

Press release: Swindon court users to benefit from £2.6m government investment



Refurbishment works have been carried out at Swindon Magistrates Court and Swindon Combined Court. The renovations will provide a more comfortable environment for court users and additional space for staff to carry out their duties and is part of HMCTS' commitment to improving the condition of court buildings and access to justice for all users.

The investment will also allow the courts to manage an increased workload and accommodate additional numbers of office staff, following the reallocation of cases from Chippenham Magistrates' and Civil Court. New facilities now available as a result of this funding include:

- additional hearing rooms and judicial chambers;
- kitchen facilities and new furniture;
- fully refurbished office areas; and
- a new public waiting room.

Justice Minister, Lucy Frazer said:

I'm delighted court users in Swindon are already benefiting from this significant government investment. Court appearances can often come at difficult and emotional times in a person's life, and so we are committed to making our estate as efficient and comfortable as possible.

Our justice system is one of the greatest in the world and we are determined to ensure it is fit for the 21st century.

Solicitor General and MP for Swindon South, Robert Buckland said:

Having pressed hard for Swindon on this issue, I warmly welcome these vital improvements to our Magistrates and Combined Courts, which will be of real benefit to the public and to the hardworking

court staff too. HMCTS' ambitious £1bn reform programme is bringing new technology and modern ways of working to the justice system.

This programme has already delivered:

- A new fully accessible online civil money claims service giving the public the ability to make a small claim online – with more than 35,000 claims made since its launch in March and user satisfaction at 90%;
- A new system for applying for divorce online, which has cut errors in application forms from 40% to less than 1%;
- A new probate system in testing, which has cut errors, quickened the process and has a user satisfaction rate of 93%;
- A pilot of fully video hearings in tax tribunals to test the potential for roll-out where appropriate across the courts and tribunals system;
- The national implementation of a new in-court system to record the results of cases digitally and instantly.

Published 7 December 2018