

## Tour of the Royal Courts of Justice - 29 April 2025



Our TASA members all turned up on time on this warm and sunny day, walking, by taxi, bus or underground, ready for a new experience. We entered in good time, had our bags and ourselves scanned, and met up with our lovely guide Joan.

Joan started with giving us some information about the building (*it houses the High Court and Court of Appeal of England and Wales. Designed by George Edmund Street, who died before it was completed, it is a large grey stone edifice in the Victorian Gothic Revival style built in the 1870s and opened by Queen Victoria in 1882. It is one of the largest courts in Europe*), followed by an explanation of the type of cases the Law Courts deal with (*i.e. civil cases such as Rooney vs Vardy, Bates vs the Post Office, wills, probate, matrimonial disputes, appeals from other courts. None of the cases here involves a jury.*) 21 courts have been extended over the years to over a 100 courts, although many cases nowadays are dealt with remotely via zoom.

The expression 'on Carey Street', meaning bankrupt, evolved when the bankruptcy court moved to the back of the Law Courts, next to Carey Street (1840).

We were able to admire the display of various robes and wigs (big wigs (!) for the most important judges). At important occasions these robes and wigs get another outing.

No photography allowed, but we managed to get a dispensation for a group photo with Joan in the gorgeous Bear Garden. Confused? Apparently, once when Queen Victoria visited, the noise of arguing barristers in what was the Bar room, caused her to remark that it was like a garden full with bears.

