

## Observing an RICS tribunal hearing

### Observing a hearing

- Members of the public are welcome to observe an RICS hearing (Disciplinary, Registration and Appeal Hearings). Those who want to attend should contact the relevant Regulatory Tribunal Executive specified on the forthcoming notice.
- Hearings are mainly held at RICS, 55 Colmore Row, Birmingham, B3 2AS, though occasionally they are held at RICS, Parliament Square, London, SW1P 3AD, external venues in the UK, or outside the UK.
- Hearings can be subject to last-minute cancellations or adjournments and, sometimes, parts of the cases are heard in private. All public observers have to leave the tribunal room for the duration of the private hearing.
- Public observers are allowed on a first come, first served basis. There can be four observers at hearings in Birmingham, and six observers at hearings in London.
- Observers have to report to reception when they arrive. They are signed in and given a badge that needs to be worn at all times. Observers then wait in reception until they are shown to the tribunal room by the relevant Regulatory Tribunal Executive, who will be happy to answer any questions.
- Observers should conduct themselves as quietly as possible within RICS' offices, where the hearings are held.
- Observers should remain silent at all times within the tribunal room. Mobile phones have to be switched off.
- RICS reserves the right to ask any member of the public to leave the tribunal room and/or the premises at any time.
- Observers cannot approach a member of the panel at any time. The Regulatory Tribunal Executive can assist and answer queries.

### Hearing times

- Hearings generally start at 10:00am GMT/BST (or 7.30-8:00am BST/GMT for international cases) and finish around 5:30pm GMT/BST.
- Times may differ depending on the case.
- A hearing is normally scheduled for a day, but it may take more or less time. RICS is unable to provide precise indications of exact timing.

### What to expect

- Attending a hearing requires a lot of waiting. Whenever the panel deliberates, the case goes into a private session and public observers are asked to leave the tribunal room.

## During the hearing

### *The panel:*

- The Conduct and Appeal Committee are entirely independent and completely impartial to RICS.
- Each panel has three members. At least one member is a chartered surveyor and at least one is a lay member. There is also a panel chair.
- The panel chair is an experienced panel member and is responsible for the proceedings.
- The panel chair and panel members are solely responsible for making the decisions in the case.

### *Legal adviser:*

- The legal adviser is an independent and experienced barrister or solicitor who advises the panel on the law.
- The legal adviser assists with drafting the decision for the panel but plays no part in the decision-making.

### *Presenting officer*

- The presenting officer is normally a solicitor or a barrister who presents a case on behalf of RICS.

### *Regulated member*

- The regulated member is the individual or firm that is regulated by RICS and that is under investigation. The regulated member may be present at the hearing and may also be legally represented.

### *Regulatory tribunal executive*

- The Regulatory Tribunal Executive assists the panel, both parties, witnesses and public observers for the duration of the hearing. They are the key contact throughout the day.

### *Witnesses*

- Witnesses can be called to give evidence by the RICS presenting officer or by the regulated member.

## Noise and disturbances

- Phones and electronic devices should be turned off and remain silent during the hearing.
- Public observers may leave the room during the proceedings but have to do so without causing disturbance.
- No canned drinks or food may be bought into the tribunal room.

## Recording equipment

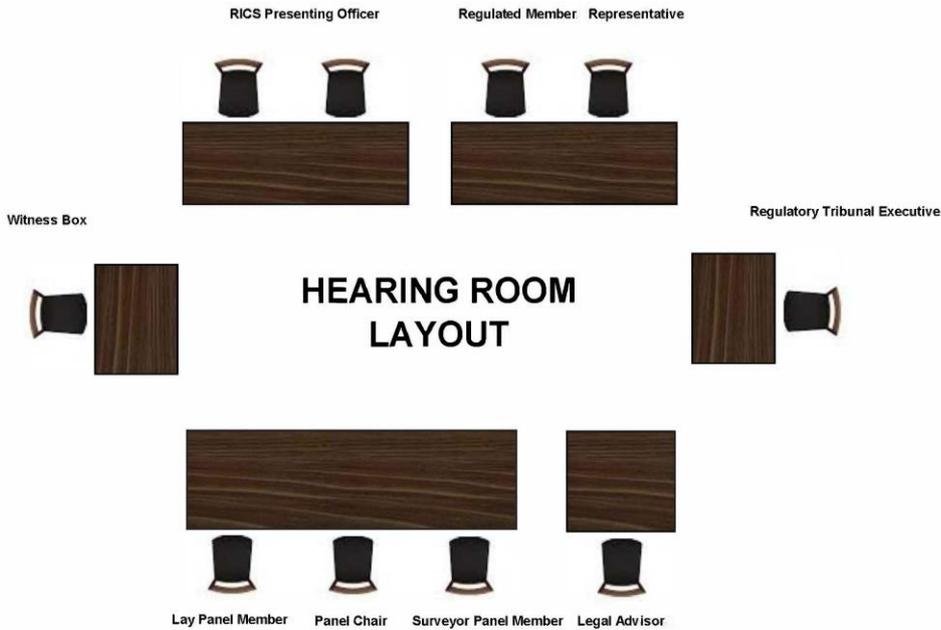
- RICS records the audio of the hearing.
- The use of recording or photographic equipment is strictly forbidden by members of the public.

## Fire safety

- Fire drills are always addressed before the hearing commences.
- If there is a fire drill, the Regulatory Tribunal Executive will guide you to the nearest exit

# Venues

The diagram below shows where each party usually sits during a tribunal. The photographs show the tribunal rooms in Birmingham.



**Birmingham**