



Bob Blackman MP
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

05 September 2023

Dear Bob,

HARROW CROWN COURT

I am writing to you following the decision by HMCTS to temporarily close Harrow Crown Court as a precautionary safety measure on Monday 21 August, after Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC) was found in the roof space as part of roof replacement works. RAAC is a lightweight form of precast concrete used in some buildings in the UK from the mid-1960s to the 1980s and is now recognised to have limited durability.

After further investigation by HMCTS property officials, it has been confirmed that the removal of the RAAC material and the replacement of the roof will take several months. HMCTS is taking forward the required estate works as a top priority, and I am advised that Harrow Crown Court is likely to remain closed for a six-to-nine-month period to complete this work.

Since its closure, Harrow cases have been listed at other sites across London and the South East. I am grateful to the judiciary, HMCTS staff, and wider Criminal Justice Service partners in keeping justice running.

HMCTS is working at speed to implement a plan for re-listing cases from Harrow Crown Court during the expected closure period. With the support of the Wood Green Resident Judge, HMCTS has secured two courtrooms and space for the administration team within the Crown Court sitting at Hendon Magistrates Court. The Resident Judge for Aylesbury has also agreed to provide a further courtroom at Amersham. HMCTS will begin to list into these courtrooms with immediate effect.

HMCTS is continuing to explore, in partnership with the judiciary, further locations in London and the South East as well as remote court options to support Harrow Crown Court while it is closed.

I will of course keep you informed on this matter.

MIKE FREER MP