

New Service Centre opens in Newport

News story

The centre will provide court users with support and guidance on their cases.



The Newport centre opens today (Monday 18 July) and is our fifth and final Service Centre following sites opened in [Stoke-on-Trent](#), [Birmingham](#), [Loughborough](#) and [Salford](#). The centres are an important part of the government's £1 billion reform programme.

This centre brings staff together under one roof to provide support and guidance about cases. This increased capacity helps court users who need information about criminal cases, and complements the teams in Salford and Stoke-on-Trent who already advise on criminal cases and the [Single Justice Service](#). These teams allow court staff to focus on helping people attending hearings and court in-person.

Service Centres answer more than one million queries each year. They allow us to answer calls and queries quickly and offer better access to justice by providing a service that is more consistent. They also handle several important services that the public relies on, such as applications for probate and supporting video hearings.

Paul Harris, Operations Director, said:

I'm delighted that our new Service Centre is now open. It delivers on a promise we made at the beginning of our reform programme to make it easier for court and tribunal users to find information on their cases.

The Newport Service Centre will help callers with queries about criminal cases. Common queries they'll advise on include listing enquiries, interpreter bookings and enquiries about hearing results.

Service Centres have achieved a huge amount and bring value to court and tribunal users every day. For example, the new digital

divorce process has improved the service at Stoke service centre. A majority of divorces are now concluded within 20 weeks and the number of divorces rejected has been reduced from 40% to less than 1%.

The opening of the Newport Service Centre completes this part of our £1 billion investment to reform courts and tribunals by providing more and better ways to access justice for everyone that needs it.

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Record £2.8 billion commercial benefits delivered through Crown Commercial Service agreements

- Almost £3 billion achieved in commercial benefits in 2021/22 through CCS agreements
- Total spent through agreements has doubled over the past 5 years to £27.6 billion
- SMEs have benefited from £2.2 billion in direct spending, an additional £687 million directly compared to 2020/21

Almost £3 billion in commercial benefits have been achieved for public sector organisations through use of Crown Commercial Service (CCS) agreements, delivering record value for taxpayers.

CCS agreements provide public sector bodies with a choice of suppliers who offer the best value, leveraging the scale of public sector demand to secure competitive prices. By using these agreements, public sector customers can achieve commercial benefits such as reduced costs compared to market prices and better value in contract terms and conditions.

The newly published CCS annual report and accounts for 2021/22 shows £2.8 billion of commercial benefits were achieved across the public sector. CCS agreements secured £1.9 billion in benefits for central government, and a further £0.9 billion for the wider public sector.

This includes £4 million in savings for 14 NHS trusts on mobile and data services, such as voice calls, connectivity and applications. The Student Loan Company also saved £1.6 million by outsourcing its print and mail services through CCS's Managed Print and Digital Solutions framework.

ACRO Criminal Records Office, a national police unit, was able to improve efficiency and accuracy by putting in place a machine translation solution

through CCS's Language Services framework. This enabled the organisation to translate vital conviction information quickly from EU member states and prevent criminal cases being thrown out of court, saving £6,000 in 3 months and helping to make our streets safer.

Minister for Brexit Opportunities and Government Efficiency, Jacob Rees-Mogg said:

The Crown Commercial Service is one of the highest-performing parts of the Government. It provides the best value for taxpayers day in, day out. At a time of high inflation and squeezed budgets, its work is more valuable than ever.

By leveraging the scale of public sector demand when choosing suppliers, these agreements have secured billions in savings, which can be used to support vital services delivered across the public sector.

Spending through CCS frameworks has doubled in five years, reaching £27.6 billion in 2021/22. This means CCS is on course to hit its target of £30 billion by 2024 and represents an increase of £4.9 billion on the 2020/21 total. CCS also assisted customers with contracts valued at over £5 billion annually by running procurements on their behalf.

The amount spent directly with small and medium-sized businesses (SMEs) increased by £687 million compared to the year before. In total, £2.2 billion was spent directly with SMEs, supporting growth and jobs across the UK.

Simon Tse, CEO of Crown Commercial Service, said:

Growing the economy is a top priority and supporting small businesses will do just that.

The past year has seen record spending with SMEs through CCS agreements and suppliers have been paid promptly, aiding their growth and spreading economic prosperity across the country.

CCS agreements have also supported public sector customers with key policy priorities, such as net zero commitments and supply chain auditing.

Thousands of customers used CCS's dedicated net zero web pages over the last 12 months to identify agreements that help them meet sustainability goals.

CCS also published its first annual modern slavery statement in November. This set out steps being taken to identify, prevent and mitigate the risks of modern slavery in CCS operations and supply chains, including ensuring that suppliers are publishing an annually updated modern slavery statement.

Chair of the CCS Board, Tony van Kralingen said:

Crown Commercial Service has once again driven significant value for taxpayers, while continuing to develop and enhance its reputation for excellence across central government and the wider public sector.

I am delighted to be able to end my term as Chair of the CCS Board with such outstanding results. The Board and I are confident that the platform for continued success is well established.

The year at a glance

- £27.6 billion of public sector spend was channelled through CCS agreements, doubling spend over 5 years
- Customers who have used CCS agreements have achieved commercial benefits equivalent to £2.8 billion
- CCS's employee engagement index, as measured by the Civil Service People Survey, remains high at 71% in 2021
- £2.2 billion was spent directly with SMEs through CCS's commercial agreements in 2021/22 – an additional £687m compared to 2020/21
- The assisted procurement service helped deliver procurements for customers worth a total annual contract value of £5 billion

Read the full report

You can read [CCS's Annual Report and Accounts](#).

You can find a full list of all the commercial agreements CCS offers, alongside details of how CCS can help you build policy considerations into your procurement, in our [interactive digital brochure](#).

PM's remarks at Farnborough Air Show: 18 July 2022

It is fantastic to be here at Farnborough the scene of many of the most exciting developments in the history of powered flight

It was here that the de Havilland comet ushered in the jet age

here that the world first saw the Vulcan bomber, a beautiful machine I remember from my childhood

and here that spectators saw first the amazing aeronautical ability of the Typhoon

which I experienced myself last Thursday

With the help of wing commander Paul Hanson I took off from RAF Coningsby
straight up like a vertical firecracker
we slipped the surly bonds of earth
as the poet Magee puts it
and danced the skies on laughter silvered wings
we flung that eager craft through footless halls of air
and generally put it through its paces, I can tell you
and after a while the wing commander said to me
do you want to have a go
and I said are you sure
it seems very expensive to me
we only have 148 of them and they cost about £75m a pop
and he said don't worry
you can't break it
and I thought oh well famous last words
and so I pushed the joystick right over to the right and we did an aileron
roll and then I hauled the joystick right back and we did a fantastic loop
the loop
and then I did a more complicated thing called a barrel roll in which I
pushed the stick up and right a bit
and we started to pull a few Gs, as they say
and when I came back to consciousness I could see
the sea getting closer and closer
and I started to dream about the incredible forest of wind farms I could see
and I thought about the way this government in the last few years has been
reclaiming doggerland
harvesting the drowned prairies of the north sea
and harvesting them once again with gigawatt after gigawatt of clean green
energy
helping to deliver a long term sustainable solution to our energy needs

ending any dependence on Putin whatsoever

and this reverie must have gone on for a while because my colleague said er I am taking back control now

and we headed happily home

and I was absolutely stunned by the typhoon

because it is now more than 25 years since I first flew a fast jet

I went out, thanks to the RAF, to Seymour Johnson air force base in north Carolina and flew an F15E strike eagle

and I remember sitting in that cockpit and looking at wires running either side of me that were attached to pedals at the pilot's feet

and were pulling the flaps

and I looked at that and I thought this really isn't so different from a sopwith camel

and on Thursday last week at Coningsby I asked them afterwards, as you ask about what would happen in a fight between a tyrannosaurus rex and a Killer whale

what would happen in a fight between a typhoon and an F15E strike eagle

and they said it would be no contest

almost 30 years ago when I went up in a F15E

the strike eagle seemed to me to be the last word in strength and power and aggression

but compared to the typhoon, according to the RAF, it would be so motionless and defenceless that a dogfight

in the brutal words of one typhoon pilot would be like clubbing seals

and so the lesson I draw is about the scale and the pace of technological change

It was only 85 years ago that my grandfather was flying wellington bombers

with equipment so primitive that you really have to marvel at the bravery of the men and women who were involved in that war

in fact he used up quite a few wellington bombers

he crashed twice – the second time into a church

I am afraid he was always prone to religious doubts

I marvel at the bravery of that generation

and let's face it – it was only 120 years ago that this whole enterprise began – of heavier than air powered flight –

in machines, barely more than a century ago, that looked like laundry baskets lashed together with leather and canvas

and propelled by lawnmower engines

and if you can go from a laundry basket to a typhoon in a century

I just want you to imagine what the next 20 years and the next 50 years will bring

and I want you to know that this government believes in British aviation

and British technological genius and its power to bring jobs and growth across our whole country, uniting and levelling up across the whole country

and that is why we are investing so massively in defence, the biggest uplift since the end of the Cold War,

and that is why I am so obsessed with the FCAS

with Team Tempest and everything that that involves

I think it is a fantastic project

There are already 560 UK companies playing their part

more than a thousand apprentices and new graduates involved

and I am a passionate believer in the potential of our burgeoning partnership – not just with Italy, but with Japan

an incredible thing to be doing now 80 years after the end of the Second World War

and of course, FCAS is not just a plane

it is a whole platform for technological change and industrial spin-offs of all kinds

because the combat aircraft systems of the future will be very different even from the typhoon

and some of them will be manned, some of them will be crewed and some of them won't be

and in developing these new technologies

and maintaining the air superiority that we have luxuriated in for so long

and which is so crucial for our long term security

I want our country to be in the lead

and then on this scorching day

with the thermometer about to blow and temperatures here apparently higher than the Sahara

there is the next great technological challenge

which is how to send a plane across the Atlantic without burning tonnes of kerosene and adding the carbon tea cosy that is heating our planet to destruction

we know that we must fix it

we know that time is running out

and that is why one of the first things I initiated 3 years ago was a project called Jet Zero

in which I think many of you are participating and thank you very much for what you are doing – a zero carbon plane

and people think it's impossible

they say pigs might fly

well let me tell you

this is not only the country that built the first jet engine, but the first plane across the Atlantic

In 1909 a pilot by the name of John Theodore Cuthbert Moore Brabazon took off with a six week old piglet in a waste paper basket tied to the strut of a Short Brothers biplane

We showed that pigs could fly a hundred years ago

and we are going to fix zero carbon aviation as well

not just because it's right for our planet but because it will drive jobs and growth around the country

and that is why, today, we are investing a further quarter of a billion today in UK aviation technology and innovation

and so, in conclusion, I want you to know that after 3 happy years in the cockpit

and after performing some pretty difficult if not astonishing feats

getting Brexit done and restoring this country's ability to make its own laws

in parliament

vaccinating our population faster than any other comparable country and ensuring the fastest growth in the G7

and being the first European country to give the Ukrainians the vital military help they need see off Putin's aggression

not to mention, cutting neighbourhood crime by 31 per cent

lowest unemployment for almost 50 years

gigabit broadband from 7 to 69 per cent households in this country

and many many other statistics

I am now going to hand over the controls

seamlessly to someone else

I don't know who

but whoever it is I can tell you that the twin engines, the great Rolls Royce twin engines of this conservative government will roar on

fantastic public services

a dynamic free market economy

each boosting the other and developing millions of tons of thrust

and there could be no better example of that relationship

that symbiosis between government and the private sector than the aviation industry

and if you want a final example of this government's ambition I give you not just FCAS, not just Jet Zero but space flight as well

This year if all goes well

we will launch the first UK satellite in history to enter space from UK soil

as Newquay becomes this country's equivalent of Cape Kennedy, shortly to be followed by Shetland as well

and I leave it to you to imagine who

at this stage I would like to send into orbit

Perhaps a volunteer could be found from the green benches of parliament

I leave that entirely to your speculation

but for now, with so much to look forward to in this incredible sector and

with the UK at the leading edge of progress

not just for our national security, the security of our friends and neighbours

not just for our economic prosperity around the whole country

but for the protection of the planet itself

I declare this great Farnborough air show open

UK builds momentum on combat air programme with demonstrator set to fly within five years

- UK develops next generation fighter demonstrator aircraft as part of the Future Combat Air System (FCAS) programme.
- Project involves the Ministry of Defence and the Team Tempest industry partners, led by BAE Systems.
- Comes as the UK deepens collaboration with Japan and Italy as it builds a combat air international partnership.
- FCAS Enterprise launches its 'Generation Tempest' initiative creating early careers job opportunities across the UK and a new Tempest Academy.

A new flying demonstrator will be unveiled within the next five years as part of the UK's major next generation fighter aircraft programme, the Future Combat Air System (FCAS). It comes as the future combat air programme launches a new recruitment and skills initiative known as Generation Tempest, set to create thousands of new job opportunities across the United Kingdom.

The demonstrator aircraft is already in development between the Government and Team Tempest industry partners and the UK is actively progressing collaboration opportunities on the project with Italian industry partners.

The flying demonstrator will be a piloted supersonic aircraft testing a range of new technologies including integration of stealth compatible features. This is the first time the UK will have developed a new fast aircraft using 21st century technology.

Work is rapidly gathering pace on this important part of the FCAS programme, with development of the demonstrator underway at BAE Systems' facility near Preston in the north of England. This is being supported by hundreds of companies and thousands of engineers across the UK.

The demonstrator is vital for ensuring our technology, skills and industrial

capability are ready for the future. Designing and building the flying demonstrator will prove integration and test skills. It will also provide invaluable data and lessons to UK industry to support the introduction of a new FCAS aircraft from 2035.

Separately, the UK is now conducting joint concept analysis with close partners Japan and Italy to understand areas of shared interest and to explore potential Future Combat Air partnership options and continues to explore wider partnerships. Further decisions are expected to be made by the end of 2022. Like the UK, both Japan and Italy operate F-35 fighter jets and the nations have undertaken joint exercises together in the past.

Defence Secretary Ben Wallace said:

I am delighted that the UK, alongside Italy, Japan and Sweden are working on the same combat air journey together.

Our work with Japan and Italy on cutting-edge technologies like this, shows the benefit of our alliances across the world.

The design and development of the demonstrator aircraft represents an important milestone, showcasing the success and talent of our engineers, programmers and software developers. This programme will go on to attract opportunities for many more great minds and talent from across the UK.

To support the programme, a series of measures to attract the brightest minds onto FCAS have been announced, including plans for a new Tempest Academy, joint recruitment and talent development between partners, and the launch of a new [careers website](#). It is hoped that this initiative will create a 'Generation Tempest' who will bring their own unique ideas and experiences to the programme.

The FCAS programme plays an important role in supporting the Government's levelling up ambitions, employing around 2,500 highly skilled people across the UK including at combat air sector industrial hubs in Scotland, the north-west and south-west of England. The programme now employs 1,000 apprentices and graduates, offering attractive employment opportunities in STEM subjects such as industrial digitisation, artificial intelligence and data analytics.

Team Tempest partners, BAE Systems, Rolls-Royce, Leonardo UK and MBDA UK, aim to hire an additional 1,300 early careers starters by the end of 2023.

UK Director Future Combat Air Richard Berthon said:

FCAS is an exciting, dynamic and inclusive programme, needing a diversity of people, ideas and skills working together. We are recruiting fresh talent who will lead FCAS, delivering one of the world's most important Defence programmes.

The FCAS programme is driving developments at the cutting edge of technology and there have been a series of advances across UK industry supporting the programme, some of which are being showcased at Farnborough Airshow this week including:

- Rolls-Royce Defence has delivered a new gas turbine demonstrator engine, known as Orpheus, designed, built and tested in under two years to prove innovative technology developments for FCAS. Working with international partners, Rolls Royce have also agreed the next stage of the full-scale engine demonstrator programme.
- BAE Systems has used digital transformation to design and build a representative military fast jet fuselage, demonstrating how innovative technologies can transform the design and manufacturing capability for Tempest. Commercial robots were adapted and utilised, and 65% of the parts were guided into location using automation.
- Leonardo UK and Japan's Mitsubishi Electric have agreed the concept for a radar technology demonstrator called JAGUAR, first unveiled in February, following the completion of joint concept work and feasibility studies earlier this year.
- Leonardo has also revealed ongoing bilateral work to support the future electronics on-board the FCAS programme. Leonardo in the UK and in Italy are working together on a number of projects with Elettronica in Italy including joint assessment of potential architecture of a common Integrated Sensing and Non-Kinetic Effects (ISANKE) and Integrated Communications System. The work is complementary to ongoing collaboration with Japan on 6th generation sensor capabilities, an area in which Italy will soon be involved.
- MBDA unveiled its concept for a weapon effects management system, to aid the coordination of all available weapons in the battle space using Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning enhanced software.

[Pre-recorded evidence for rape victims rolled out to courts across the Midlands](#)

- pre-recorded evidence now available in 4 more courts in the Midlands.
- measure aims to reduce trauma for victims and witnesses to help them give better evidence
- rollout means it is now available in over two-thirds of all Crown Courts in England and Wales

The measure, which has already been successfully introduced in 54 Crown Courts across England and Wales, allows victims and witnesses of crimes such as rape and modern slavery to have their cross-examination video-recorded and

played later during trial. This is subject to a successful application to the court.

The recording takes place as close to the time of the offence as possible, while memories remain fresh, and helps victims avoid the stress of giving evidence in a courtroom setting, which many find traumatic.

From today, the measure will be available immediately at Birmingham, Coventry, Derby and Wolverhampton Crown Courts.

The move follows the successful implementation for vulnerable victims, such as children or those who have limited mental capacity, across the country – with more than 2,500 witnesses having already benefitted from the technology since August 2020.

Justice Minister, Tom Pursglove, said:

We're overhauling the entire response to rape and rolling out pre-recorded evidence to every Crown Court in England and Wales is a key part of that – sparing victims the stress of testifying during a live trial.

We're also recruiting more independent sexual violence advisors, improving collaboration between police and prosecutors, and delivering a Victims' Bill to ensure they get the justice they deserve.

While there is still much more to do, we are starting to see the results of these efforts, with rape convictions up by more than a quarter since before the pandemic.

This extension means it is now available for victims of rape at 58 Crown Courts, over two-thirds of all Crown Courts in England and Wales. The government is committed to rolling it out nationwide by the end of September.

The measure is also designed to maintain a defendant's right to a fair trial and any decision to pre-record evidence is made by a judge on a case-by-case basis.

The roll out of pre-recorded evidence is a key pledge within the government's Rape Review Action Plan. The plan sets out clear actions for the police, prosecutors, and courts. These include a new approach to investigations, reducing the number of victims withdrawing from the process, increasing the volume of trials being heard, protecting the public and putting more rapists behind bars.

In June, the government published the latest Rape Review Progress report and committed to piloting specialist rape support in three courtrooms as recommended by the Joint Inspectorates of the CPS and Police. This would offer support, such as Independent Sexual Violence Advisors, within the court itself, as well as providing trauma training to court staff. These courtrooms

will be set up at Snaresbrook Crown Court in London as well as Leeds and Newcastle Crown Courts.

Today's announcement builds on recent government action to make our streets safer and increase confidence in the justice system, including the publication of a draft Victims' Bill. The legislation seeks to amplify victims' voices, and places greater accountability on agencies such as the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) and police for the service they provide to them.

Guidance:

- Both the defence and prosecution lawyers will be present in court during the pre-recording as will the judge and the defendant.
- The independent judiciary will be responsible for overseeing the use of pre-recorded evidence and will have discretion to ensure that the interests of justice are served.
- Pre-recording cross-examination preserves a defendant's right to a fair trial.
- Vulnerable witnesses and victims are defined as all child witnesses under 18 and any witness whose quality of evidence is likely to be diminished because they are suffering from a mental disorder or physical disability or has significant impairment of intelligence and social functioning.
- Intimidated witnesses and victims for the purposes of this pilot were defined as complainants of sexual offences and modern slavery offences who are witnesses in proceedings relating to that offence, or that offence and any other offences.
- There are 71 Crown Court Centres in the UK, and a total of 83 Crown Court locations.
- Rape convictions are increasing – there has been a 15 percent increase in the number of people convicted for rape offences in the last three months. There were 467 convictions last quarter (CPS Prosecution Statistics – October to December 2021), compared to 407, 398 and 376 in the quarters before. Total completed prosecutions for rape cases have increased by 10 percent from 600 (July – September 2021) to 661 (October-December 2021).
- The average number of days for adult rape from CPS charge to the case being completed continued to fall, down by 38 days (8.3 percent) since the peak in June 2021 – down from 457 days to 419 in October – December 2021.
- The measure is being rolled out to the following courts today:
 - Birmingham
 - Coventry
 - Derby
 - Wolverhampton
- The Courts already operating pre-recorded evidence for intimidated victims are:
 - Bolton
 - Burnley
 - Preston

- Carlisle
- Lancaster
- Warrington
- Chester
- Manchester Crown Square
- Manchester Minshull Street
- Swindon Crown Court
- Sheffield
- Doncaster
- Newcastle
- Portsmouth
- Southampton
- Isle of Wight
- Winchester
- Bournemouth
- Bristol
- Exeter
- Gloucester
- Plymouth
- Salisbury
- Truro
- Liverpool
- Leeds
- Kingston-Upon-Thames
- Harrow
- Isleworth
- Wood Green
- Durham
- York
- Grimsby
- Hull
- Bradford
- Teesside Crown Court
- Warwick
- Shrewsbury
- Stafford
- Stoke-on-Trent
- Worcester
- Hereford
- Nottingham
- Lincoln
- Leicester
- Northampton
- Taunton
- Caernarfon
- Cardiff
- Merthyr Tydfil
- Mold
- Newport
- Swansea
- Preston Crown Court and Family Court (Sessions House)