



Youth Consultation Hearing Centre Closures



Northern Ireland

**Courts and
Tribunals Service**

www.courtsni.gov.uk

Background

The Northern Ireland Courts and Tribunals Service (NICTS) have 23 courthouses all around Northern Ireland. The courthouses are where court hearings take place and where we provide various services like:-

- Preparing for court hearings
- Accepting fine payments and applications for more time to pay fines
- Providing information leaflets
- Providing information on when court cases will be heard
- Advising what fees should be paid to start some court cases

Before September 2009 all the courthouses opened from 9am to 5pm from Monday to Friday each week (excluding public holidays).



Hearing Centres

In September 2009 5 of our 23 courthouses became “Hearing Centres” because not many people used them when courts weren’t sitting and we needed to make better use of our courthouses and staff.

These courthouses were Bangor, Larne, Limavady, Magherafelt and Strabane. They only open on the day that court hearings take place, the rest of the time they remain closed.

When the Hearing Centres are open they offer all of the services mentioned above. When the Hearing Centres are closed people must access these services:-

- At other courthouses
- On the telephone
- Over the internet



Our new proposals

The NICTS financial situation is different from what it was in 2009. We are now being given less money each year to operate but we are still required to provide the same range and standard of services.

We are thinking about doing a number of things to save money so we can continue to operate within our budget.

One of the things we are thinking about is completely closing the five Hearing Centres we created in 2009. This would also mean transferring their court hearings to other courthouses nearby.

By closing the Hearing Centres we expect to save over £400,000 each year in security costs, maintenance costs, and bills (like electricity and rates).

We also anticipate that we will need to spend approximately £3,000,000 in the future to keep these courthouses in good repair and up to current building standards if they were to remain open.

Having looked at the available facilities and courtrooms in our other courthouses, and the transport implications for people, we're thinking about moving the court business as follows:-

Hearing Centre we're thinking about closing.	Courthouse their business would move to.
Bangor	Newtownards
Larne	Ballymena
Limavady	Coleraine
Magherafelt	Antrim
Strabane	Omagh

More information on how we reached our decision is available in our document "Consultation on proposals to close Hearing Centres at Bangor, Larne, Limavady, Magherafelt and Strabane courthouses."

We can email you this document if you would like to read it. Our contact details are on the next page.

What are your views?

The NICTS is very interested in your views on what we are thinking about doing, especially if you live in the areas where the courthouses above are located.

You can tell us what you think before **Friday 2 March 2012** by:-

Emailing: communicationsgroup@courtsni.gov.uk

Writing to: Consultation Co-ordinator
Hearing Centres Consultation
Northern Ireland Courts and Tribunals Service
Communications Group
Laganside House
23-27 Oxford Street
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Telephoning: 028 9041 2386

Textphoning: 028 9041 2920

Faxing: 028 9072 8942

Copies of this document are also available from the above address and can be made available in other formats or minority languages on request.



To obtain this document in an alternative language please contact **Communications Group** at the above address.

Для получения данного документа на другом языке, пожалуйста, свяжитесь с **Communications Group** по вышеуказанному адресу.

Niniejszy dokument można uzyskać w innych językach pisząc do **Communications Group** na powyższy adres.

Para obter este documento noutra idioma, por favor, contacte **Communications Group** na morada acima indicada.

Norėdami gauti šį dokumentą kita kalba, prašom kreiptis į **Communications Group** aukščiau nurodytu adresu.

如需本文件的中文版本，请联络上述地址的 **Communications Group**。



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