

Research shows court fees no hindrance to justice



28 June 2007

People going to court are motivated by getting justice and a final decision, government research published today shows.

The research report, **What's cost got to do with it?: the impact of changing court fees on users**, carried out in England and Wales, found that people worried more about how stressful or long their court case would be, than about the potential costs of the case.

Four in ten people said that courts should continue to be funded as they are; while one in four of those sampled felt that court users should pay all costs.

When asked about court fees, most people said court users should only pay for the services used. They would also like to know up front how much the process would cost them.

Justice Minister Vera Baird QC MP welcomed the findings and said:

These findings give us an insight into what people take account of when deciding whether to go to court or not. Getting justice is, rightly, their paramount motivation, so it is important to learn what factors stress, length of case, cost they consider, and what weight they attach to them, when deciding whether or not to pursue a case.

We have recently consulted on the issue of civil court fees and the outcome of that public consultation shall be published shortly.

Other findings show:

- Over half of court users know the court process, and just under half know about court fees specifically;
- People claiming money back and people wanting to divorce would prefer to go to court without legal representation, to cut costs;
- In our sample court users who used solicitors were just as satisfied with the process as those who did not use them.

Notes to editors

1. In 2005 Her Majesty's Court Service developed a strategy to ensure that the funding of the civil

courts including funding for their modernisation is sustainable and fair.

2. A [consultation paper Civil Court Fees](#) was published on 2 April 2007. The consultation period ended on 25 June 2007.
3. For more information about the research report: [What's cost got to do with it?: the impact of changing court fees on users](#)

4. Media queries should be directed to Kathryn Montague, Ministry of Justice Press Office, on
 020 7210 1397 .