

History of UK Property Land Registry

In the year 1857, the Registration of Title of the Royal Commission introduced a registration system, which was mainly established around the London's central registry in addition to the district offices. The Lord Chancellor of that time, Sir Richard Bethell passed the Land Registration Act in the year 1862. The registration act helped in the provision of Freehold estates. The registration system that was adopted originated from a system, which was initiated in South Australia with the help of the Prime Minister, Sir Robert Torrens. The first Chief Land Registrar, Mr. Brent Spencer Follett, initiated the first offices of the Land Registry at London's 34 Lincoln's Inn Fields on the 15th of October, 1862. At that time, only six full time staffs were employed for Mr. Follett. The salary of Mr. Follett at that time was an imperial £ 2500 annually.

Land Registry Flaws: The main reason for the downfall of the 1862 Act was that it contained numerous flaws. In addition, it was not compulsorily imposed upon people at that time to necessarily embark on a land registration. Also, once a person registered the land, it was not essential to register any other transactions subsequent to that which was already registered. This meant that a person, who had initially registered as the specific property owner might not be necessarily its owner, in case the land is sold to some other person subsequent to the registration. Lawyers at that time vociferously opposed compulsion to register land. Subsequent to the Land Transfer Act of 1875, as much as seven other attempts were made for the introduction of the act for land registration which yielded no results. When it seemed that the land registration would not succeed, Sir Charles Brickdale took over the reins as a Land Registrar and thoroughly improved the land registration process. A detailed report prepared by Sir Charles which was used in Germany at that time, proved to be of utmost benefit.

Miscellaneous: Subsequently, the year 1897 witnessed the imposition of the Land Transfer Act by Hardinge Giffard, the Lord Chancellor. This act helped in bringing about a sense of necessity into the land registration process. A country veto was also permitted for the satisfaction of the demands of the legal profession. In the year 1899, the London County Council voted in favor of the Land Registration Act. This was one of the reasons for the expansion of the Land Registration Act.