

Common Platform is live in more early adopter criminal courts

The Common Platform has gone live in further “early adopter” sites at Bristol Crown and Magistrates’ Courts, representing a major step forward for the Criminal Justice System in making the best use of digital technology. It has already been well established in Derby Crown and Magistrates’ Courts, and Chesterfield Magistrates’ Court and delivers a single, seamless source of information for participants in a criminal case from the initial point of arrest and throughout.

Designed to be used by court staff, the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS), defence professionals, police and other justice agencies, it provides secure, tailored access to information, so users can only access the information appropriate to them.

Once fully rolled out in England and Wales, Common Platform will enable greater efficiency across the Criminal Justice System. Today is the latest step in the first stage of introducing it to a series of selected early adopter courts across England and Wales, and progress has been made despite the uniquely challenging context of COVID-19.

Christine Murray, Delivery Director for the south-west region, said:

HMCTS staff in the south-west region, and colleagues from partner agencies across Bristol and the wider Avon and Somerset area, have worked exceptionally hard together to bring the Bristol early adopter sites to a stage of readiness, in spite of the challenges being presented by the pandemic.

It is a fantastic achievement, and great testament to the strength of our local relationships and the value of truly collaborative working. A huge thank you to everyone involved.

Common Platform cuts down the need for manual document handling and improves how criminal cases are accessed, managed and processed. It removes the need to copy information from one system to another, ensuring the integrity of crucial information and minimising duplication of effort. A range of features ensure cases are progressed effectively – for example, the system will automatically alert users when new case documents are available, or when tasks are outstanding.

The next courts due to go live with Common Platform will be in the north-east and south-east regions:

- North Tyneside, Mid and South-East Northumberland Magistrates’ Courts, and Newcastle Crown Court
- Guildford and Staines Magistrates’ Courts and Guildford Crown Court

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