

Press release: Additional year to deliver ambitious court reforms

Learning from the services that we have already delivered and the feedback received, including from the Public Accounts Committee and the National Audit Office, we have decided to re-order aspects of the programme. This will allow more time to develop some of the shared systems that sit behind our next set of online services, working to an updated finish date of 2023.

The reform programme is both essential and ambitious. It will transform the administration of justice by shaping it around the needs of its users, and we are determined to deliver it effectively in the interests of all.

Existing services, which are already providing quicker and easier access to justice for many – including divorcing couples, executors of wills and people appealing decisions about their benefits – continue to be available and will have more elements added to them in the coming years.

With the leadership of the government and the judiciary, the HMCTS Reform Programme is increasing the accessibility and efficiency of the justice system by shaping it around the needs of those who use it.

The £1 billion reform programme has already delivered:

- A pilot of fully-video hearings in the tax tribunals.
- The national implementation of a new in-court system to record the result of cases digitally and instantly.
- A pilot of a new digital system providing shared case information in criminal cases to the police, Crown Prosecution Service, courts and legal professionals.
- A Civil Money Claims service with more than 51,000 claims made since it first launched in March 2018, with the fastest claim being lodged and paid under two hours. Almost 90% of users say they are satisfied or very satisfied with the new service.
- An online Divorce Service, with more than 31,000 applications made since it launched in April 2018. The online form takes half as long to complete as the paper form, and has reduced the error rate.
- Online Probate Service with more than 12,000 personal applications made since July 2018.
- We opened two new Courts and Tribunals Service Centres in Stoke and Birmingham in January 2019, which are dealing with digital cases in the Single Justice Service, divorce, Social Security and Child Support and some probate services.
- Support to help people use online services if they choose to.

As a major government project HMCTS reform is subject to a cross-government approvals process, which is ongoing.

Notes to editors

Figures are drawn from management information and are not official statistics.