# A Practical Guide to Living in the United Kingdom A Report

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A report by Professor Thom Brooks of a review of the uses of *A Practical Guide to Living in the United Kingdom* for British immigration policy

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## **FOREWORD**

## by Professor Thom Brooks

In 2013, my comprehensive report on the *Life in the United Kingdom* citizenship test revealed serious errors and omissions finding it 'unfit for purpose'. My report was widely covered in over 300 media outlets often with the tag that the report found the test was 'like a bad pub guiz'—a claim that has stuck to the test as it has not yet been revised since my report was published.

The coalition government was dismissive of my findings claiming that much of what I found missing on the test was information that any migrant eligible for citizenship should know, such as how to contact emergency services, how to report a crime or register with a GP. This response suggests the government's spokesperson lacked much familiarity with the test handbook because it still includes much trivial information that we can reasonably expect any visitor to the UK should know, such as that there is a £5 note, the Queen is head of state and Christmas Day is 25th December. The government has never replied to my response.

The TSO published A Practical Guide to Living in the United Kingdom in 2014 receiving virtually no press attention. It is authored by Jenny Wales, who wrote the Official Study Guide to the citizenship test which I included in my report's analysis.

My new report into the *Practical Guide* exposes omissions that raise serious questions about its suitability as a practical guide for migrants coming to the UK for the first time. My biggest surprise is to find many of the omissions in this guide to be the same missing in the citizenship test, such as how to contact the police about an emergency services. Either the government did not take note of my earlier concerns and recommendations or they have rushed out a guide before it was ready for publication.

My report reveals these omissions and problems. I recommend that the government must make a choice about the purposes for such a guide in light of their producing a citizenship test handbook. I further recommend that a more attractive option is to include any additional information produced in the *Practical Guide* in the future citizenship test handbook instead.

This single-authored report is the product of research informed by personal experiences. I left my native United States for the Republic of Ireland in 1999, I have lived in the United Kingdom since 2001 and I became a British citizen in 2011. These experiences provide me with first-hand knowledge about immigration in theory and practice. This knowledge has been invaluable in helping me identify so guickly what ministers and commentators readily overlook.

This report is part of my effort to contribute to the improvement of immigration policies. British citizenship has been an honour for me to achieve and I believe I have a duty to provide a constructive, yet critical, examination in this important area of public policy not only for the benefit of future immigrants, but, more importantly, for present citizens as well.

Professor Thom Brooks, Durham University

22<sup>nd</sup> June 2015

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The TSO published A Practical Guide to Living in the United Kingdom ('Practical Guide') for the stated purpose to help migrants 'settle in quickly and enjoy your new life'. This report finds mistakes and omissions in this guide that raise serious concerns about its being unfit for purpose. These errors are all the more striking because many of them were also a problem for the citizenship test handbook—and the *Practical Guide*'s author is also the author of the citizenship test's *Official Study* Guide.<sup>2</sup>

#### Main conclusions

# Poorly organised

The *Practical Guide* is poorly organised with significant overlap between some chapters and information presented out of order. Information about basics concerning the law begin the book while information about British geography and traditions end it which reads out of place.

## Key practical information left out

One surprise is that many key pieces of practical information, such as how to learn about how much council tax to pay or how to contact emergency services, are left out of the Practical Guide and readers are asked to find this out for themselves. While it may be useful to promote readers become independent learners about certain aspects of life in the UK, it is an error to leave such vitally important practical information for new migrants to discover on their own without any guidance. This undermines the *Guide*'s aim as a handbook of important *practical* information.

## Mistakes

The Practical Guide is unsatisfactory as a guide to help migrants settle in the United Kingdom. It contains several errors and omissions that seriously undermine its potential effectiveness. These include key practical areas of every day British life such as taxes, residency and marriage. These gaps must be closed if the *Practical* Guide is to fulfil its stated purpose.

## **Omissions**

The Practical Guide contains several omissions concerning obtaining work visas, the courts, housing and divorce. These are in addition to the Guide's not informing readers about how to contact the police or fire services—important information that should have been included, but also missing from the current UK citizenship test.<sup>3</sup>

# Already outdated

<sup>1</sup> Jenny Wales, A Practical Guide to Living in the United Kingdom (London: TSO, 2014).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> See Jenny Wales, Life in the United Kingdom: Official Study Guide (London: TSO, 2013). Wales has authored other books about citizenship, including Jenny Wales, Citizenship Today – Student's Book: Endorsed by Edexcel, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed (London: Collins, 2009) and Jenny Wales, Collins Revision – GCSE Citizenship for Edexcel (London: Collins, 2010).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> See Thom Brooks, The 'Life in the United Kingdom' Citizenship Test: Is It Unfit for Purpose? (Durham: Durham University, 2013).

Some information in the *Practical Guide* is already out of date. This includes its claim that the three largest parties in Parliament are the Conservatives, Labour and Liberal Democrats. A further mistake is its claiming that driving licences include a paper licence which has been discontinued.

## Lack of purpose

There is substantial overlap between the *Practical Guide* and the citizenship test handbook. The Guide's author also wrote the TSO's Official Study Guide to the citizenship test. Both the Guide and the citizenship test handbook share many of the same problems. The government is recommended to address these problems by improving the citizenship test handbook: there is no clear purpose for publishing a separate Practical Guide. If the Practical Guide is to continue, then its aims and purposes should be distinguished and its content more closely reflect its difference from the citizenship test.

**Chapter 1** examines problems relating to the *Practical Guide*'s form. Chapter 2 exposes problems with its content. The conclusion raises recommendations for the government on how it should address problems identified in this report.

## CHAPTER ONE

## Problems found with the *Practical Guide*'s format

The Practical Guide suffers from several problems relating to its form. These include its table of contents, unnecessary overlap between chapters and leaving key practical information for readers to discover without any guidance on where it can be found.

#### Table of contents

The *Practical Guide* is divided into six chapters of roughly equal lengths. The first is 'How the law affects you' with some basic information about the government and legal system.<sup>4</sup> The second chapter is 'Working life' explaining 'the world of work' and self-employment.<sup>5</sup> The third is 'Everyday life' with discussion of language, currency, shopping and housing.<sup>6</sup> The fourth is 'Family life' covering marriage, civil partnerships, domestic violence, divorce and issues pertaining to children such as education.<sup>7</sup> The fifth is 'Community life' discussion local government, cultural heritage, sport and local community.8 The final chapter is 'Out and about' which includes British geography, traditions, transport and leisure. <sup>9</sup> There is a brief glossary containing 18 terms and index.

It is highly surprising that a 'practical guide' designed to assist migrants acclimatise to a new life in the United Kingdom would start with a chapter on 'How the law affects you' and not some comment about basic facts about the UK, such as its geography, population or a comment on its history. Such basic information is a natural introduction to the UK that new migrants should familiarise themselves with.

The *Practical Guide* presents information about the criminal law and courts before turning to 'Everyday life' in chapter three. In this later chapter, the *Practical Guide* discusses the English language, currency and housing—arguably of greater practical significance for most new migrants than knowing the difference between various courtrooms. It would have been more straightforward to begin with information like British geography, currency and housing before turning to information about how to submit a complaint against the police or claim for legal aid. 10

# Overlap

There is much overlap between chapters and their content should have been organised better. The first chapter discusses the law and it notes the Human Rights Act. 11 But the Human Rights Act is raised again with a second discussion in chapter 4.12 This later chapter notes that my rights relating to the respect for family life are

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> See Wales, A Practical Guide to Living in the United Kingdom, 8—33.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> See ibid., 34—55.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> See ibid., 56—73.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> See ibid., 74—105.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> See ibid., 106—133.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> See ibid., 134—162.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> See ibid., 27, 31—33.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> Ibid., 19.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> Ibid, 75.

covered by the Act. But it is somewhat off-topic in noting here (and not earlier) that it covers 'a right to a fair trial and 'a right to join in the election of a government'.<sup>13</sup>

There is further overlap in other areas, such as chapter 5 (on 'Community life') and chapter 6 ('Out and about'). Both cover similar terrain regarding leisure activities and cultural events. This overlap might have been better managed by separating out information on transport (including how to procure a driving licence) creating its own chapter, but then bringing together the other information into a second chapter.

Another area of overlap concerns council tax. Council tax is first discussed in the chapter 'Everyday life'.<sup>14</sup> But it comes up again and defined in the following chapter 'Community life' as part of a wider discussion about councils.<sup>15</sup>

## Key information left for readers to discover

Each chapter contains 'Action' boxes that ask readers to find out information for themselves. This could be beneficial if readers had the tools that could be applied to find such information. One problem is that this is often lacking. An example is the Action box that says the following: 'Find out the name of your MP. Which party do they represent?' This question is not grammatically correct. It should read 'Find out the name of your MP. Which party *does he or she* represent?' No information is provided in the *Practical Guide* about how readers might find out about who their representations are, such as a website or other resource.

If the *Practical Guide* wants to encourage readers to discover information for themselves, then it should ensure it delivers the tools readers will require to apply this knowledge. The general aim is a good one as it encourages reader curiosity about life in the UK. There is also an added benefit of keeping the text a more reasonable length: there is no need to print the names and political affiliations of all 650 MPs when a website directory might suffice instead. But the website directory deserves mention to help ensure readers can find the information requested from them.

This problem of asking readers to find answers to questions without being given the necessary tools to do so is repeated elsewhere. Perhaps the best example of the problem it creates concerns taxes and the emergency services. Readers are asked to 'Find out how to pay your council tax' and 'Find out how to contact the police and emergency services'. Readers are also asked to find out for themselves 'what does "income" include? Find out how taxes are paid', 'How does self-assessment work?' and 'What benefits are affected if you do not pay National Insurance?' But no information is given to provide a head-start, such as a website or telephone number.

It is especially surprising to discover that contacting the police and emergency services is not held to be something sufficiently important to provide to readers. Arguably, dialling 999 is one of the more crucial phone numbers anyone in the United Kingdom should know. But the only mention of 999 is in relation to health

<sup>14</sup> See ibid., 72—73.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> Ibid., 75.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>15</sup> See ibid., 109.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>16</sup> Ibid., 19.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup> Ibid., 73.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>18</sup> Ibid., 39.

care-related emergency. 19 It is nowhere said that other emergency services may be contacted by 999, such as the police.

This failing is compounded by the fact that how to contact the emergency services or police is also missing from the *Life in the United Kingdom* citizenship test handbook. When I identified this major omission in my citizenship test report, Lord Taylor of Holbeach, speaking for the government, said that some information was omitted where it would be expected suitable applicants for citizenship—who would normally have residency in the UK for at least three years—would already know this.<sup>20</sup> I argued that this was a mistaken assumption and an unsatisfactory justification for omitting something so crucial for any migrant to know.

But the *Practical Guide* cannot rely on any such excuse. It is not for migrants with several years of UK residency looking to apply shortly for citizenship. The *Practical* Guide is for migrants newly arrived in the UK. Given its earlier omission from the test handbook and Jenny Wales's earlier Official Study Guide for the citizenship test identified in my 2013 report, it is difficult to understand why 999 is left out yet again. but this time for individuals who might have only just set foot in the country.<sup>21</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>19</sup> See ibid., 92, 154.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>20</sup> Lord Taylor of Holbeach. 2013. HL Debate, 10 October, cGC127.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>21</sup> See Brooks, The 'Life in the United Kingdom' Citizenship Test and Wales, Official Study Guide.

#### CHAPTER TWO

#### Problems found with the Practical Guide's content

The *Practical Guide* suffers from several problems relating to its content relating to mistakes, omissions and already outdated information.

## **Problems identified**

One problem identified in the first chapter is that the *Practical Guide* fails to inform readers about how to contact the emergency services for non-heath care-related reasons. The only references to 999 are to health care-related matters. Readers are not told how to contact the police or fire brigade in cases of emergency. This is a highly surprising omission for a self-professed practical guide for new migrants.

A second problem identified in the last chapter is the *Practical Guide* fails to inform readers about where to find details on how much council tax they might owe.

## Taxes and benefits

But the problems with the *Practical Guide's content* are greater than these two omissions. For example, the absence of information about council taxes is compounded by the lack of information about National Insurance or income tax. While the HMRC self-assessment hotline is one of five telephone numbers listed in the current citizenship test handbook, it is not included in the *Practical Guide*. The Guide notes there is income tax paid through either self-assessment or 'usually taken directly from your pay by your employer'. 22 There is no information about how much might be paid. The *Practical Guide* notes that Natural Insurance contributions must be paid and that they are 'usually deducted in the same way as income tax' without any indication about how much might be paid.<sup>23</sup> It is noted that 'you may not be able to claim benefits or receive a pension' if National Insurance is not paid.<sup>24</sup>

It is especially difficult to reconcile the absence of much, if any, information about what taxes might be owed, how to find out how much might be owed and how to pay taxes with the inclusion of detailed information about how to claim benefits. To be clear, there are significant restrictions on benefits available to non-UK citizens. This is especially true for non-EU citizens.

But there remains a substantial amount of space granted to informing new migrants about how to claim benefits, included:

- Information about claiming legal aid.<sup>25</sup>
- Information about financial help for legal costs.<sup>26</sup>
- Information about claiming compensation for victims.<sup>27</sup>
- Information about claiming benefits while unemployed.<sup>28</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>22</sup> Wales, A Practical Guide to Living in the United Kingdom, 39.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>23</sup> Ibid., 39.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>24</sup> Ibid., p. 39.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>25</sup> See ibid., 32.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>26</sup> See ibid., 33.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>27</sup> See ibid., 33.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>28</sup> See ibid., 46.

- Information about eligibility for maternity benefits.<sup>29</sup>
- Information about claiming free health care on grounds of age, pregnancy or because of having 'certain illnesses'.30
- Information about free health care services available to all.31

I do not question the importance of such help. But it is striking that the government's previous claims that it had struck out information about benefits from the last citizenship test seem contradicted by the decision to include it here—and for people newly arriving into Britain, rather than reserved only for people applying for citizenship.

In response to my report about the current UK citizenship test, a Conservative Party spokesman was quoted by the Press Association saying that it was no surprise I preferred 'Labour's flawed old test which told people how to claim benefits rather than encourage participation in British life'. 32 The *Practical Guide* is in stark contrast to this view. There is nearly a full page dedicated to information about claiming benefits on becoming unemployed.<sup>33</sup> Additionally, there are 'Action' points that encourage readers to find out how they can claim benefits as well.<sup>34</sup> It is noted that benefit claimants may pay less on council taxes.<sup>35</sup>

## Factual inaccuracies

There are several factual inaccuracies in the *Practical Guide's* discussion of British citizenship. It states that permanent settlement in the UK is known as 'permanent leave to remain'. 36 But it is called 'indefinite leave to remain' instead. The *Practical* Guide claims persons over age 18 'living in the UK for the last five years' or married to a British partner 'for the last three years' satisfy the residency requirements for citizenship.<sup>37</sup> But this is only the case if none of this time is spent as a student or married to an earlier partner, or if there are any convictions.<sup>38</sup>

The *Practical Guide* states that 'everyone' who applies for citizenship 'must have passed the Life in the UK test', but says nothing about the possible exemptions.<sup>39</sup> The Guide says all applicants must 'hold a language qualification', but this is also untrue: there are nearly a dozen exemptions, including on grounds of nationality.<sup>40</sup>

<sup>31</sup> See ibid., 90—91.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>29</sup> See ibid., 41.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>30</sup> Ibid., 88.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>32</sup> Press Association, 'Citizenship test has become a bad pub quiz, says academic', *The Guardian* (14 June 2013) (http://www.theguardian.com/uk/2013/jun/14/citizenship-test-pub-quiz).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>33</sup> Wales, A Practical Guide to Living in the United Kingdom, 46.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>34</sup> See 'Action' point 'Find out how to claim maternity benefits' and finding out about Jobseeker's Allowance (ibid., 42, 46).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>35</sup> Ibid., 72.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>36</sup> Ibid., 13.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>37</sup> Ibid., 13.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>38</sup> This information can be found at gov.uk under immigration rules concerning residency and the 'good character' requirement.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>39</sup> Wales, A Practical Guide to Living in the United Kingdom, 13.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>40</sup> Ibid., 13. See Home Office, *Immigration Rules: Appendix KoLL* 

<sup>(</sup>https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\_data/file/420549/20150406\_immigration\_ rules\_appendix\_koll\_final.pdf).

The *Practical Guide* notes that applicants 'will also need to meet other requirements and conditions', but none are mentioned.<sup>41</sup> These include the intention to settle permanently in the UK and satisfying the good character requirement. It is shocking to find so many inaccuracies and gaps in this section because the author previously published the *Official Study Guide* to the UK citizenship test, and so she should be aware.

#### Mistakes

There are several mistakes which can be listed:

- The Guide states that UK laws 'including the ones about visas and immigration' are 'passed by Parliament'.<sup>42</sup> In fact, most are delegated legislation composing the immigration rules and these are not Parliamentary Acts.
- The Guide states that 'the House of Lords is made up of people who have been selected by the parliamentary parties and those who have inherited the right'. 43 It is unclear what this 'right' is, but the Guide is inaccurate because it omits any mention of Crossbench Peers belonging to no party and the Lord Spiritual (Archbishops and Bishops) sitting in the House of Lords.
- The Guide states that, in addition to the Tories, Labour and the Liberal Democrats, there are also 'parties representing Scottish, Welsh and Northern Irish interests'.<sup>44</sup> This is presumably a nod to parties like the SNP, Plaid Cymru, the DUP and Sinn Fein among others. But it is surely a mistake to claim that only these smaller parties and not the Tories or Labour represent regional interests, too.
- The Guide states that 'shadow cabinet' aims only 'to challenge the government', but this is more accurately understood as holding the government to account.<sup>45</sup> These are not the same things.
- The *Guide* states that Anglican marriages at a local church 'usually have to have the "banns" read at a Sunday service for three weeks'. <sup>46</sup> This is true for couples that are both British. For marriages between someone British and a citizen of another country, there is normally a common licence—and not 'banns'. <sup>47</sup> This is a surprising error for a book written for individuals who are not British.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid., 14.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>41</sup> Ibid., 13.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>43</sup> Ibid., 14.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>44</sup> Ibid., 15.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>45</sup> Ibid., 16.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>46</sup> Ibid., 80.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>47</sup> See Diocese of Oxford, 'Immigration and Church of England marriages' (http://www.oxford.anglican.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/02/immigration\_and\_church\_of\_england\_marriages.pdf) ('For many years, the policy has been that non-British citizens, and those who come from outside the EU should be married by 'Common Licence' rather than by banns'.)

#### **Omissions**

There are other omissions that can be listed:

- While it is noted that many work visas require sponsorship and they have varying costs, there is no mention that there are income requirements for sponsoring family members.<sup>48</sup>
- The Practical Guide omits any reference to regional assemblies in Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. This is a strange omission because applicants for the citizenship test are not asked about the number of MPs in the House of Commons, but they may be asked about the number of representatives in these three regional assemblies.
- While the *Guide* notes Magistrates' Court, Justice of the Peace Court, the Crown Court and Youth Court, there is no mention of the UK Supreme Court.<sup>49</sup> The citizenship test handbook similarly states the lower courts, but does not include mention of the UK Supreme Court.
- The section on housing does not mention freehold or leasehold properties nor their difference.<sup>50</sup>
- The section on buying a house makes no mention of EPCs and what they
  are.<sup>51</sup> The only mention of the 'energy performance certificate' is under renting
  where it is noted that, 'as a tenant', there is a right to see the EPC of the
  property and that landlords must provide one.<sup>52</sup>
- The section on divorce omits any mention of the decree nisi or decree absolute.<sup>53</sup> The section also does not say that non-EU citizens would have to be out of the UK when a decree nisi is confirmed. Furthermore, the section also does not say that a non-UK citizen's residency in the UK only counts for the purposes of acquiring indefinite leave to remain or citizenship while that person is still married to the same person. If no application is made successfully beforehand, the residency time accumulated is lost and must be acquired anew.
- The only mention of '999' is in the section 'Health' where it is noted 'You can call 111 when you have a health problem that does not require the urgent response of a 999 call'.<sup>54</sup> This presentation of 999 as purely health care related is further supported in a later section on road accidents, where it is noted that 'if people are hurt, dial 999 and call an ambulance'.<sup>55</sup> This omits the fact that 999 can be used to contact the police and other emergency services.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>48</sup> Wales, A Practical Guide to Living in the United Kingdom, 11.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>49</sup> Ibid., 28—29.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>50</sup> See ibid., 67—68.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>51</sup> See ibid., 67—68.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>52</sup> Ibid., 70—71.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>53</sup> Ibid., 83.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>54</sup> Ibid., 92.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>55</sup> Ibid., 154.

- Now that the Cornish have protected minority status, its patron saints' day for St Pirin should have be included those for the Welsh, Scots and Northern Irish.<sup>56</sup> There is mention of the Cornish language and the Cornish pasty elsewhere in the *Practical Guide*.<sup>57</sup>
- The *Practical Guide* notes the existence of the 'electoral register' only once in the section on the 'jury service'. There is no information on how readers can join the register, if eligible.

## Already outdated

Some of the *Practical Guide* is already outdated:

- The *Guide* says that the parties with the 'most representation in Parliament currently' are the Tories, Labour and the Liberal Democrats.<sup>59</sup> This was true in 2014, but no longer the case as the SNP has more MPs than the Liberal Democrats in the current Parliament.
- The *Guide* refers to 'both parts of your driving licence (photocard and paper licence)'.<sup>60</sup> But the paper licence has been discontinued.
- The *Practical Guide* refers to tax discs to be purchased through a dedicated website www.gov.uk/tax-disc.<sup>61</sup> This website now redirects users to www.gov/uk/vehicle-tax as tax discs are no longer required on display in cars although vehicle tax must still be paid.

# The glossary

Finally, a few comments on problems with the brief glossary at the end of the *Practical Guide*. The glossary has 18 terms. The only religious terms are Anglican Church and denomination.<sup>62</sup> Most terms included are political and/or legal: cabinet, conveyancer, Human Rights Act, Parliament, Prime Minister, registrar and solicitor.<sup>63</sup> Most others relate to tax: corporation tax, National Insurance, VAT.<sup>64</sup>

It is odd that the only Parliamentary Act noted is the Human Rights Act and not the Parliament Acts or any others.

Definitions for several terms are incomplete or problematic. The 'cabinet' is defined as 'a senior group of government ministers who are responsible for making decisions', for example. 65 Another illustration is 'Parliament' defined s 'the seat of the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>56</sup> See ibid., 113.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>57</sup> See ibid., 57, 140.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>58</sup> Ibid., 131.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>59</sup> Ibid., 15.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>60</sup> Ibidi., 149.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>61</sup> Ibid., 151.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>62</sup> See ibid., 163.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>63</sup> See ibid., 163—164.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>64</sup> See ibid., 163—164.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>65</sup> Ibid., 163.

UK government' without reference to the House of Commons, House of Lords or the Queen in Parliament.<sup>66</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>66</sup> Ibid., 164.

## CONCLUSION

#### Recommendations

- **1.** The *Practical Guide* lacks a distinctive aim and purpose. It is designed for individuals planning to come to the UK or already resident in the UK and to provide information about practical affairs in every day British life. But there is far too much overlap with the UK citizenship test handbook. Both cover British geography, currency and information about public services. But the citizenship test handbook is a more comprehensive resource. If the *Practical Guide* should be maintained, it needs to have an aim and purpose *distinctive* from the citizenship test handbook. Fixing the *Guide*'s mistakes and omissions will not solve this larger problem about its purpose.
- 2. The Government should incorporate any additional information in the *Practical Guide* into the *Life in the United Kingdom* citizenship test handbook. The citizenship test handbook lacks information about how to contact any emergency services, report a crime or register with a GP. Relevant practical information found only in the *Practical Guide* should be incorporated into the citizenship test handbook to make the latter a complete resource. Migrants must become familiar with the citizenship test handbook to prepare for passing the test. The citizenship test handbook is the more natural place to put such information. It is unclear why an additional *Practical Guide* covering much of the same ground is warranted.
- 3. The Government should launch a new Citizenship Advisory Group. It is over 10 years since Sir Bernard Crick led the Life in the UK Advisory Group that opened a national discussion about British citizenship and made several recommendations about the content of the citizenship test and ceremonies. Much has changed since this time and a new Advisory Group is urgently needed to review UK rules and regulations concerning residency in the UK for non-UK citizens and pathways to citizenship and make evidence-based recommendations on how existing measures might be improved and made more effective.

**In conclusion**, these recommendations illuminate why *A Practical Guide to Living in the United Kingdom* should be discontinued and any key information for migrants incorporated into a future edition of the *Life in the United Kingdom: A Guide for New Residents*<sup>67</sup> used to prepare applicants for the citizenship test.

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>67</sup> Home Office, *Life in the United Kingdom: A Guide for New Residents*, 3<sup>rd</sup> (London: TSO, 2013).

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## **AUTHOR**

# **Biography**

Professor Thom Brooks is Professor of Law and Government in the Law School of Durham University. Brooks has held visiting positions at St John's College, Oxford; University of Oxford; University of St Andrews; Uppsala University and Yale University. Brooks is Fellow of the Academy of Social Science, Fellow of the Higher Education Academy, Fellow of the Royal Historical Society and Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts. Brooks has published twenty books and over 100 research articles including The Global Justice Reader (2008), The Right to a Fair Trial (2009), Punishment (2012) and Ethical Citizenship (2014). Brooks is also a dual citizen of the United Kingdom and United States who sat and passed the Life in the UK test in 2009 and earned British citizenship in 2011.



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