

KENT MESSENGER

"Gravesend resident extradited and imprisoned without trial"

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Yes, it could happen under new EU laws where Britons tried abroad in their absence will be deported from the UK to serve their sentence.

Refinements to the controversial European Arrest Warrant system mean a British citizen can be arrested here and sent to prison elsewhere - even if he did not know he had been charged.

It allows EU countries to demand the extradition of suspects from other EU states without any formal extradition proceedings or court hearings. At the moment, states including Britain have the right to refuse to hand over a suspect, if he has been convicted in his absence.

We have habeas corpus and Magna Carta, residents of this constituency are bound by the rules of this country, not Brussels. If this goes ahead it would undermine the right of the accused to defend himself in a trial, and the risk of serious miscarriages of justice.

I do not believe British nationals should be extradited to face prison in European jails, based on trials in absentia, is simply not compatible with the principles of British justice.

We have already lost our town court and our police station is now situated out of town. We cannot allow further erosion of our rights to justice.