

Downpatrick Courthouse

Location

The courthouse is located in English Street, Downpatrick. It is adjacent to Down County Museum and in the Vicinity of Down Cathedral.

Transport

The bus station is approximately a 10 minute walk from the courthouse. For information about bus timetables contact Translink on 028 9066 6630 or www.translink.co.uk

Car parking

There is no car parking at the courthouse, but there are a number of car parks within walking distance of the court. Mount Crescent located on the first right past Down High School. Irish Street which operates a system whereby the fee is paid on your return. Lower Market Street in the vicinity of the Saint Patrick's Centre. Church Street on the left hand side as you approach from Belfast. Pay & Display in operation. Some on street parking is available on English Street. There is a disabled parking bay at the courthouse, please contact the customer service officer or disability liaison officer to arrange access.

Opening hours

The building is open from 9.00am. The office is open to the public from 9.30am to 4.30pm. The courts generally start at 10.30am, stopping for lunch around 1.00pm and resuming at 2.00pm, until the daily business is finished.

Refreshment & other facilities

Refreshment facilities are available at the courthouse. There is also a range of coffee shops and restaurants within walking distance. There is a payphone in the public corridor, and a tannoy system throughout the building.

Note Taking in Court

Anyone wishing to take notes in court must obtain the judge's prior permission.

Mobile Phones and Photographic equipment

Care must be taken in the use of mobile phones whilst in the precincts of the court. It is prohibited to use any photographic or recording device within the court building and the area immediately surrounding it. Some mobile phones are capable of performing this function and therefore you are advised not to use mobile phones for this purpose whilst attending court. Mobile phones must be switched off before entering a courtroom.

Witness Service

If you are a victim or witness for the prosecution, Victim Support Northern Ireland offers a Witness Service at all the Crown and Magistrate' Courts.

Before the Trial: opportunity to talk to someone; pre-trial familiarisation visit to court; information on court procedures.

During the Trial: safe waiting area; liaison with court officers and legal representatives; arrangements for witnesses with special needs; accompanying witnesses into court.

After the Trial: preparing victims for case outcome; encouraging continued contact with Victim Support Community Service; referral on to other agencies.

Witness & Child waiting areas

Downpatrick Courthouse also has a room allocated for vulnerable or intimidated witnesses. This room is located in a private area on the ground floor. There is also a child witness room available on the ground floor and TV link facilities on the first floor.

Help and information

The staff in the main office on the first floor will help with any queries you may have. There is a notice board in the waiting area which displays lists of the daily business. If you require additional information or need to meet someone on

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arrival, you can get help from the reception desk or court office. This will be available from 9.30am each court day. If you have not already done so, you may wish to contact a solicitor before coming to court.

Please note that you must attend court at the time you have been given, although you may not be called until after this. If you feel you have been waiting too long, please contact a court official.

Do you have a disability or a special need?

If you have a disability or a special need, please contact the Customer Service Officer or disability liaison officer who will provide you with information on the facilities available. The public counter and all courtrooms in Downpatrick have induction loop systems, and our leaflets can also be made available in large print. The Courthouse, which is a listed building, is on a raised site. Wheelchair access is through the side entrance. Lifts provide access to the first floor courtrooms. It is advisable to contact the disability liaison officer in advance to discuss any mobility needs within the courtroom environment.

Giving Evidence

If you are aged 14 or over and have to give evidence in court, you will be required either to take a religious oath or 'affirm' that you will tell the truth. The court clerk will ask you which method you want to use, and invite you to repeat after them the appropriate words. A religious oath is a sworn promise to tell the truth and is made on a holy book. An affirmation is a declaration to tell the truth but it is not sworn on a holy book.

Contact information

For further information on Downpatrick Courthouse please contact:
The Customer Service Officer
The Courthouse,
21 English Street,
Downpatrick BT30 6AB

Telephone 028 4461 4621

Facsimile 028 4461 3969

Email: downpatrickcourthouse@courtsni.gov.uk

This information sheet will be made available in a range of alternative formats. Requests for alternative formats should be made to Communications Group. For further information on other courthouses please contact

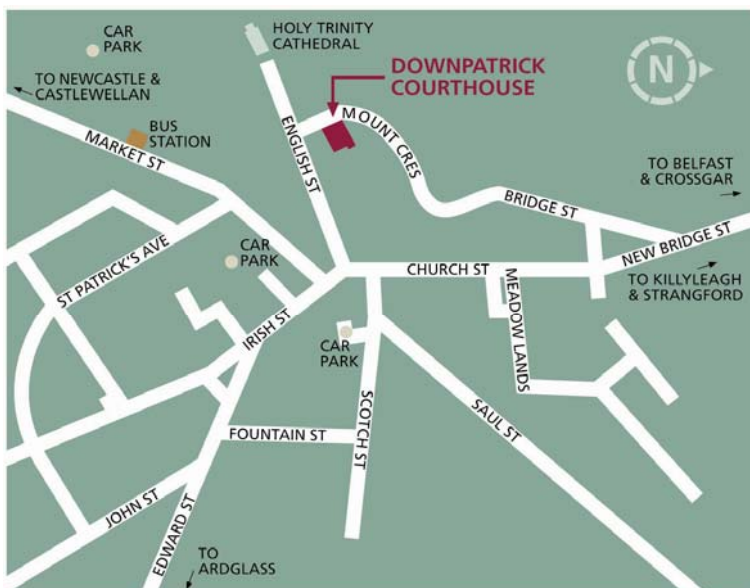
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Belfast BT1 3LA

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The Northern Ireland Courts and Tribunals Service is committed to improving its quality of service to all court users. By making comments about our services, you enable us to improve them. By making a complaint, you enable us to put things right.



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