

Court provision in Gloucestershire

An overview

Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Gloucestershire



Foreword

Like post offices, pubs and village schools, local courthouses are gradually being consigned to the history books. When I tried to recall how many there used to be in Gloucestershire, it was difficult to remember them all. Certainly, magistrates in Gloucester, Cheltenham, Stroud, Coleford and Stow-on-the-Wold had their own building with each of them housing multiple court rooms. Now, there are only two criminal courts in the county, with the Magistrates' court in Cheltenham serving the Crown Court in Gloucester, and the Combined Family and County courts, also in Gloucester.

The court community in Gloucestershire has been aware for a long while of the substandard nature of the county's courts with regards to facilities and the negative impact this has on local justice. Despite various attempts to secure new court premises over the years, the county has been overlooked in many of the rounds of new court complexes or improvements to existing buildings. As a result, Gloucestershire is now one of just six counties with only one Magistrates' Court and one of two counties with the lowest number of courts per population.

As chair of the Gloucestershire Criminal Justice Board, my overriding concern is that this is a trend that could turn out to be irreversible. The consequence is an urgent and identifiable need for a new justice centre for the county as laid out in this report.

Courts are a physical manifestation of the law, one of the successes of democracy and - they should be - a focus for civic pride. In holding offenders to account, courts should also be a source of reassurance for victims, somewhere they go to gain satisfaction for a wrong done to them. The concept of local justice is vital and as Judge Tabor explains in these pages, it is equally important for those sitting in judgement to have experience and knowledge of the locality.

In my primary role as Police and Crime Commissioner, I can offer a location on which to build a new justice centre fit for the 21st century which addresses all of the issues highlighted in this report. But I have also made it clear that if a better site becomes available in, for instance, the centre of Gloucester that would also have my support.

The loss of our other courthouses has eroded the right of the people of Gloucestershire to local justice. With the proposed increase in funding for the police, CPS and prisons, the missing link in the Criminal Justice System, certainly as far as Gloucestershire is concerned, is the inadequate court provision. We cannot allow our county to slip off the judicial map and it is the responsibility of us all to do all we can to work towards the renewal of the court estate for now and for future generations.

Martin Surl
Police and Crime Commissioner for Gloucestershire

Executive Summary

This report asserts that there is an urgent and clearly identifiable need for new court provision for Gloucestershire.

Her Majesty's Courts and Tribunal Service (HMCTS) launched a national reform programme in 2010 with the initial reforms leading to a rationalisation of the court estate; closing around 50% of the original estate and locally the closure of five courts. This left the county with one magistrates' court, one crown court and a civil and family court in Gloucester.

Ministry of Justice data and other research shows that Gloucestershire is one of only six counties in the country to have just one magistrates' court and has one of the lowest number of courts per 10,000 population compared to those areas that are most demographically similar. One of those areas is Suffolk, who has undertaken research that suggests that lack of courts leads to longer travel journey times and higher costs culminating in a possible increase in the number of defendants failing to appear.

There has also been considerable changes to what the MoJ deem 'reasonable' travel times and this has a particular impact on a county as rural as Gloucestershire. Data taken from the MoJ shows that those travelling to court from the Forest of Dean now have at least 20 miles to travel, often with little or irregular public transport available, making it difficult for court users to arrive on time.

Accessibility to local justice is one of the key tenets of our justice system in this country but our two remaining criminal courts struggle to provide open access to all those who wish to use the courts, or see local justice administered for themselves. People with physical disabilities are unable to access the chambers within the crown court at all due to the configuration of the building and means any case involving a defendant, victim or witness who has mobility issues has to be transferred out of county, affecting the delivery of local justice.

The court community in Gloucestershire has been aware of the substandard facilities on offer for a long while. While various attempts to secure adequate and new facilities have been made, the county has been overlooked in many of the rounds of new court buildings or improvements to existing ones. This document seeks to bring all parties together across the county, with many conversations already taking place with senior representatives from HMCTS and Gloucestershire County Council.

The PCC has offered land next to the police custody complex as a viable option but would also support any suitable alternative site able to provide the county with a court fit to provide justice in the 21st century.

The PCC recommends that a meeting is held involving all agencies with a legal interest in the building to agree on a plan and way forward; the government minister is further petitioned to attend and view the facilities first-hand and have direct discussions with the PCC, county council and other interested parties; and that public support is garnered in order to effect change. Comments and feedback are warmly encouraged to help find a solution to provide better court facilities for the county.

Background

National reform programmes

Her Majesty's Courts and Tribunal Services (HMCTS) continued its highly ambitious reform programme in 2016, focusing on the introduction and use of new technology to help modernise the justice system. These included online services and video technology to help reduce demand in court rooms; the idea of the 'Common Platform' for data/information sharing between HMCTS and Police and Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) and making many of the civil court procedures online only. The reforms will cost around £1bn and have a delivery deadline of 2022.

The main reasons for the reform programme were set out around the inefficiencies of the then court estate, with only around 40% of courts being used for less than half of their available court sitting time¹, as well as modernising the online capability of courts and the justice/civil procedures to make better use of court room time.

Alongside these reform programmes has been an ongoing Ministry of Justice (MoJ) transformation programme of the court and tribunal estate which aimed to generate funds for the digital modernisation programme. This was re-launched in March 2018 as the 'Fit for the Future' programme and a public consultation was issued. The response to this was published in May 2019 and is considered in further detail below.

During this review process, courts being considered for closure were assessed on the basis of how well utilised they were whilst ensuring access to justice, delivering value for money and the ability to offer efficiency in the long term with specific reference to travelling times for members of the public attending court, whether as a defendant, victim or witness.

This estate rationalisation was initiated in 2010 and has seen 162 of the 323 magistrates' courts in England and Wales close - around 50% of the overall estate. If all court hearing centres (civil and criminal) that have ceased to hear cases were to be included, that number goes up to around 250 sites, the sale of which has generated around £223m, although primarily through the sale of estate in London².

The MoJ has formally stated that all money generated through the sales of buildings has been or will be reinvested into the justice system.

Locally, the reform programme has led to the closure of Stroud, Gloucester, Cirencester and Coleford Magistrates' Courts and Cheltenham County Court, leaving the county with one Magistrates' Court based in Cheltenham, a Crown Court in Gloucester and the Gloucester and Cheltenham County and Family Courts in Gloucester.

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/government-announces-changes-to-court-estate>

² <https://www.theguardian.com/law/2019/jan/27/half-of-magistrates-courts-in-england-and-wales-closed-since-tories-elected>



Cheltenham Magistrates' Court



Gloucester Crown Court



Gloucester and Cheltenham County and Family Courts

Response to the reforms

There have been several, high-profile reviews of the reform programme and its progress, including the court closures, and concerns raised which centre on access to justice.

A National Audit office report found that “...*the scale of proposed changes to HMCTS present a challenge and, HMCTS has so far made less progress than it originally [sic] planned. Costs have increased whilst benefits have decreased and, whilst HMCTS has taken steps to manage risks and improve how it manages the changes, it will be difficult to deliver without additional meaningful engagement with other related parties such as police and legal professionals...*”³.

This led to the Public Accounts Committee undertaking a ‘Transforming Courts and Tribunals’ inquiry which found that “*such sweeping changes will be extremely challenging to deliver*”⁴ and its Chair raising concerns that there was a need for HMCTS to ensure there were adequate benefits to the reform programme, rather than cost shunting to other agencies within the criminal justice system, querying “*...how these reforms could be called a success if the result is to undermine people’s access to justice...*”

An additional inquiry (Court and Tribunal Reforms Inquiry⁵) was commenced into the reform programme in January of this year, concentrating on queries previous reports had raised about the implications of access to justice. There will be two particular areas on which it will focus: the closures of courts and tribunal hearing centres; and the increased use of digital and video technology. Submissions were due in March of this year and the report is currently in preparation.

There has also been a recent debate in the House of Commons⁶ which focused on MPs concerns about access to justice (in particular for those with disabilities), suggesting that the reforms had been approached in a piecemeal and haphazard way. The MP tabling the motion, Bambos Charabalambous (Labour MP for Enfield and Southgate) stated

“Local justice and fairness and equality before the law need to apply to everyone equally. The court closures programme has fundamentally failed and skewed things against those on low incomes and the disadvantaged. This has to stop and has to stop now: justice must be for everyone, not just those who can afford it”

There has also been considerable coverage in the national press. A BuzzFeed article published in March of this year⁷ accused the Ministry of Justice of leaving out data from a recently published survey that allegedly showed that users of the Justice System had a more positive experience if they physically attended a court building, therefore throwing doubt on the reliance of the reforms on increased usage of video technology instead of courtrooms.

The Huffington Post ran an article in April this year⁸ focusing on the closure of Chorley Magistrates and the wider impact of this on the community, the Police Force and town centre trading, as well as raising wider national issues including defendants who aren’t able or willing to use computers; defendants and victims using same public transport in

³ <https://www.parliament.uk/business/committees/committees-a-z/commons-select/public-accounts-committee/inquiries/parliament-2017/transforming-courts-tribunals-17-19/>

⁴ <https://www.parliament.uk/business/committees/committees-a-z/commons-select/public-accounts-committee/inquiries/parliament-2017/transforming-courts-tribunals-17-19/>

⁵ <https://www.parliament.uk/business/committees/committees-a-z/commons-select/justice-committee/inquiries/parliament-2017/court-and-tribunals-reform-inquiry-17-19/>

⁶ <https://hansard.parliament.uk/Commons/2019-06-20/debates/CAA83503-F9A5-430E-891E-434A242BFB1E/CourtClosuresAccessToJustice>

⁷ https://www.buzzfeed.com/amhtml/emilydugan/ministry-justice-data-closing-courts?_twitter_impression=true

⁸ https://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/entry/austerity-is-harming-access-to-justice-with-magistrates-courts-closures-say-campaigners_uk_5ca5fc13e4b0409b0ec49e3c?guccounter=1

more rural areas; and, a lack of Magistrates, highlighting that it makes it even more important that Magistrates have local knowledge.

Local context

Until recently, there has not been any available data from the MoJ as to what court provision each county has/had before and after the court closure programme.

Newspaper articles and online research indicated that Gloucestershire is one of only six counties with only one Magistrates' Court⁹. Those other counties are: Shropshire, Herefordshire, Bedfordshire, the Isle of Wight and Suffolk.

Recently, a map of the HMCTS Estate by region and county has been published¹⁰ which appears to confirm this.

The below table shows the comparative number of court centres for the areas considered to be in the 'most similar group' (MSGs) to Gloucestershire Constabulary.

Force	Number of Magistrates Courts	Number of Crown Courts	Number of Civil Courts	Number of joint court centres - Crown and County	Number of joint court centres - Crown/County/Magistrates/Family	Total courts	Total Magistrates
Cambridgeshire	2	1	1	1	0	5	2
Devon and Cornwall	4	1	3	2	1	11	5
Gloucestershire	1	1	1	0	0	3	1
N. Yorkshire	0	1	1	0	3	5	3
Suffolk	1	1	2	0	0	4	1
Warwickshire	2	0	1	1	0	4	2
West Mercia	5	2	2	1	0	10	5
Wiltshire	1	0	0	1	1	3	2

As explained by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS), MSGs are groups of police force areas that have been found to be the most similar to each other based on an analysis of demographic, social and economic characteristics which relate to crime¹¹ and thus can be used as a comparator for court provision, although this is not their primary use.

Using both sets of data, it is clear that Gloucestershire and Suffolk have the lowest number of Magistrates' courts and, Gloucestershire (along with Wiltshire) has the smallest court estates within the MSG.

Using the MSG data and comparing it to population data available on iQuanta (a web based service provided to operational staff in police forces, community safety partnerships and Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services) it is possible to compare provision of courts per 100,000 population.

⁹ <https://www.eadt.co.uk/news/court-closures-would-mean-suffolk-would-be-one-of-only-six-counties-in-the-uk-to-operate-with-single-magistrates-court-1-4216501>

¹⁰ https://consult.justice.gov.uk/digital-communications/transforming-court-tribunal-estate/supporting_documents/hmctsnationalmap.pdf

¹¹ <https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmicfrs/crime-and-policing-comparator/about-the-data/>

It is also apparent that Gloucestershire and Suffolk have the lowest number of Magistrates' Courts per 100,000 population, whilst Gloucestershire and Wiltshire have the lowest number of total courts per 100,000 population.

Force	Total courts per 100,000 population	Total Magistrates per 100,000 population
Cambridgeshire	0.59	0.24
Devon and Cornwall	0.63	0.29
Gloucestershire	0.48	0.16
N. Yorkshire	0.61	0.37
Suffolk	0.53	0.13
Warwickshire	0.71	0.35
West Mercia	0.79	0.39
Wiltshire	0.42	0.28

Having one remaining Magistrates' Court also means there are additional difficulties with court users travelling further and longer to attend court. Research from Suffolk (which is comparable both as an MSG and number of courts), suggested that longer distances and higher travel costs are partly responsible for the increase in the number of defendants not appearing¹².

During the original launch of the court closures in 2010, the MoJ stated that court users should be able to reach court within one hour and considered this as reasonable travel time. However the 'Fit for the Future' model in 2018 has refreshed the concept of reasonable travelling as being able to travel to and from court in one day, defined as leaving no earlier than 7.30am and returning home no later than 7.30pm. Given most court centres aim to sit between 10am and finish between 4-5pm, this has increased what the government see as reasonable travel time considerably up to around 2 hours each way.

Using the tool provided by the Commons Library¹³ which maps court provision across the country, it is clear that after the local court closures, those living in the south of the county have had their travel/mileage increased to get to and from their local court house by around 10 miles, with most of the south having around 10-20 miles to travel to reach Cheltenham. The east of the county (Forest of Dean) now has **at least** 20 miles to travel to reach court (whereas before, pre-2010 closures, it was between 10-20 miles), often with little or irregular public transport available.

Most public transport from the Forest of Dean takes around 2 hours, with a change at Gloucester Transport Hub and, if leaving within the parameters set by the MoJ (i.e. not leaving before 7.30am) do not leave early enough for those warned to attend court for 9.30am. By way of example, someone travelling from Coleford to Cheltenham Magistrates' Court would need to leave on the 07.00 bus, make 2 changes, and arrive in Cheltenham for 09.00. The next bus leaves at 07.45, has one change and arrives in Cheltenham at 10.11, taking 2 hours and 28 minutes and making the attendee late for court.

Excluding professionals who work within the courthouse, most attendees rely on public transport to get to Cheltenham and Gloucester, which can pose additional problems for those in rural areas (especially the Forest of Dean) not just for irregularity of services and

¹² <https://www.uos.ac.uk/sites/default/files/Research%20Report%20Access%20to%20Justice%20FINAL.pdf>

¹³ <https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/home-affairs/justice/courts/constituency-data-magistrates-court-closures/>

length of travel time, but often requires defendants having to use the same public transport as victims and witnesses. Not only is this highly distressing for victims and witnesses, it potentially places the defendant in breach of bail conditions and has a cost implication for the wider Criminal Justice System by resulting in applications to the Crown Prosecution Service to pay for taxis to ensure the safe travel and attendance of vulnerable victims/witnesses.

There is some mitigation of travel issues by the increased use of Live Links (LL) for victims and witnesses, with facilities now available in Waterwells, Bamfurlong and most recently, Coleford. These are mainly used for police officers but can be used for vulnerable victims and witnesses where special measures¹⁴ have been granted. Local multi-agency co-operation has been good and its use is well embedded and utilised, with the restriction on increased use being that there is only one courtroom in Cheltenham that has capacity to hear trials using Live Link technology. This can prove limiting when there is more than one trial listed with a LL requirement and can result in police officers attending court as vulnerable witnesses must take priority.

A particular issue that affects both local courts is accessibility for those with physical disabilities or restrictions. As mentioned above, Gloucester Crown Court is a Grade II listed building dating from 1816 and, due to this, has no direct access for those requiring the use of walking aids or wheelchairs. Access is possible via a separate entrance in Shire Hall but, once within the Crown Court complex, these visitors to the court are unable to move around easily or freely.

If attending as a witness or a member of the public, access to the public gallery is accessible only via stairways and has no lift facility, making them impossible for those with physical restrictions to use them. The entrances into the courtrooms themselves are via narrow, stepped doors into a courtroom that also has steps throughout.

Alice, a local student, is studying criminology. As part of her course, Alice needed to go Crown Court to observe a particular type of case and how the jury process worked and, because she is in a wheelchair, contacted the court in advance to discuss access. Alice was politely advised that in order for her to observe a trial, she could enter via the Shire Hall access which has ramps but, in order to enter a courtroom as is her right as a member of the public and in accordance with the principles of access to justice she would need to be lifted out of her wheelchair and into the courtroom. Once in place, she would be unable to be moved for 4 hours until the court recessed for lunch.

“Whilst I appreciated court staff trying to accommodate my request, the solution offered was not practical and extremely undignified. The offered alternative was that I travel to Bristol Crown Court which has better disabled access but I don’t drive and is a considerable distance away and would involve significant cost for me to get to using public transport.”

Officially, the nearest Equality Act 2010 compliant crown court is Salisbury Crown Court, around 75 miles from Gloucester, taking around 1.45 hours to drive, 2.50 hours via train and has no direct bus services.

¹⁴ <https://www.cps.gov.uk/legal-guidance/special-measures>

Accessibility was a key theme for the recently retired resident Judge at Gloucester Crown Court, Judge Jamie Tabor, who explained how he had made the decision that any cases involving a defendant, victim or witness with a mobility issue (i.e. on crutches or in a wheelchair) were to be transferred to Bristol Crown Court as

“No-one should commence giving evidence by being carried into a courtroom – it was demeaning and humiliating for those involved.”

Judge Tabor emphasised how vital the concept of local justice is, and is a passionate believer that it is essential for sentencers to have experience and knowledge of the locality

“Judges from other areas, even Bristol, do not have the knowledge of the area and its nuances and the impact that has on the local community when sentencing offenders.”

This was confirmed with subsequent conversations with a local man who has unique insight into the impact of local justice. Hollie Gazzard was murdered by her ex-partner and her father, Nick Gazzard, stresses how important it was to him and his whole family that her killer was sentenced locally after being convicted after trial at Bristol Crown Court.

Mr Gazzard spoke about how inaccessible Bristol Crown Court felt for a family of a victim, having to travel a considerable distance every day to attend the trial, making the day longer and whole experience for them even worse. This included difficulties with parking; the trauma of having to sit in the courtroom directly alongside the defendant’s family and being shoulder-to-shoulder with the press.

Mr Gazzard describes feeling a disconnect to the proceedings and how upsetting it was for him and his family to have to be in such close proximity to the defendant as he was walked through the courtroom to and from the dock, every day of the trial, several times a day. In contrast to this, Nick explained how he and his family were able to sit in the courtroom in Gloucester for the sentencing, separate from the press and the defendant’s family.

“Being in my home town made it feel like justice was happening where I live, in front of people I knew, allowing a wider support network which provided additional comfort to me and my family in such traumatic circumstances.”

Whilst there is not the same level of accessibility issues for Cheltenham Magistrates' Court with regards to those with physical disabilities (there is a separate entrance for those in a wheelchair/on crutches to avoid the steps at the front of the building), there are other accessibility issues. The main entrance to the building is via a set of stairs and through the designated smoking area, where a considerable number of defendants stand to smoke. This can be intimidating for victims and witnesses, professional court users and support services and even other defendants. Inside the court building, there are limited waiting facilities which mean that, unless identified as vulnerable, victims, witnesses and defendants can wait in the same space. Some efforts have been made to remedy this, with a separate room available but this is shabby and not particularly inviting or a calm environment to wait within.

General facilities are sparse, with witnesses having to use the same toilets as defendants and walk through the general waiting room to court. Just recently, defendants produced into the court building from police custody had to be transferred to Bristol Magistrates' court due to a leaking toilet within the court cellblock.¹⁵ The court cell block itself has only six cells meaning that, on the days when more than six prisoners are produced from the police custody suite, severe delays can be experienced not only for those in police custody but also those defendants who have attended court on bail, delaying cases and causing the courts to sit later.

¹⁵ <https://www.gloucestershirelive.co.uk/news/cheltenham-news/defendants-moved-bristol-because-leaking-3189723>

Purpose of this report

For a long while, the court community in Gloucestershire has been aware of the substandard nature of their courts with regards to facilities and the negative impact this has on local justice.

Various attempts have been made to secure new court premises over the years and the county has been overlooked in many of the rounds of new court complexes or improvements to existing buildings.

There is an identified need for a new justice centre for the county. The PCC recognises and encourages it¹⁶ and in May of this year, a cross party motion was passed by Gloucestershire County Council to write to ministers specifically requesting investment in the county's Crown Court, stating that

“a new court could form part of a 21st century Justice Centre, which may also contain the Magistrate and County Courts.”¹⁷

Officers from both the OPCC and County Council have met, as have OPCC/HMCTS representatives and agree that approaching the issue as a collective is the best way to progress matters, with work ongoing.

In the meantime, the PCC has offered land next to Police Headquarters within very close proximity to their custody cell complex. This would allow the MoJ to build a state-of-the-art justice centre without the expense of the retail value of the land and could offer courtrooms for justice that must be done face-to-face (such as trials and sentencing), be future-proof (with better and more video enabled solutions) as well as providing better facilities such as a café and potentially even a crèche. The proposal would include both criminal and civil courts. There are travel links with the Park and Ride and the M5 close by.

There are concerns about whether any new court should be situated nearer the city centre rather than in Quedgeley and, if suitable land could be identified, the PCC and criminal justice agencies would support this as the key objective is to provide better court provision for the county. Work is ongoing with Council officers to identify any other suitable sections of land within Gloucester city centre that could potentially be developed.



Artist's impression of what a new court could look like

¹⁶ <https://www.gloucestershire-pcc.gov.uk/a-new-court-for-gloucestershire-vital-for-dispensing-local-justice/>

¹⁷ <https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/gloucestershire-county-council-news/news-may-2019/cross-party-support-for-crown-court-upgrade/>

The PCC has written to the minister to raise his concerns about the local provision of justice and put forward his proposal for the offered land near Police Headquarters but has been advised that there are no accessibility issues with the local courts and, in any event, no money with which to build a new court centre.

Despite this, there are some areas that are receiving high levels of MoJ funding in relation to their court facilities. Of particular note is the £2.6million spent on Swindon Magistrates' and Crown Court regeneration which had new facilities added and existing ones revamped¹⁸. This included additional hearing rooms, judicial chambers, new kitchen facilities and furniture, refurbished offices and a new public waiting room, all of which in a court building which was already Equality Act compliant. The renovations were stated as being

"...part of HMCTS' commitment to improving the condition of court buildings and access to justice for all users."

This is not the only investment the MoJ has made/is making in the court estate:

- £5million for Liverpool's Civil and Family Court to assist the Personal Support Unit (PSU) (a charity whose volunteers help those who require extra assistance in court)¹⁹
- £30million is being spent on PricewaterhouseCoopers as external consultants to deliver part of the ongoing modernisation programme²⁰
- Project to spend millions on a new court complex within London City to deal with cyber crime²¹

Given the outlined conditions and restrictions of the current court estate within the county, it would seem that Gloucestershire is a viable candidate to receive some level of MoJ funding to remedy and improve local access to justice that would fit the HMCTS commitment quoted above.

¹⁸ <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/swindon-court-users-to-benefit-from-26m-government-investment>

¹⁹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/vulnerable-court-users-to-benefit-from-5m-government-investment>

²⁰ <https://www.theguardian.com/law/2018/jan/02/moj-spending-huge-sums-on-consultants-to-deliver-digital-courts>

²¹ <https://www.theguardian.com/law/2017/oct/09/new-court-complex-planned-bolster-city-london-after-brexit>

Conclusions/Recommendations

There is widespread acceptance across the county that it is in need of up to date and suitable court facilities to fully enable modern, accessible justice for the people of our county. Some good progress has been made to date between the criminal justice agencies and local government officers and if change is to be successful, this should be capitalised upon.

Recommendation 1:

A multi-agency meeting is held with all parties who hold a legal interest in Cheltenham Magistrates Court to discuss the findings and create a plan of action on how to progress not only the location but the building of a new court centre.

Recommendation 2:

To further petition to the government for a minister/under-secretary to visit court facilities and to meet the PCC and other interested parties to see and discuss them first hand. Several correspondences have been entered into with the various ministers and the most recent incumbent has been approached.

Recommendation 3:

That public support is garnered – this includes from the local defence community, court users (both professional and volunteer) and canvassing of the views of defendants, victims and witnesses to see how the current facilities affect their experiences of court and, in turn, their views of justice.