



## News Release

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### CC CLEARS BRIGHTSOLID/FRIENDS REUNITED MERGER

The Competition Commission (CC) has formally cleared the anticipated acquisition of Friends Reunited from ITV by Brightsolid, after concluding that the tie-up poses no threat to customers of online genealogy services. This confirms the CC's provisional findings which were [published](#) last month.

Chairman of the Inquiry Group and Deputy Chairman of the CC, Laura Carstensen, said:

After the merger another website, Ancestry.co.uk, will remain the largest supplier in this market and its presence, along with potential entry by new suppliers and the alternatives provided by free sites, will ensure that the merged company faces strong competition—preventing it from raising prices or worsening the service it provides. In fact, the merger could potentially benefit amateur family historians as the merged company will be better equipped to compete directly with Ancestry.co.uk, leading to more innovation and improvements in the market.

Brightsolid, which runs websites Find My Past.com and 1911 Census.com, and Friends Reunited, which owns Genes Reunited.com, are two of the three largest suppliers of online genealogy services in the UK. These websites allow users to search and access historical information and documents such as census results, birth, marriage and death records, and also supply family tree software.

The final report is now available on the CC's [website](#). The case was referred by the Office of Fair Trading on 3 November last year and the CC was asked to decide whether the acquisition may be expected to result in a substantial lessening of competition within any market or markets in the UK.

#### Notes for editors

1. The CC is an independent public body, which carries out investigations into mergers, markets and the regulated industries.
2. The Enterprise Act 2002 empowers the Office of Fair Trading to refer to the CC completed or proposed mergers for investigation and report which create or enhance a

25 per cent share of supply in the UK (or a substantial part thereof) or where the UK turnover associated with the enterprise being acquired is over £70 million.

3. The members of the Brightsolid/Friends Reunited Group are: Laura Carstensen (Group Chairman), Robin Mason, Ed Smith and Anthony Stern.
4. The CC has a 24-week period in which it is required to publish its report, which may be extended by no more than eight weeks if it considers that there are special reasons why the report cannot be published within that period.
5. Further information on this inquiry, including the terms of reference and other key documents, as well as on the CC and its procedures, including its policy on the provision of information and the disclosure of evidence, can be obtained from the CC website at: [www.competition-commission.org.uk](http://www.competition-commission.org.uk).
6. Enquiries should be directed to [Rory Taylor](#) or [John Park](#) or by ringing 020 7271 0242.