

Review of HMCTS face-to-face digital support testing published

News story

Good Things Foundation has today (30 September 2020) published its assessment of a test service that helps people to access reformed HMCTS online services from 26 organisations across the UK.



The independent assessment finds users are ‘overwhelmingly positive’ about their experience.

HMCTS commissioned the test service to learn how the face-to-face digital support service can be successfully implemented across a range of organisations to inform the design of a national service. The future service will ensure that people without the confidence, skills or necessary equipment have the help and support they need to successfully use our online services.

Since 2017 almost 800 appointments have taken place in citizens advice centres, law centres and community-based centres, helping people access various HMCTS online services including probate or divorce applications. Using a mixture of interviews, data and case studies the report explores how centres have helped and supported users, the impact COVID-19 has had on delivery and summarises what has been learnt.

Lauren Van Staden, HMCTS Deputy Director, User Experience said:

We welcome this report from Good Things Foundation which outlines the work from our partnership over the last three years. The network has allowed us to test digital support in a variety of different settings so that we can learn how to design a service that meets the needs of our users.

It has also allowed us to speak directly to users who need support and the organisations delivering it to make sure the user is at the

centre of our design. We look forward to taking these findings and feeding them into a national service.

Since the onset of COVID-19, we have been working with Good Things Foundation to adapt the way support is provided. The testing has moved from offering solely face-to-face appointments to a hybrid model of remote support and face-to-face appointments, where they can be offered safely. In order to allow for further testing and to develop a system that is COVID-19-secure, we have extended testing by a further 12 months. The test will then be replaced with a larger national service and contract in 2021.

- as of 31/08/2020, a total of 782 digital support sessions took place
- the testing will continue to support people to use HMCTS Civil Money Claims, Divorce, Help with Fees, Probate, Single Justice System and Social Security and Child Support (PIP appeals, ESA appeals, Universal Credit appeals) online services
- the full report: [HMCTS Digital Support Service: Implementation review](#) can be viewed on [Good Things Foundation website](#).

Published 30 September 2020