

Join the Legal Challenge to the UK Govt Lockdown

by **Simon Dolan**

10

days to go

£362,159

pledged of £425,000 stretch target from 12,063 pledges

Pledge now

 [Judicial review](#)  Lawyers: Wedlake Bell LLP
 United Kingdom

Simon Dolan

Case Owner

UK Entrepreneur fed up with the increasing Govt control being exerted.

This case is raising funds for its stretch target. Your pledge will be collected within the next 24-48 hours (and it only takes two minutes to pledge!)

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Simon Dolan

Oct. 1, 2020

Update 20

SUPPORT THE CASE

Filing today for an Injunction

We have joined forces with leading wedding venue operator Cripps Barn Group Ltd to seek an injunction which would immediately halt the Government's latest lockdown laws.

We are serving legal papers on the Government today, seeking urgent relief from the Court to quash the new restrictions laid down by Boris Johnson's Cabinet and to declare them illegal. We are also seeking permission to take the measures to judicial review.

We say the contradictory and confusing laws are destroying the hospitality industry and that the measures are disproportionate to the risk to public health from COVID-19.

We are arguing that the Government misused legislation to bring in the new regulations without proper scrutiny by parliament. The Government introduced the new measures through the Public Health (Control of Infectious Disease) Act 1984 by certifying the legislation as 'urgent'. That loophole allows Ministers to make the laws effective immediately without prior approval in parliament.

If the injunction is granted, and a public official attempts to impose the lockdown laws, they could be in contempt of court which is ultimately punishable by imprisonment.

Family-run wedding and events firm Cripps is a member of the £130 billion hospitality industry and – like many others - has seen their business devastated by the Government's restrictions. The business has been blitzed by the new rule limiting weddings to 15 people – while pubs and restaurants can hold unlimited numbers within individual groups.

Mark Henriques, Managing Director of Cripps & Co, said: "The latest round of lockdown restrictions, introduced through the back door without any Parliamentary scrutiny, are absurd and contradictory. They are devastating the hospitality industry and all its support businesses. We are asking the courts to halt the new restrictions at least until they have been properly debated.

"It is plainly ridiculous that spacious wedding venues, including some that seat 1,500 people, have to restrict themselves to 15 people. It's all based on the Government view that weddings are 'super-spreader' events. By next March the wedding dreams of around 500,000 brides and grooms will have been shattered. The Government's thoughtless assumption is that wedding guests will be drunkenly hugging and kissing everyone in the room as though Covid didn't exist.

"In the real world, the Government must see that most people have adapted their behaviour and, particularly around the vulnerable, are acting with great restraint. A wedding meal for 100 people, with guests spaced as in restaurants, with no mingling or dancing, with modest consumption of alcohol, poses a very small risk indeed. Wedding events can be closely supervised by venue staff and family members who would be determined to keep things safe. Weddings pose no more risk than many other permitted activities.

"We ask the Government to drop this obsession with weddings and wake up to the fact they are needlessly ruining the lives of hundreds of thousands of wedding couples, business owners, staff and suppliers."

We are applying to the Court for an urgent hearing and an injunction to stop further damage being caused by the new laws. We sent the Government's lawyers a Letter Before Action at the weekend to signal their intentions. We are issuing proceedings today and asking for a hearing to be held next week.

We are bringing this case in addition to the existing high profile legal challenge to the Government, which continues and the Appeal will be heard on 29th Oct.

This additional, fresh legal challenge comes after backbench MPs, who were demanding more say over COVID restrictions, rolled over and accepted a future vote 'wherever possible' on lockdown measures.

Simon Dolan said: "With 16m people now under draconian local restrictions, and everyone facing harsh fines for contravening rules they can't even understand, the tide is turning. More and more people believe, like us, that the Government cannot be allowed to do what it likes with no thought to the consequences of its actions.

"The new legislation has been sneaked in using a legal loophole without scrutiny from parliament. That is why the country is in a total mess and a state of confusion. Businesses are being driven into the ground and lives are being ruined. The Prime Minister himself had to apologise for getting confused by his own laws and his own father did not know to wear a mask.

"I have long argued that all the lockdown measures have been brought in illegally and are completely disproportionate to the risk from COVID-19. We have evidence which backs this up and challenges the spurious scenario presented made by Professor Whitty when he claimed that there could be 50,000 coronavirus cases per day by next month.

"Backbench MPs, led by Sir Graham Brady, made some noise about being denied a voice. But they rolled over like poodles as soon as their tummies were tickled with the promise they will be given a vote 'when possible.'

"The new measures threaten to destroy the hospitality industry. We know there are dismayed, worried and angry people in the hospitality industry and we need more people from the sector to come forward and support this legal case. They can make their voices heard. Anyone who wants to support it financially can donate to the CrowdJustice appeal. The lockdown measures are illegal, they do not work and they must be scrapped."

Simon Dolan

Sept. 17, 2020

Update 19

Appeal Delayed due to Govt lawyer holiday plans

Our legal challenge against the Government delayed by a further month - due to a Government lawyer being on holiday.

We had been scheduled to go ahead on September 23, with the court having moved the hearing forward from the original date of September 28.

But one of the Government's 11-strong team is holiday on that date, meaning it has now been moved back to October 29. The availability of suitably senior judges to hear the case on alternative dates was also a factor.

As you know, the appeal was ordered to be heard by Lord Justice Hickinbottom who said that the legal challenge "potentially raises fundamental issues concerning the proper spheres for democratically-accountable Ministers of the Government and judges."

We are all naturally incredibly frustrated that the hearing will be delayed, especially given Lord Justice Hickinbottom's direction that the case needed to be heard quickly. The case is of the utmost importance to the entire nation and we believe that further delays only highlight the Government's inability to face up to its decisions.

The better news is that the delay will mean that the appeal will be held in person, rather than virtually as all previous stages have been.

We have seen in recent weeks that the Government, by its own admission, is willing to break the law. It cannot be allowed that these actions go unchecked and I urge everyone to consider the ramifications which the lockdown has had on our freedoms and liberties.

In the meantime, we will continue to fight to expose the dangerous and damaging impacts the Government's lockdown strategy has had on the entire nation and I would urge you to join our fight by signing up to <https://www.keepbritainfree.com>

Simon Dolan

Aug. 5, 2020

Update 18

Appeal to be heard!

Our challenge against the UK Government lockdown will continue to be heard after the Court of Appeal yesterday ruled that the case highlighted 'fundamental' concerns over the accountability of Government Ministers.

The Judicial Review will now proceed to a rolled-up hearing expected to be held at the Court of Appeal during the week commencing the 28th September after a ruling was handed down by Lord Justice Hickinbottom.

The hearing will decide on whether the case should progress to a full Appeal which would see the Government once again pressed to defend the introduction of measures which were described by the court as "possibly the most restrictive regime on the public life of persons and businesses ever."

Lord Justice Hickinbottom said that the legal challenge "potentially raises fundamental issues concerning the proper spheres for democratically-accountable Ministers of the Government and judges."

Owing to Government restrictions, our first hearing was held virtually. However, Lord Justice Hickinbottom ordered in his review that the case should be "considered by the full court in open court, and the Applicants given any opportunity to make good their case at least on arguability."

Simon Dolan

July 17, 2020

Update 17

Appeal

Just to let you all know that the appeal documents (grounds of appeal and skeleton arguments) are up on the site. Bottom of the home page.

Well worth a read...

Simon Dolan

July 9, 2020

Update 16

Appeal announcement

I am reigniting our lockdown battle with the Government by launching an appeal against the decision denying us permission to bring a Judicial Review over the measures.

Our Judicial Review attempt was rebuffed by Mr Justice Lewis in a swiftly delivered decision, following an all-day hearing on July 2.

But after consulting with the legal team, I am now appealing the ruling.

I feel passionately about the rights which lockdown has taken away from everyone and that is why I am appealing. It cannot be right that the power to take away livelihoods, damage businesses and remove basic freedoms can be exercised by a Government Minister, with no adequate checks or balances.

I feel the judgment did not engage with, or consider on any analytical level, the vital issues – issues that affect tens of millions of people - that we set out in the case.

Neither do I feel the judgment engaged on an appropriate level with the 100s of pages of evidence the legal team put together. It appears incredibly out of touch with the devastating consequences on society.

The judge suggested the impact on family life was modest as loved-ones could catch up on video calls.

This is a statement which will not sit well with the millions of families who have been unable to visit elderly relatives and those in care homes.

Only this week we have read how this lack of contact is feared to have accelerated dementia in sufferers, with it being reported that experts suspect many indirect COVID 19 deaths in care homes were due to lack of contact with loved ones and carers, causing dementia patients to deteriorate.

We also now know there has been no consistency on political gatherings, which are effectively banned under lockdown. Piers Corbyn, who is a 73-year-old man, will face court in October, just for exercising his rights of free speech at Speaker's Corner. Yet 1000s of people who have marched on various causes – including BLM – have not faced the same measures.

Lockdown is not over. Even now, the Government's "guidance" on what people can or cannot do is at odds with the laws they have enacted. It is so confusing that many even mainstream media have misreported what the restrictions actually are. We are seeing the appalling effects of the Government decisions every day. Life in the UK could be changed forever if we do not act.

The Government's barrister argued that our case was now "academic" due to the recent easing of restrictions.

But the lockdown in Leicester – and any other city which is sent down the same path whenever the Government so chooses – shows that is plainly not the case.

I believe lockdown should never be allowed to happen again and that – and the support of nearly 7,000 people who have backed my campaign – also drives this appeal.

Papers formally requesting the appeal will be lodged at the High Court on Monday.

Simon Dolan

July 6, 2020

Update 15

High Court Decision

Disappointed beyond measure to let you know that we have received the High Court ruling and the Judge has disallowed our case - essentially this means we have no recourse to the law.

We have published the full decision on the website. Please do read through this as you will see just how lightly and with complete disdain the Judiciary have dismissed the enormous amount of evidence we provided.

We are currently considering an Appeal.

I want to say a personal and very heartfelt thank you to all of you. It has meant the world to stand alongside so many people who believe like I do that Britain should remain a free country.

We will continue the fight - either in Court of via other means. Please do consider signing up to www.keepbritainfree.com

We may have lost this battle but the war is very much just beginning.

Simon Dolan

July 3, 2020

Update 14

Breaking News

After our day in Court yesterday, the Govt have scrapped the existing Regs and tonight replaced them with much less restrictive ones. However, they are not fully scrapped and the threat of reimposition remains so we continue to fight for full Judicial Review

Our legal team will be analysing the new Regs over the weekend. We will come back on Monday with full details as to what restrictions remain.

Simon Dolan

July 2, 2020

Update 13

High Court - Day 1

Just a quick update. Our skeleton case was heard today at the High Court with our barristers laying out our arguments and the Govt's barristers countering.

The Judge, who described the case as "extremely important" has reserved judgement and will deliver his verdict early next week. This verdict will determine whether we can move forward to the full hearing which would likely be very soon after.

We are feeling quietly confident.

Thank you again for all your support. For a full rundown of the days events, you can follow me on Twitter (@simondolan) where you will be able to see the various points made throughout the hearing

Simon Dolan

June 23, 2020

Update 12

High Court date given

Our battle against the Government's lockdown will go before a High Court judge on July 2.

The date – which will mark the 101st day since the UK was placed into lockdown – has been set aside for an application for permission to seek Judicial Review. This hearing is the important first step in the process and is the first official court date in our legal challenge.

It was set just days after the Government found itself under-fire following the claim in its defence papers that it had not ordered schools to close and that it was merely a "request" that they did.

The revelation sparked backlash from schools and parents alarmed over how the trick of words from Prime Minister Boris Johnson has meant more than 11 million children being out of school since March 23. Many private schools declared they would be opening regardless in September "come what may", using hygiene measures and their own test and trace measures.

While lockdown means the hearing will take place via video link and not physically in the High Court, it will follow normal rules in terms of access to the public and media.

The Government will be represented by one of country's top QCs, First Treasury Counsel Sir James Eadie. Its legal team also includes 3 barristers.

July 2 will be just over 100 days since lockdown and what has happened every day in this period underlines how important the Judicial Review is.

In that time, £2.5bn has been wiped off the UK economy each day, millions of children are shut out of school, the NHS faces a waiting list explosion, and the freedoms of liberties everyone in the UK have been trampled over. In all this time, the Government has shown the agility of a beached whale.

It has sought to kick this legal process into the long grass time and time again. Even its response was issued 3 minutes before the deadline. Its strategy seems to be to label our claims as 'absurd' and to shut down any scrutiny of the most draconian set of rules this country has known.

We have already forced the publishing of the SAGE meeting minutes, and unmasked the closure of schools as a trick of words from a government now trying to weasel its way out of a decision around education which is a stain on the history of this country.

There has been no democratic process on lockdown, which is why we must turn to the courts. Few people will realise there was a debate over the lockdown in the Commons recently. It is a disgrace that only a handful of MPs attended – a point made by some of the MPs themselves – this is why I believe the legal work to unpick the Government's actions as part of the Judicial Review is so vital. Lockdown must end now.

The Judicial Review will seek to challenge the Government on three main points:

- Whether lockdown is unlawful because the Government implemented regulations under the Public Health Act 1984 instead of the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 or the Coronavirus Act 2020.
- The legality of the continuation of lockdown, and whether the tests for lifting it are too narrow, failing to take account of the economic and social impacts of lockdown.
- Whether the restrictions brought in by the Government contravene the European Convention of Human Rights, which cover the right to liberty, family life, education and property.

We are represented by Michael Gardner of law firm Wedlake Bell LLP and barrister Francis Hoar of Field Court Chambers. Philip Havers QC, a barrister and Deputy High Court Judge who specialises in public law, human rights and public inquiries, is also instructed as part of the legal team.

Simon Dolan

June 18, 2020

Update 11

Government Defence Now Published

Happy to say that we have now published the Govt Summary Grounds of Defence. Is on the website toward the bottom of the homepage (and yes, includes the schools defence in all its glory)

Also, you may want to visit

<https://www.keepbritainfree.com>

Which is a new movement I have set up to ensure this can never happen again

Simon Dolan

June 15, 2020

Update 10

Our second victory

Late on Friday afternoon, 3 minutes before their deadline expired, the Govt filed with us their defence against our claim. All 58 pages of it.

We will publish the whole thing on the site shortly, but the main story is that we have finally exposed that the whole schools shutdown was a lie. The Govt have admitted that they had no legal basis to close schools, and that they simply 'recommended it'.

This was something we suspected all along. The Govt says it is nonsensical for us to say that schools were closed because they remained open for key workers and there had only been a 'request' that schools should shut their doors to other pupils, yet the PM announced on March 18th that "schools will remain closed until further notice"

This is really quite an extraordinary lie, and one which never would have come out if we hadn't started this Judicial Review

Finally, if you would like to get up to the minute updates, please do feel free to follow me on Twitter (just search simondolan). I can get these out much quicker than the updates on here.

Simon

Simon Dolan

June 8, 2020

Update 9

Letter Before Action - Quarantine regs.

Our letter before action against the quarantine regulations is now up on the site - right at the bottom of the homepage. Contains our whole argument against the quarantine.

Simon Dolan

June 2, 2020

Update 8

Additional Letters Published now.

Just a very quick update to say that there is additional correspondence up on the site. Same place on the home page - is at the bottom left

Things seem to be moving very much in our favour - we keep fighting. Govt have until 12th June to issue full defence.

Simon Dolan

May 30, 2020

Update 7

First victory!

The Government have now released Sage minutes following our demands. Having formally served our Judicial Review on them demanding disclosure on 26 May, 3 days later, they've performed a complete U turn and published them.

Patrick Vallance said

"Openness and transparency around this disease is a social imperative, which is why it's important we don't wait to publish minutes and evidence"

Chris Whitty said

"I am very pleased that the SAGE minutes are being published"

Make no mistake. The only reason the Govt published these was because of our legal action. The fight of course, continues. We won't stop until they have been held to account for this illegal lockdown. They have until 12th June to file their defence papers.

If you want to read the papers you can find them here:

<https://www.gov.uk/search/transparency-and-freedom-of-information-releases?organisations%5B%5D=scientific-advisory-group-for-emergencies&parent=scientific-advisory-group-for-emergencies>

Simon Dolan

May 27, 2020

Update 6

Evidence in Support

This document is now published in full on the home page. Well worth a read as it contains the evidence in support of our case.

Simon Dolan

May 21, 2020

Update 5

Case filed today

My lawyers have this morning filed my application to the High Court for a Judicial Review of the Government's lockdown regulations. They have filed over 1000 pages of legal documents including an 87 page Statement of Grounds. We will be publishing the entire document on this site around 1pm today, along with the initial Govt response to our first letter.

The proceedings are against Matt Hancock, the Secretary of State for Health & Social Care – whose name is on the lockdown laws – and Gavin Williamson the Secretary of State for Education, who has presided over the closure of schools and universities.

The aim of the proceedings is to lift the ruinous lockdown, restore the civil liberties taken away from the public and allow schools, healthcare services and the economy to restart.

The number of people furloughed or unemployed stands at 10 million people, and billions are being wiped off the economy with every passing day. Those lucky enough to have jobs left at the end of this crisis could see income tax increase by up to 10p in the pound. The government has spent £13,000 per household on bailout so far.

A judicial review is the only effective means of challenging what the Government is doing and holding them properly to account. Boris Johnson and his crew have sleepwalked into this mess and are taking the nation over the cliff edge with them.

Our fight begins proper today!

Simon Dolan

May 14, 2020

Update 4

Govt response received

Just a few hours ago we received a detailed response from the Govt to our letter before action. Our legal team are currently considering the various points raised. The letter runs to some 13 pages and as you can imagine contains some highly technical points. We can confirm for now that they are however refusing to release the minutes of the SAGE meetings.

Will update further just as soon as the legal team have formulated their plan of action. rest assured, the fight very much continues. Expect another update in the next couple of days.

Simon Dolan

May 7, 2020

Update 3

Government asking for more time to respond to us

Businessman Simon Dolan has accused Boris Johnson of “dragging his heels over the burning embers of the economy” after the Government said it needed more time to respond to his legal challenge to lockdown.

Mr Dolan, who owns ten UK businesses and employs 600 people, is seeking a Judicial Review over the Government’s emergency measures which continue to impose severe restrictions on personal liberty and freeze the UK economy.

His lawyers sent a Letter Before Action the Government on Thursday April 30, setting a deadline of May 7 for them to respond.

The legal challenge calls on the Government to urgently action the allowing of gatherings of up to 100 people, the reopening of schools, and to commit to a review the lockdown restrictions every two weeks

However, government lawyers have now written to Mr Dolan’s legal team requesting a further week to issue their response.

The initial deadline was also the time PM Boris Johnson was due to announce a review of lockdown. That announcement has also been pushed back – reportedly until Sunday evening.

Simon Dolan said: “The Government is playing for time in asking for more time to respond to the Letter Before Action. Time is something ministers really do not have the luxury of – every day is estimated to cost the economy £2.5billion.

“It is yet another example of the Government sitting on its hands while Britain is sent hurtling on a journey to economic and social ruin. Boris Johnson wants to be seen as Churchillian – he is behaving more like Nero, dragging his heels over the burning embers of the economy and freedom.

“We have a delay in addressing the Letter Before Action and delay in addressing nation desperate to hear a plan on how we will climb out of the mess of lockdown.

“The logic of delaying any announcement is baffling, unnecessary and damaging. Other countries are emerging from lockdown and Britain we will be left behind – ruining the rising cost with every passing hour.”

The extension request from Government comes following pressure from its own MPs over lockdown. In a House of Commons debate on Monday evening (May 4), questions over the legality of lockdown were aired. Mr Dolan’s Judicial Review was referenced in the debate.

One backbencher who took part in the debate, Steve Baker MP (Wycombe), had already called on the Prime Minister to “end the absurd, dystopian and tyrannical lockdown.” Writing in a national newspaper, he argued: “These extraordinary measures require not only legal authority but democratic consent. There is a real possibility that they have had neither.”

Mr Dolan said: “There is growing criticism and frustration over the Government’s delays, including from within its own party.

“It is now universally accepted that the lockdown will cause enormous long-term damage to both the economy and the general health of the population.

“We know from the House of Commons debate that the Government is aware of the issues over the legality of lockdown. To say it hasn't had time to properly respond is unacceptable when so much is at stake.

““Boris will play to the crowd on Sunday by allowing picnics and visits to the garden centre. He is going to let people play golf and go fly fishing.

“But it's just lightweight stuff which does not address the real needs of ordinary people. We need serious decisions which will get the economy moving and safeguard future generations.”

Mr Dolan's lawyers have given the Government until Tuesday May 12 to issue its response.

Simon Dolan

May 6, 2020

Update 2

Leading barrister Philip Havers QC instructed in lockdown legal challenge

A leading human rights lawyer has been appointed to the team which is mounting a legal challenge to lockdown – and calling for all SAGE publications to be made public.

Philip Havers QC, a barrister and Deputy High Court Judge who specialises in public law, human rights and public inquiries, has been instructed to challenge the lawfulness of the Government's restriction of civil liberties.

This comes as the campaign continues to seek greater transparency over the Government's SAGE meetings – after a disappointing partial release of information.

Earlier today the Government released a cache of SAGE documents, but so far only a small fraction of the 122 documents which the scientific advisory group has produced have been made public.

Meanwhile, over two thousand individuals have now donated to the CrowdJustice fund behind the lockdown legal challenge, led by UK businessman Simon Dolan.

They are backing a Judicial Review into the Government's emergency measures which continue to impose severe restrictions on personal liberty which are freezing the UK economy.

Lawyers acting on behalf of Mr Dolan delivered a 'Letter Before Action' to the Government last week, giving it until this Thursday May 7 to respond.

A key part of their challenge is calling for publication of all SAGE documents and minutes from their meetings.

Simon Dolan said: “Our campaign is growing stronger by the day. I am delighted that Philip Havers QC will now be working with us on the judicial review.

“There is a lot of support for what we are doing. It is incredible that over two thousand people have now donated to our CrowdJustice fund.

“Together we can encourage the Government to lift restrictions, reopen schools and get the economy moving again.

“We welcome the partial release of SAGE publications. However, it is disappointing that so much information is still being withheld. I do not understand why there is continuing secrecy. It is vital that the government releases all SAGE documents and minutes to reveal who has said what.

“One of the SAGE publications we are not allowed to see is called 'What is the evidence for the importance of outdoor transmission and of indoor transmission of COVID-19?'. Why can't we see that? Does it cast doubt on the likelihood of people infecting each other in the street?

"This cover up is exactly why we are pursuing a legal challenge to lockdown. We want total transparency over the decisions that took our personal freedoms away.

Simon Dolan

May 3, 2020

Update 1

First update

Thanks so much everyone for your kind support. Absolutely blown away by the level of feeling out there, and I must admit my faith in humanity has been restored. Such an important subject and I am so happy that so many people agree.

The level of press attention has been great - most nationals have picked it up in the UK and we have gone as far as Aus, US, Spain and France too.

We will carry on with the media every day up to and including 7th May which is when the Govt need to respond to our letter and also the date they announce their new lockdown measures.

We have identified an eminent QC who will be representing us at the Judicial Review. I will update with full details as soon as I can.

In the meantime, thanks again. I believe we are achieving something great here.

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