



To all civil, family, probate and tribunal court users

Your Reference:

Our Reference – HA/OM

Dear court user

Re: Temporary Closure of Bristol Civil and Family Justice Centre

You may be aware that the Bristol Civil and Family Justice Centre's car park was subject to a severe flood on Tuesday 27 June 2017. This has rendered the Bristol Civil and Family Justice Centre to be unavailable to house any court hearings or administrative support from HMCTS court staff until further notice.

I appreciate that this will and has caused disruption to court users wanting to access the services provided by the Bristol Civil and Family Justice Centre and offer my most sincere apologies for the inconvenience caused.

The court has and is working closely with it's judiciary, estates team and stakeholders to secure temporary arrangements to ensure that services to court users are maintained until such time that re-occupancy to the Bristol Civil and Family Justice Centre can be achieved.

The following service provision is therefore in place until further notice:-

Bristol Probate Registry

Due to this incident the Bristol District Probate Registry will be closed until further notice. Telephone calls and e-mails cannot be answered at this time and no counter service is available. Bristol District Probate Registry staff has been relocated for the duration of the closure to the Probate Registry of Wales in Cardiff.

For further assistance please telephone **02920474379** or alternatively email:
CardiffDPRenquiries@hmcts.gsi.gov.uk

Counter Services for Civil and Family

The main public counter servicing all civil and family enquiries is temporarily located on the 1st floor at Bristol Magistrates Court, Marlborough Street, Bristol from 9.30am to 2pm (Monday to Friday).

Court bundles

Due to limited storage capacity at our temporary venues, we would ask all court users to take any bundles with them at the conclusion of the hearing. Any bundles left in venues will be subject to our confidential wasting procedures and **will not** be retained.

Court hearings

Every effort is being made to keep all listed hearings for civil, family and tribunal hearings in Bristol or in close proximity to Bristol. Other court venues such as Bath Magistrates Court, Taunton Combined Court Centre, Gloucester County Court and North Somerset Courthouse in Worle are also being used (if required).

The court listing team will contact parties giving as much notice as possible in the event that travelling to other court venues is required **or** if your case has to be adjourned due to lack of court room accommodation.

In the event of your case being adjourned this will be supported by a judicial decision as listing is deemed as a judicial function.

Consultation rooms

Can all civil, family and tribunal court users note that we have limited consultation rooms available to use in our temporary hearing venues. If you occupy one of these consultation rooms for any reason, please ensure that you remove any possessions including court papers when you leave them. Please **do not** under any circumstances, leave any items in these rooms as this poses security risks.

E-mail services

This remains unaffected by this incident and due to the current situation is the preferred method of communication but we appreciate that not all court users have access to e-mail services. Please note that due to the flood, the court staff have only had limited access to e-mails but that situation is now improving.

As a result there may be a delay in responding to your enquiry. If you are sending e-mails to the court for hearings, please include the case number, date of hearing and the name of the Judge hearing this case (if this is known to you).

The court e-mail addresses are available on the Bristol Civil and Family Justice Centre court finder page:-courtribunalfinder.service.gov.uk.

Payments of court fees and warrant payments.

Our normal service of accepting payments (by all methods) has been restored. Payments can be accepted via our temporary counter services at Bristol Magistrates Court between the hours of 9.30am to 2pm (Monday to Friday) or by telephone to: **0117 9302430** between the hours of 9am to 4pm (Monday to Friday).

Personal Support Unit (PSU)

This service has been re-located to the 1st floor (room adjacent to Court 6) at Bristol Magistrates Court, Marlborough Street, Bristol. They also have a temporary contact number for customers to arrange appointments or enquiries which is **07756 976823**.

Postal services

All post destined for the Bristol Civil and Family Justice Centre is being re-directed to Bristol Magistrates Court. As a result there may be a delay in responding to your enquiry or your issuing process. The court has a recovery plan in place, I would be most grateful if you could defer from contacting the court asking for updates on routine enquiries as this will enable us to deal with our backlogs more quickly.

Telephone hearings

Any court users involved in telephone hearings will be provided with the number for their conference provider to call by the listing team giving as much notice as possible.

Telephone services

We are in the process of restoring our main switchboard number but until then please use the following direct dial numbers:-

Centralised Listing for civil and family cases: **0117 9302411**

Civil enquiries (including High Court and Court of Protection): **0117 9763010**

Family (including Divorce enquiries): **0117 9302442**

South West Employment Tribunal: **0117 9763019**

Updates of the incident involving the Bristol Civil and Family Justice Centre

We are working closely with the HMCTS communications team to provide regular updates to court users on the incident as we appreciate and acknowledge the disruption and inconvenience this incident is causing.

These updates will feature on the Bristol Civil and Family Justice Centre court finder page:-
courttribunalfinder.service.gov.uk.

Updates may also be found on the independent website: www.familycourtinfo.org.uk

May I thank all court users for their assistance, patience and understanding while the court tries to restore its services as quickly as possible and offer my most sincere apologies for any inconvenience caused.

Yours Sincerely

Helen Andrews

Mrs Helen Andrews
Operations Manager Bristol Civil, Family and Tribunals