



**In the High Court of Justice
King's Bench Division
Administrative Court**

AC-2025-CDF-000108
19 Feb 2026
CARDIFF
HIGH COURT OF JUSTICE
ADMINISTRATIVE COURT

In the matter of an application for judicial review AC-2025-CDF-000108

THE KING

on the application of

(1) Wells Rugby Football Club Ltd.
(2) Taunton Rugby Football Club Ltd.

Claimant

-and-

His Majesty's Senior Coroner for the Area of Somerset

Defendant

Notification of the Judge's Decision (CPR 54.11, 54.12)

Following consideration of the documents lodged by the Claimant, the Defendant's Summary Grounds of Defence and the Interested Party's Acknowledgement of Service.

ORDER BY MRS JUSTICE JEFFORD DBE

1. Permission: Permission to apply for judicial review is refused.
2. Costs: No order as to costs.
3. Renewal directions: Where the Claimant makes a valid request for reconsideration (see notes below), the following directions apply:
 - (a) The permission hearing is to be listed with a time estimate of 60 minutes including submissions by the parties and an oral judgment by the judge. If the Claimant considers that more time should be allowed, the time estimate must be included with the request for reconsideration of permission.
 - (b) Within 21 days of the service of this Order, the Claimant must file and serve an electronic copy of the Permission Hearing Bundle, prepared in accordance with the guidance on the Administrative Court website and containing the following documents:
 - (i) the Claim Form, Statement of Facts and Grounds and any evidence or other documents filed with the Claim Form;

- (ii) any Acknowledgment of Service, Summary Grounds of Defence and any accompanying documents served by any Defendant and/or Interested Party;
 - (iii) any Reply or other document served by any party to the proceedings at the paper permission stage;
 - (iv) this Order;
 - (v) the renewed application for permission to apply for judicial review (on Form 86B);
 - (vi) any other document the Court would be likely to consider material to its decision on permission to apply for judicial review.
- (c) If the Claimant fails to comply with sub-paragraph (b), permission will be determined on the basis of the renewal notice and the documents before the Court at the paper stage, unless at the hearing the Court otherwise directs.
- (d) At least 7 days before the date listed for the hearing, the Claimant must file and serve:
- (i) a skeleton argument, maximum 10 pages;
 - (ii) an electronic bundle containing any authorities which the Court needs to read at the hearing (the Authorities Bundle: see para. 22.1.2 of the Administrative Court Judicial Review Guide); and
 - (iii) if requested by the Court, a hard copy version of the Permission Hearing Bundle and Authorities Bundles.
- (e) At least 7 days before the date listed for the hearing, any party other than the Claimant intending to participate in the hearing must file and serve any skeleton argument, maximum 10 pages.
- (f) If a party fails to comply with sub-paragraph (b), (d) and/or (e), the Court may have regard to the failure when considering any question about costs at the hearing.

REASONS

- (1) Ground 1: It is not reasonably arguable that a finding that conduct that was “poor” contributed to a death is tantamount to a finding of negligence and/or appears to make a finding of civil liability contrary to section 10(2) of the Coroners and Justice Act 2009. As a matter of normal English usage, something may be done poorly without being done without reasonable care and skill amounting to negligence.

- (2) Ground 2: Contrary to the claimants' case, the Coroner did not accept that the finding that Mrs Selwood's death was contributed to by "poor supervision and spectator safety management" was a matter of opinion. Rather the Coroner considered this to be a finding of fact which was relevant to explaining the cause of death. The expression encapsulated her findings of fact set out in the letter dated 2 December 2024. It is not arguable that these were not findings open to her and that the conclusion as to contribution to cause of death was unlawful opinion.
- (3) Ground 3: It is not arguable that the Coroner failed to carry out an adequate investigation such that her decision was unlawful and/or irrational. The claimants' argument under this ground approaches the matter as if the Coroner ought to have carried out, but did not carry out, a further investigation as to the risk of serious injury or death. There was clear evidence that Mrs Selwood's particular medical characteristics caused her death and the Coroner's decision did not turn on the likelihood of the same outcome for others. The relevant risk was no more than that of being hit by a rugby ball. As set out in letter dated 2 December 2024, there was ample evidence in respect of that risk and there was evidence from the claimants' witnesses that recognised what had not been done and/or could have been done better. The Coroner took that evidence into account in her finding that supervision and spectator management was poor - she could and did do so without needing evidence of lack of reasonable skill and care assessed by a departure from an established procedure.
- (4) Grounds 4 and 5 are not arguable for the same reasons as ground 3.

Signed Mrs Justice Jefford DBE

Date 28 January 2026

Requests to reconsider permission at a hearing pursuant to CPR 54.12

Where the Claimant wishes to request reconsideration of the refusal of permission at a hearing:

- (a) The request must be made by completing and filing Form 86B within 7 days after the date of service of this Order.
- (b) A fee is payable on filing Form 86B. Details of the current fees are at <https://www.gov.uk/court-fees-what-they-are>. The form to make an application for remission of a court fee can be obtained at <https://www.gov.uk/get-help-with-court-fees>.
- (c) If the Claimant does not pay the fee or submit a certified application for fee remission, paragraph 1 of this Order is final.

The date of service of this Order is calculated from the date in the section below

For completion by the Administrative Court Office

Sent to:

The Claimant / The Claimant's solicitors []

The Defendant / The Defendant's solicitors []

The Interested party / The Interested Party's solicitors []

Date:

Ref No.



**In the High Court of Justice
King's Bench Division
Administrative Court and Planning Court**

Ref: AC-2025-CDF-000108

In the matter of a claim for Judicial Review

The King (on the application of WELLS RUGBY FOOTBALL CLUB LTD and another) v For
The Somerset Area

Notice of RENEWAL of claim for permission to apply for Judicial Review (CPR 54. 12)

1. *This notice must be lodged in the Administrative Court Office, by post or in person and be served upon the defendant (and interested parties who were served with the claim form) within 7 days of the service on the claimant or his solicitor of the notice that the claim for permission has been refused.*
2. *If the claim was issued on or after 7 October 2013, a fee is payable on submission of Form 86B. Failure to pay the fee or lodge a certified Application for Fee remission may result in the claim being struck out. The form for Application for Remission of a Fee is obtainable from the Justice website <http://hmctsformfinder.justice.gov.uk/HMCTS/FormFinder.do>*
3. *If this form has not been lodged within 7 days of service (para 1 above) please set out below the reasons for delay:*

4. *Set out below the grounds for seeking reconsideration:*

5. *Please supply*

COUNSEL'S NAME:

COUNSEL'S TELEPHONE NUMBER:

Signed

Dated

Claimant's Ref No:

Tel.No:

Fax No:

**To the Administrative Court Office, Wales District Registry, Cardiff Civil Justice Centre,
2 Park Street, Cardiff CF10 1ET, Wales, DX. 99500**