



case study

REPLY TO JURY SUMMONS

Digital transformation in government

HMCTS has launched a new digital service to improve the juror summoning process in England and Wales. This will transform the way citizens respond to their summons for jury service.

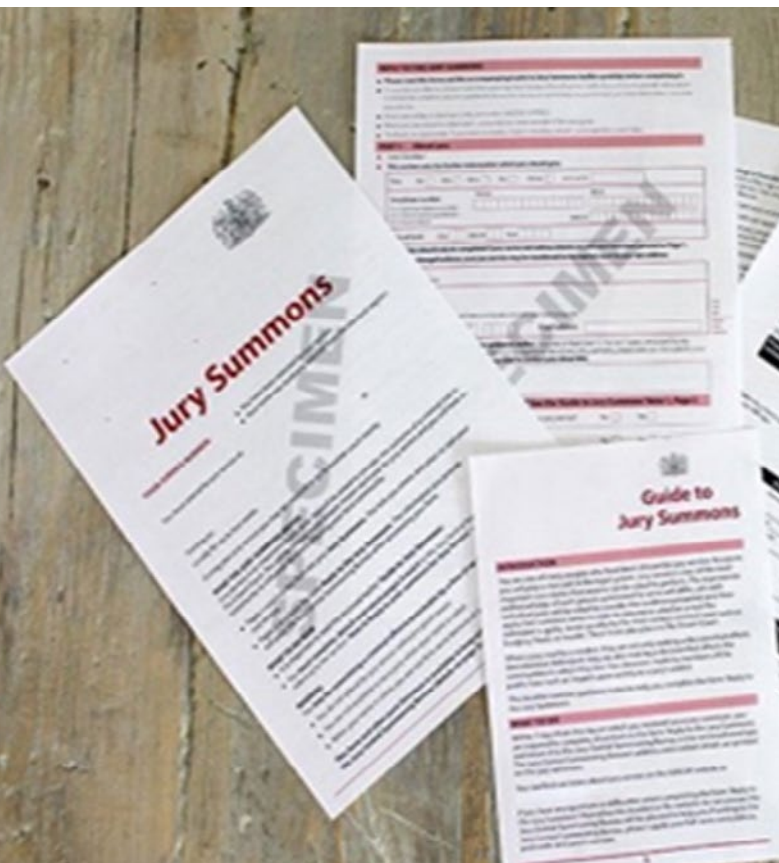
Introduction

HMCTS has launched a new digital service to improve the juror summoning process in England and Wales. This will transform the way citizens respond to their summons for jury service. The service will allow citizens to respond to their summons online, on their choice of device.

The need for change: cutting out paper and delay

The jury summoning process was very paper intensive. Summons letters were sent to all potential jurors and follow up communications were made by telephone, email and post. User research found that many citizens would prefer the option to reply to their Jury Summons online, in line with their expectations of a modern public service.

So a new service was designed in line with the government service standard. This directly supports the HMCTS transformation programme for the courts service across England and Wales - to modernise and simplify the justice experience for citizens and staff.



Juror Summons Reply

This new service enables citizens (including appointed helpers) to reply to their Jury Summons online through a web application hosted on gov.uk on their own phone, tablet or computer.



The aims of the service are to:

Improve the citizen experience, by providing a more convenient channel of response

Provide an intuitive and accessible experience that will enable the majority of people to return their summons reply without assistance

Provide alternative means (assisted digital) of replying for people who, for whatever reason, are not able to use a digital service by themselves

Improve the clarity of information received in summons replies and reduce the number of phone calls to and from HMCTS

Reduce the effort required by HMCTS to complete summons processing

Decrease the reliance on paper and enable a reduction in printing and postage

One team

A multi disciplinary team was assembled with people from HMCTS, CGI and Cogworx- a specialist UX consultancy.

From the very beginning of the project, the core team was embedded within HMCTS and worked to an agile delivery methodology.

The team had regular access to HMCTS business and operational users, enabling the team to confidently iterate and evolve ideas quickly.

Collaboration tools were used extensively to enable the team to work together effectively from multiple locations, and share progress with stakeholders on a regular basis.



“Juror Digital is a great example of collaborative working between us and multiple suppliers, providing a digital solution for Jury Summoning and improving the experience for citizens and HMCTS staff. The HMCTS led team have worked closely together throughout delivery and the use of open technologies and agile techniques enabled us to rapidly enhance the service in line with our business needs and feedback from users.”

Geraint-Wyn Jenkins
Head of Crime DCD
HM Courts & Tribunals Service



Developing the service

The development of the service followed the delivery phases set out in the Digital Service Standard to iteratively develop and deliver the service in small increments, guided by continual user feedback, to create a live service that works for everyone.

This approach ensured that confidence in the new service was progressively developed over time. The team developed the service using agile scrum methods, working through a sprint backlog over 2 week sprints with daily stand ups to check and share progress.

To ensure a wide spectrum of needs was met, a programme of ongoing user research informed the design and development process. Based on the feedback from research and user testing, designs were then iterated at increasing levels of fidelity, moving from GDS prototyping tools to live code.

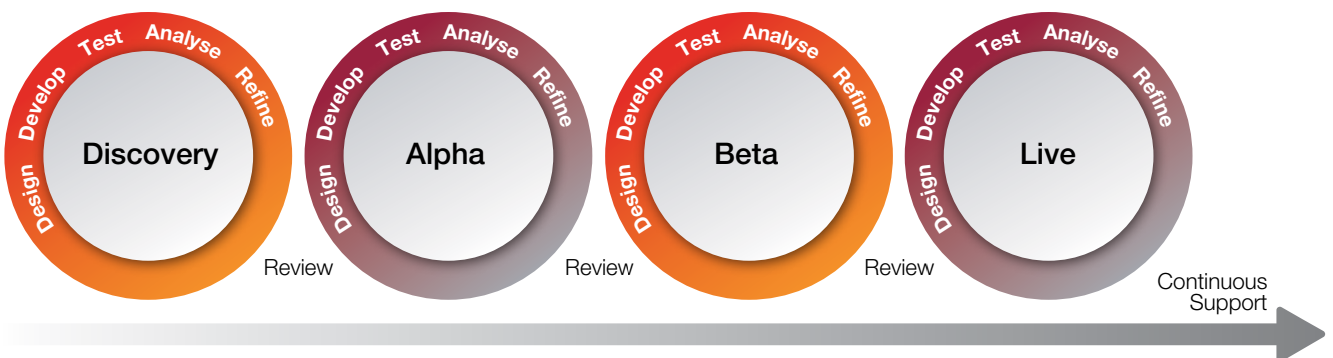


Diagram 1: Juror Digital

Discovery

In discovery, the team worked hard to understand the challenges facing a citizen when they receive their summons and how a digital solution might improve it. The team also researched the requirements for HMCTS staff who would be processing the summons received.

The end-to-end Jury Summons process and performance measures were mapped out

Ethnographic research captured the experience of citizens using the paper summons

Observation and telephone call analysis highlighted consistent challenges faced by citizens

Crown Courts visits helped to further understand citizens' experiences

Workshops with business stakeholders explored HMCTS needs from the service

Policy implications, technology options and security requirements were explored

CONCERN THAT DIABETES MAY BE SEEN AS A REASON FOR EXCUSAL

LABEL FOR FREE TEXT BOX CONTAINS HEADER AGAIN RATHER THAN "EDIT"

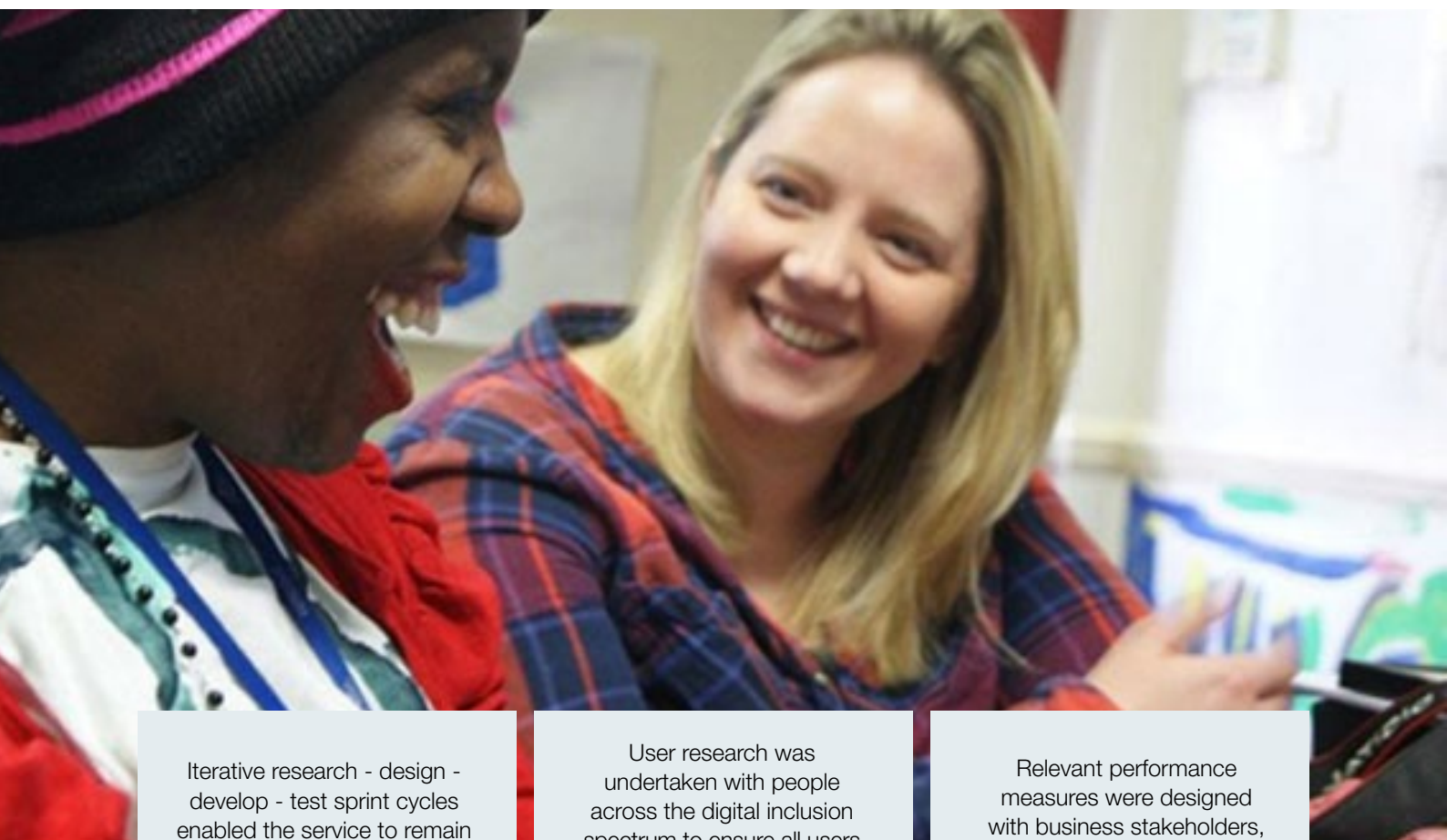
MAKE SPECIAL ARRANGEMENTS BOX MANDATORY IF 'YES' SELECTED

USERS WITH COGNITIVE IMPAIR. HAVE A

Alpha

In alpha, prototypes of the juror summons reply service were built and tested with users; demonstrating that the experience could be improved with a digital service and that its implementation was technically possible.

By the end of alpha a Minimal Viable Product was defined and prototyped in line with prioritised user needs, using the chosen technologies.



Iterative research - design - develop - test sprint cycles enabled the service to remain aligned to user needs and expectations

User research was undertaken with people across the digital inclusion spectrum to ensure all users were represented throughout service development

Relevant performance measures were designed with business stakeholders, measuring current transaction volumes

The system was developed using technologies widely used across government including:

- NodeJS, Java and API's that interface with an existing court application
- Gov.UK Notify provides email confirmations to citizens
- Continual delivery using Azure, with Terraform and Ansible to manage and configure the environments
- Code is stored in GitLab, and uses Jenkins to automatically build, deploy and test the code

Beta

In beta, building on the feedback from alpha prototypes, a working version of the service was built. A live trial service was then deployed for selected courts in England. During beta 12,000 citizens replied to their Jury Summons online.



During beta:

User research continued to explore the needs of people reliant on assistive technologies such as screen readers and those requiring support

The system was extended to provide HMCTS staff with a modern application to manage digital summons replies

The service design was expanded to include the needs of citizens wishing to respond in Welsh

A service dashboard was developed to track feedback and performance using Google Analytics and other service data

Performance testing was undertaken to ensure infrastructure readiness for a National rollout

National rollout planning was undertaken along with improvements identified from usability testing in order to increase digital take-up

User training was conducted for HMCTS staff

The team worked with the authority support team to transfer the service support to live operations

Results

The service has been deployed to all courts in England and Wales.

Results so far:



Users report that the service is convenient and simple to return their summons



During trial, 19% of the 12,000 users returned their summons within seven days compared to one per cent when using the paper form



Citizens are making fewer errors when replying using the digital service




Printing and postage costs are lower



People using the digital channel are using more of the available online materials to help prepare for jury service



HMCTS Juror officers are completing their work faster and are spending less time correcting errors on summons replies



“It makes complete sense to move more of our court processes online to fit around our busy modern lives.”

“This impressive new system is a great example of how we are making it quicker and easier for people to exercise their democratic duty.”

Lucy Frazer, Justice Minister

For further information:

www.gov.uk/government/news/click-to-accept-jury-service-in-an-instant



HM Courts &
Tribunals Service

HMCTS is the **authority with responsibility** for the administration of Courts and Tribunals throughout England and Wales

CGI

CGI is a **technology services company** whose teams of application and support specialists work alongside clients own teams in public and private sector



cogworx

Cogworx is an **SME UX consultancy** specialising in designing digital products, user experience design and user research