

## **TRAVELLING ABROAD**

On a recent trip to Europe the following snippets were of special legal note:-

In July Prince George of Cambridge was born causing a lot of excitement in England. Had the baby been a girl, she would have become third in line to the Throne after her grandfather, Charles and father, William. Until very recently a daughter born to the reigning sovereign or heir apparent would have to give precedence to any male children born after her. The change of succession rules was a radical move by Great Britain which, of course, affects all countries where the Queen is the Head of State.

Changes have also been made to Coroners procedures in England. Coroners now have strict time limits for conducting enquiries and completing statutory procedures. It is hoped that quicker attention to carrying out enquiries will speed up the process and deal with deaths in a timely manner so that a cause of death will be decided much more quickly in the future.

During my time in Britain, two jurors were each sentenced to two months imprisonment for contempt of Court. At the time a jury is sworn in, the trial Judge instructs them to listen only to the evidence and matters raised in the courtroom and to refrain from any other outside communications regarding the trial. One of the jurors researched the victims of the crimes on his computer. The other wrote on Facebook how delighted he was to be involved in a trial relating to a paedophile and what his intentions were for the decision. Neither juror had followed the Judge's directions.

Most countries seem to be trying to curb excess liquor consumption. The Scottish Parliament wants to bring in minimum pricing for alcohol products. England and Wales have already rejected the ideal. Under EU rules it is necessary to obtain the EU Commission's agreement to the proposal as it restricts trade and contractual rights. Needless to say the wine producers in European countries oppose the move as it may result in them losing money as a result. This is a continuing debate.

An authority in England has granted a company consent to carry out fracking on parts of its land. Needless to say the environmentalists are protesting vigorously in an effort to stop the process, but to little effect.

A horror story was reported in the newspapers. A young Danish business woman attended a conference in Dubai, an Islamic state. While in Dubai she alleged that she had been raped. The outcome of the rape allegation was not reported but she was charged with engaging in sex outside marriage, convicted and sentenced to 16 months imprisonment. Fortunately for her, her government dealt with the Dubai Government and she was released and able to return home but it shows how harsh other jurisdiction's laws can be.

Back in Christchurch and the Environment Court has granted Cricket the rights to develop their part of Hagley Park.

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