

# [News story: HMCTS sign lease for the Civic Centre with Newcastle City Council](#)

Work to bring civil, family and tribunal hearings into one accessible building in Newcastle city centre have taken a step forward with the signing of a new lease.

The development will provide a modern, fit for purpose building for local people, legal professionals, judiciary, and courts and tribunals staff. The new courthouse is expected to open by 2020.

We have been working in partnership with Newcastle City Council to develop plans and designs for the Civic Centre, which is being fully refurbished and will include the new Civil, Family and Tribunals (CFT) courthouse.

Linda Ventress, HMCTS regional estates strategy lead, said:

This new court will help provide a modern, fit for purpose building for the people of Newcastle. We are delighted to see the next stage of the project begin and look forward to bringing civil, family and tribunal work into one location, making it easier and more efficient for people to access justice.

This is the first part of a wider plan for the courts in Newcastle, which will also see conversion of the existing Newcastle Combined Court into a Criminal Justice Centre.

The government is investing £1bn in reforming courts and tribunals, including making significant improvements to the condition and design of court buildings. This will improve the experience of visiting or working in a court, and lead to better value for taxpayers by reducing operating costs and increasing the efficiency of the estate.