitor has indicated in the original petition, you will be asked additional details surrounding the payment of costs for the divorce.



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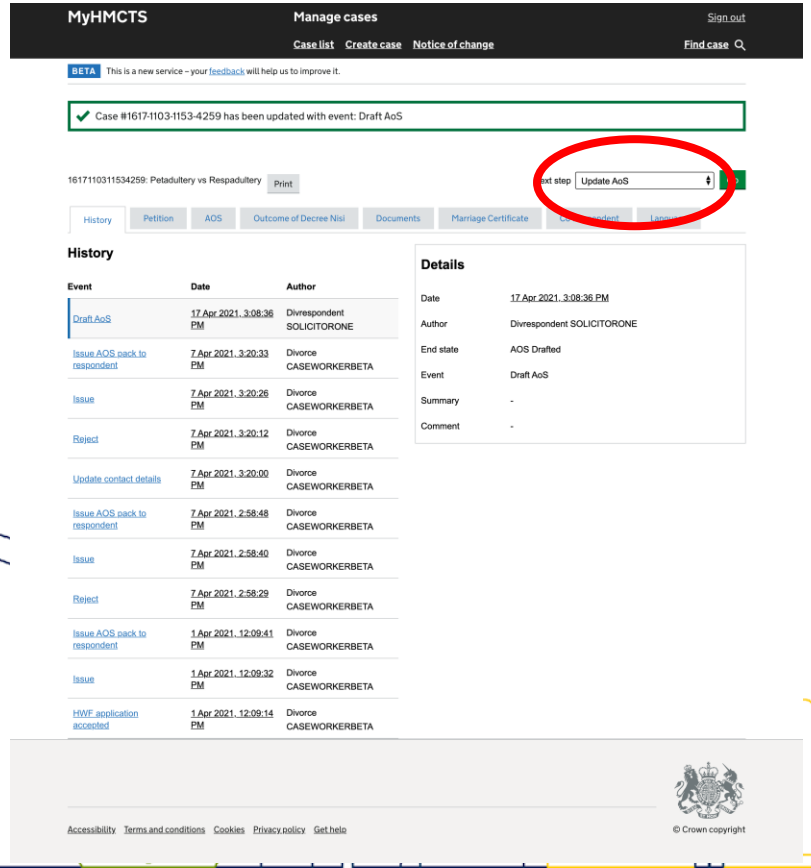
Update the Acknowledgement of Service (before submitting)

Once you have submitted the Acknowledgment of Service on behalf of your client, you will see the following screen notifying you that the AoS has been successfully updated.

The petitioner's solicitor will receive a notification to notify them that the case can now move forward.



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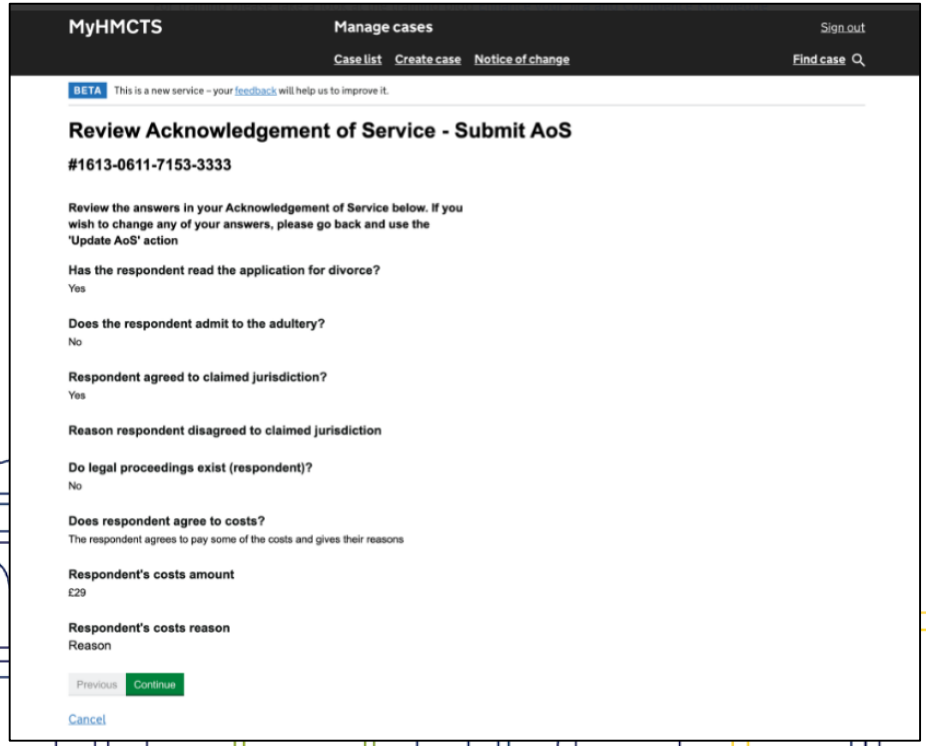
Submit the Acknowledgement of Service

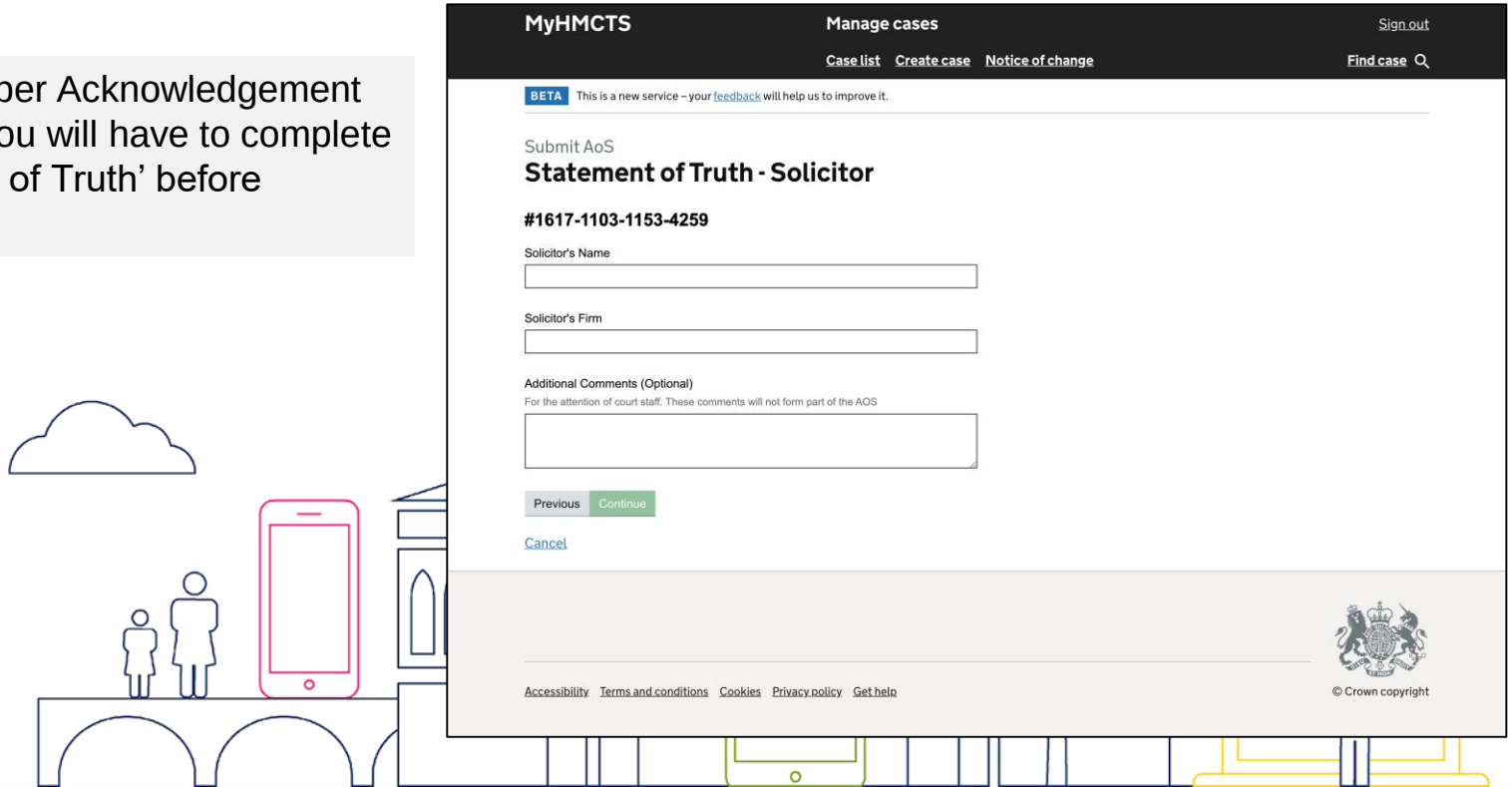
Before submitting the Acknowledgement of Service, there will be an opportunity to review the answers given. If you are happy with the answers, you can press ‘continue’.



HM Courts & Tribunals Service

Submit the Acknowledgment of Service

As with a paper Acknowledgement of Service, you will have to complete a ‘Statement of Truth’ before submitting.



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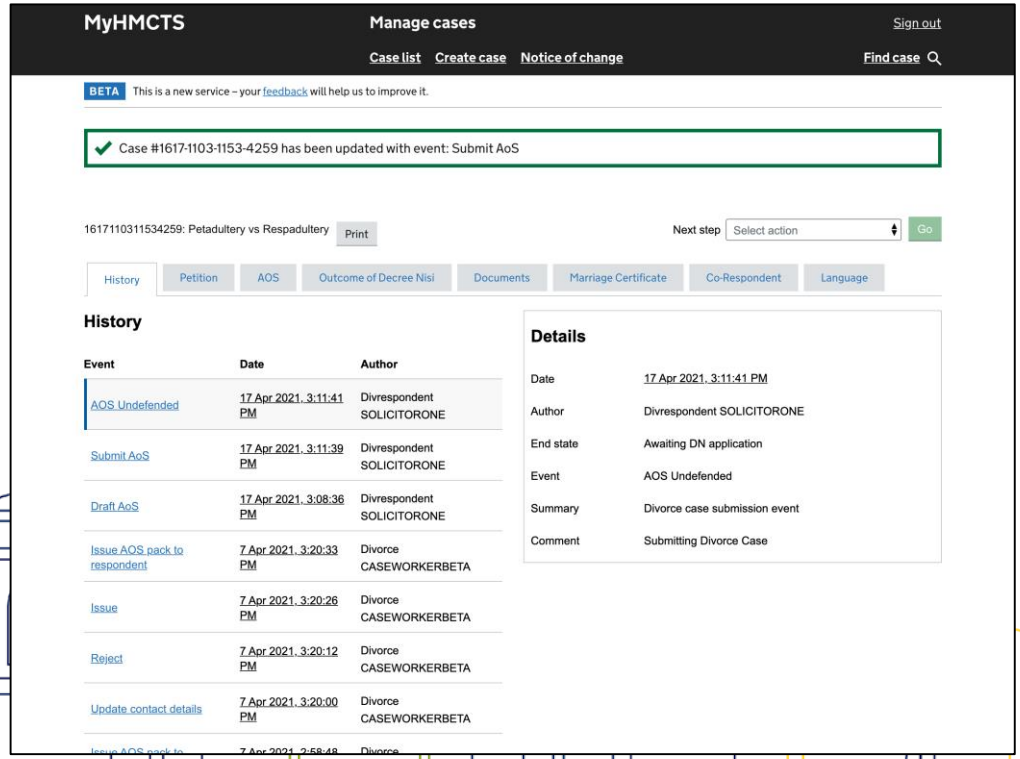
Submit the Acknowledgement of Service

Once you have submitted the Acknowledgment of Service, the events history will show that the the AOS been submitted.

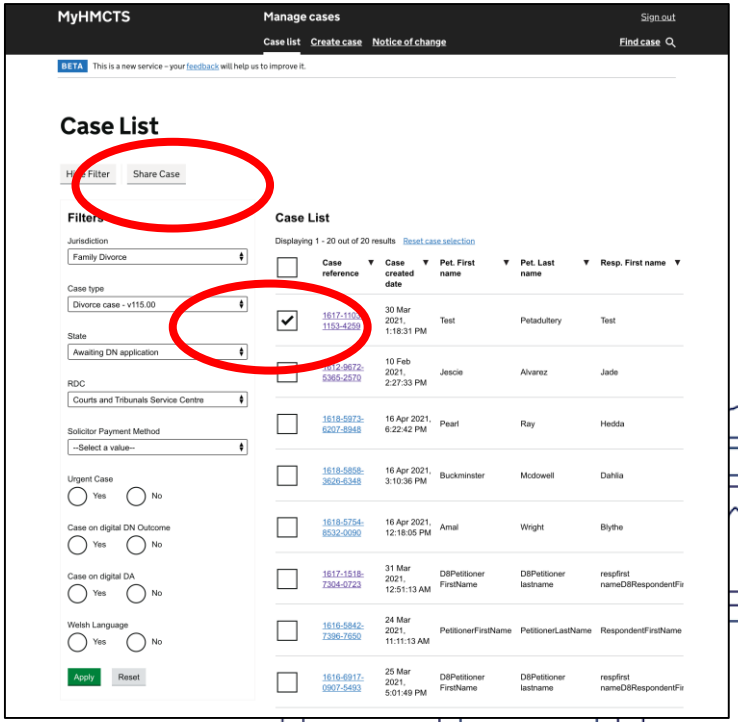
The state the case goes into next is dependant on the AOS response given.

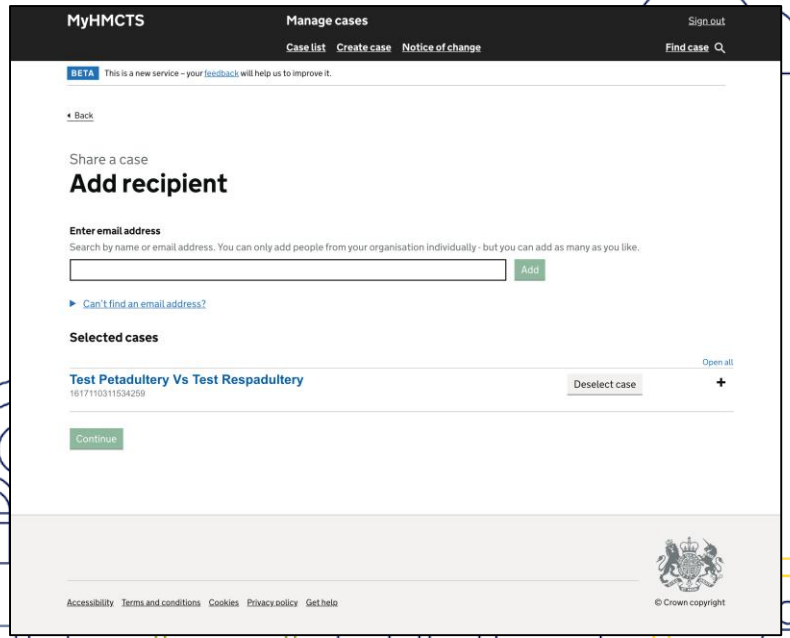


HM Courts & Tribunals Service

Sharing the case with other solicitors in the Respondent Solicitor firm

The Respondent Solicitor can share the case with other solicitors in their firm.





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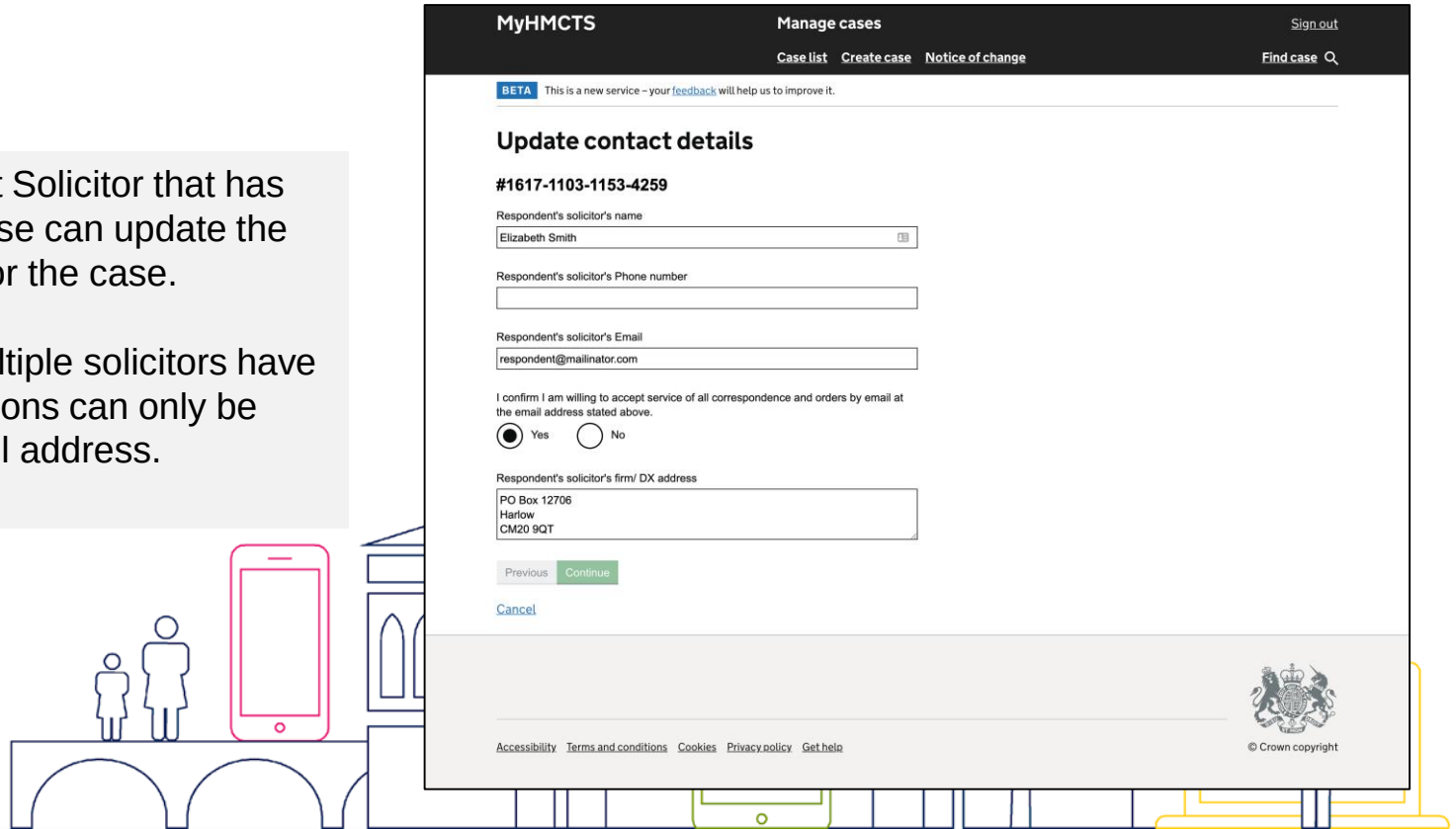
Updating Respondent Solicitor's contact details

Any Respondent Solicitor that has access to the case can update the contact details for the case.

Note, even if multiple solicitors have access, notifications can only be sent to one email address.

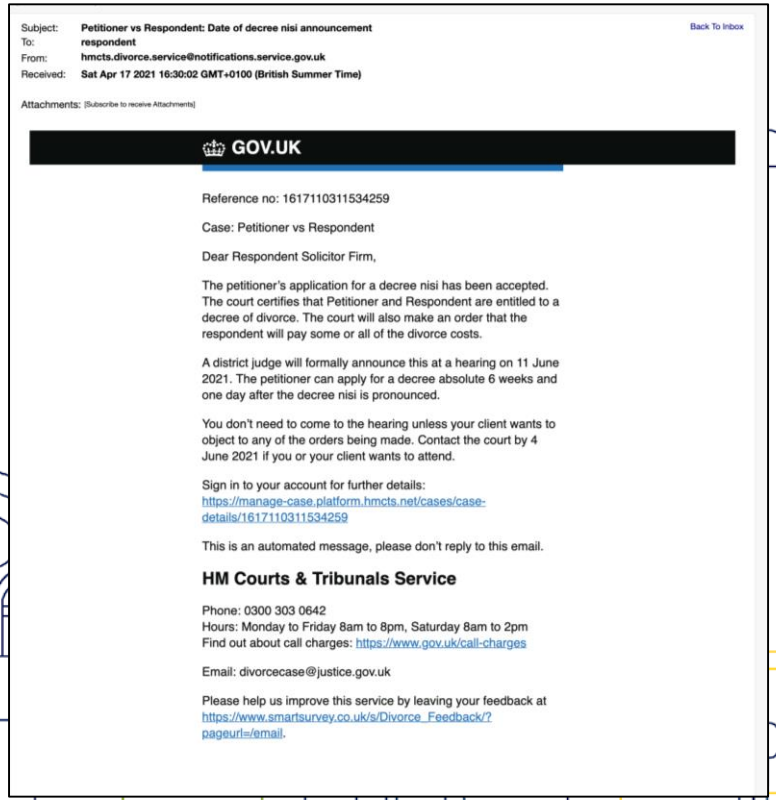


HM Courts & Tribunals Service

Certificate of Entitlement Notification

When the court date has been defined, the respondent solicitor will get a notifications.

They will able to see the Certificate of Entitlement on the ‘documents’ tab.



Subject: **Petitioner vs Respondent: Date of decree nisi announcement**
To: **respondent**
From: **hmcts.divorce.service@notifications.service.gov.uk**
Received: **Sat Apr 17 2021 16:30:02 GMT+0100 (British Summer Time)**

Back To Inbox

Attachments: [Subscribe to receive Attachments]

GOV.UK

Reference no: 1617110311534259

Case: Petitioner vs Respondent

Dear Respondent Solicitor Firm,

The petitioner’s application for a decree nisi has been accepted. The court certifies that Petitioner and Respondent are entitled to a decree of divorce. The court will also make an order that the respondent will pay some or all of the divorce costs.

A district judge will formally announce this at a hearing on 11 June 2021. The petitioner can apply for a decree absolute 6 weeks and one day after the decree nisi is pronounced.

You don’t need to come to the hearing unless your client wants to object to any of the orders being made. Contact the court by 4 June 2021 if you or your client wants to attend.

Sign in to your account for further details:
https://manage-case.platform.hmcts.net/cases/case-details/1617110311534259

This is an automated message, please don’t reply to this email.

HM Courts & Tribunals Service

Phone: 0300 303 0642
Hours: Monday to Friday 8am to 8pm, Saturday 8am to 2pm
Find out about call charges: https://www.gov.uk/call-charges

Email: divorcecase@justice.gov.uk

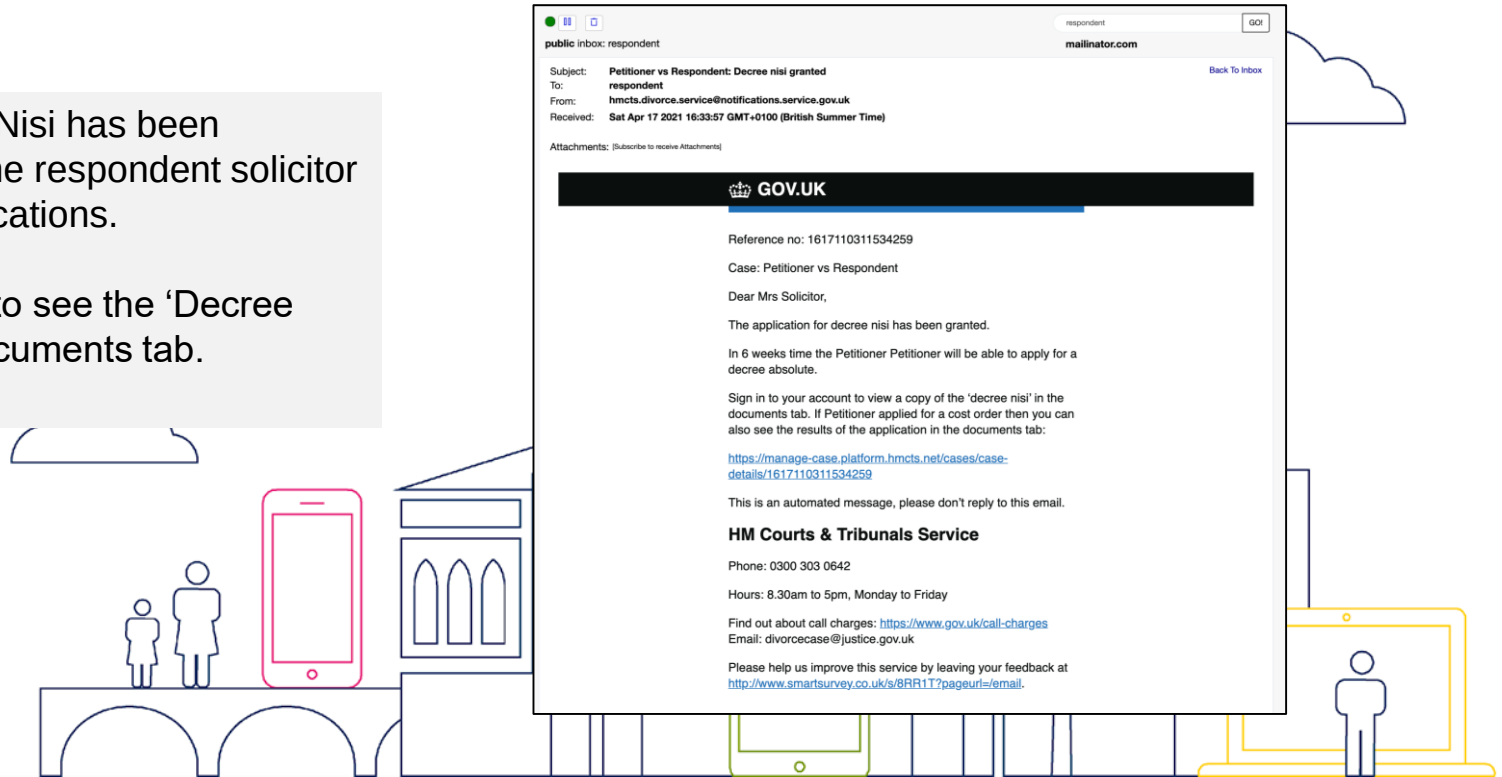
Please help us improve this service by leaving your feedback at https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/Divorce_Feedback/?pageurl=/email.

HM Courts & Tribunals Service

Decree Nisi pronounced notification

When Decree Nisi has been pronounced, the respondent solicitor will get a notifications.

They will able to see the ‘Decree Nisi’ on the documents tab.



public inbox: respondent

mailinator.com

Subject: Petitioner vs Respondent: Decree nisi granted
To: respondent
From: hmcts.divorce.service@notifications.service.gov.uk
Received: Sat Apr 17 2021 16:33:57 GMT+0100 (British Summer Time)

Attachments: [Subscribe to receive Attachments]

GOV.UK

Reference no: 1617110311534259

Case: Petitioner vs Respondent

Dear Mrs Solicitor,

The application for decree nisi has been granted.

In 6 weeks time the Petitioner Petitioner will be able to apply for a decree absolute.

Sign in to your account to view a copy of the ‘decree nisi’ in the documents tab. If Petitioner applied for a cost order then you can also see the results of the application in the documents tab:

https://manage-case.platform.hmcts.net/cases/case-details/1617110311534259

This is an automated message, please don't reply to this email.

HM Courts & Tribunals Service

Phone: 0300 303 0642

Hours: 8.30am to 5pm, Monday to Friday

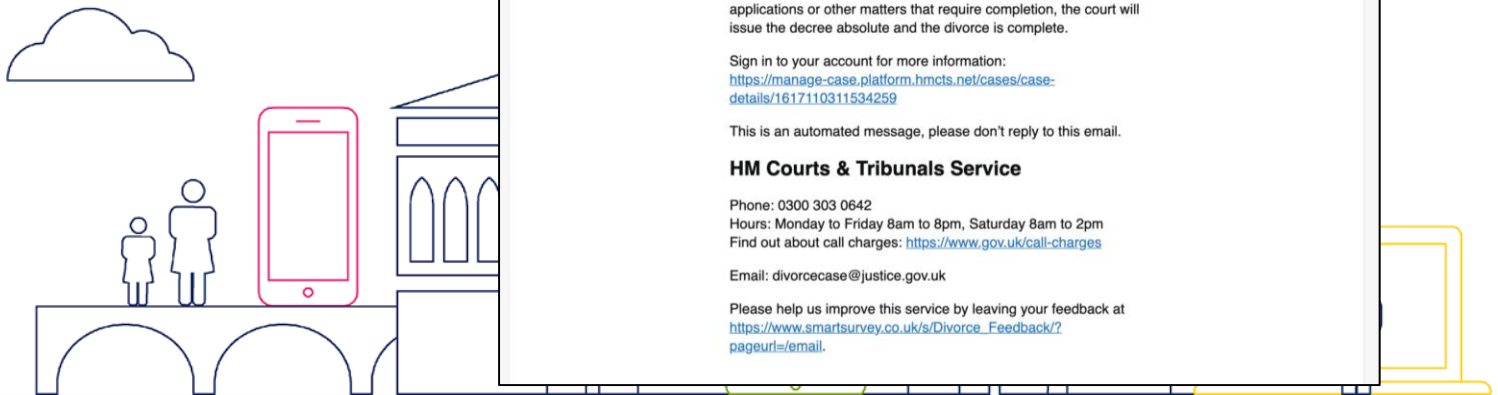
Find out about call charges: https://www.gov.uk/call-charges
Email: divorcecase@justice.gov.uk

Please help us improve this service by leaving your feedback at http://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/8RR1T?pageurl=/email.

HM Courts & Tribunals Service

Decree Absolute applied for notification

When the Petitioner or Petitioner's Solicitor applies for a Decree Absolute, the Respondent Solicitor is sent a notification.



public inbox: respondent — mailinator.com

Back To Inbox

Subject: **Petitioner vs Respondent: The applicant has applied for decree absolute**
To: **respondent**
From: **hmcts.divorce.service@notifications.service.gov.uk**
Received: **Sat Apr 17 2021 16:37:07 GMT+0100 (British Summer Time)**

Attachments: [Subscribe to receive Attachments]

GOV.UK

Reference no: 1617110311534259

Case: Petitioner vs Respondent

Dear Mrs Solicitor,

The applicant has applied for a decree absolute.

This application is subject to checks to ensure there are no outstanding applications or other matters that require completion before the divorce is finalised. If there are no outstanding applications or other matters that require completion, the court will issue the decree absolute and the divorce is complete.

Sign in to your account for more information:
https://manage-case.platform.hmcts.net/cases/case-details/1617110311534259

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HM Courts & Tribunals Service

Phone: 0300 303 0642
Hours: Monday to Friday 8am to 8pm, Saturday 8am to 2pm
Find out about call charges: https://www.gov.uk/call-charges

Email: divorcecase@justice.gov.uk

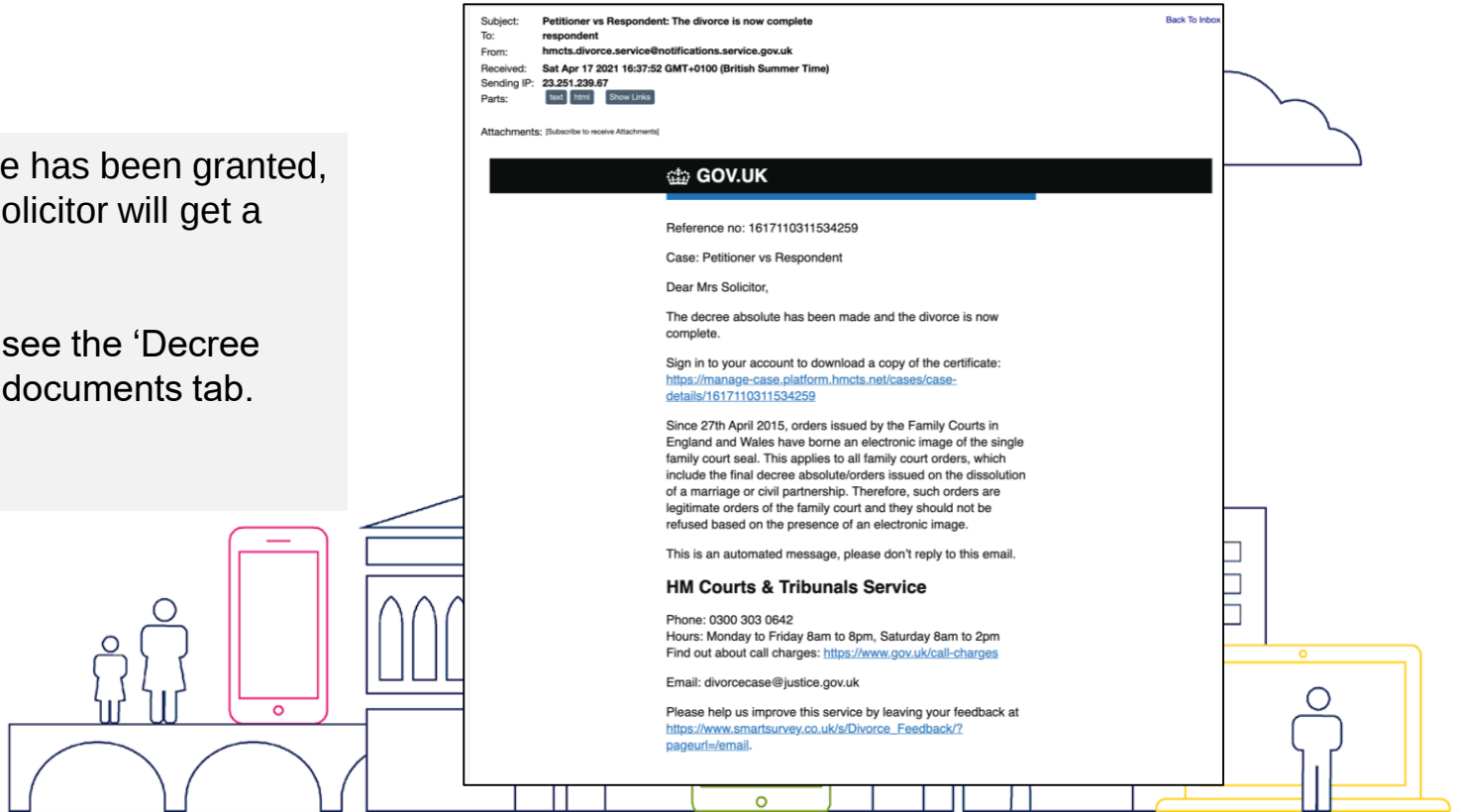
Please help us improve this service by leaving your feedback at https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/Divorce_Feedback/?pageurl=/email.

HM Courts & Tribunals Service

Decree Absolute granted notification

When the Divorce has been granted, the respondent solicitor will get a notifications.

They will able to see the ‘Decree Absolute’ on the documents tab.



Subject: **Petitioner vs Respondent: The divorce is now complete**
To: **respondent**
From: **hmcts.divorce.service@notifications.service.gov.uk**
Received: **Sat Apr 17 2021 16:37:52 GMT+0100 (British Summer Time)**
Sending IP: **23.251.239.67**
Parts: text html Show Links

Back To Inbox

Attachments: [Subscribe to receive Attachments]

GOV.UK

Reference no: 1617110311534259

Case: Petitioner vs Respondent

Dear Mrs Solicitor,

The decree absolute has been made and the divorce is now complete.

Sign in to your account to download a copy of the certificate: https://manage-case.platform.hmcts.net/cases/case-details/1617110311534259

Since 27th April 2015, orders issued by the Family Courts in England and Wales have borne an electronic image of the single family court seal. This applies to all family court orders, which include the final decree absolute/orders issued on the dissolution of a marriage or civil partnership. Therefore, such orders are legitimate orders of the family court and they should not be refused based on the presence of an electronic image.

This is an automated message, please don't reply to this email.

HM Courts & Tribunals Service

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Tribunals Service