

# Scottish Courts and Tribunals Service



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Dear Mr Cameron

**SCOTTISH PARLIAMENTARY QUESTIONS:  
S6W-17079, S6W-17080 & S6W-17081 - COURT BUILDINGS DISABLED ACCESS**

The Cabinet Secretary in his response to the above PQs indicated that they related to operational matters within the responsibility of the Scottish Courts and Tribunals Service corporate body. I am now writing in response to the matters raised.

**S6W-17079 Donald Cameron: To ask the Scottish Government on how many occasions the Scottish Courts and Tribunals Service (a) excused and (b) exempted a potential juror from appearing for jury duty because the court location was not accessible for disabled people, in each year since 2007.**

The SCTS does not hold records of potential jurors who have been excused or exempted from jury duty as result of accessibility. The SCTS uses a live operational case management system for the purposes of citing jurors. The information held on the system is structured for operational use, rather than statistical reporting or research. There is no specific category on the system which delineates which excusals or exemptions are a result of accessibility that could be used to produce the statistics sought.

**S6W-17080 Donald Cameron: To ask the Scottish Government how many court locations managed by the Scottish Courts and Tribunals Service are (a) fully, (b) partially and (c) not accessible for disabled people.**

There are currently 42 operational court locations across the SCTS estate. Of these 25 are fully accessible – i.e. all public areas of the building can be accessed by those with a disability. The remaining 17 locations are partially accessible. Public counter facilities are available in all 17 and access to a courtroom is available in 13 of these locations. In the remaining 4 locations the situation of the courtroom is not accessible – however arrangements can be made in each location to ensure that any key participant in a case is able to take part. These arrangements can vary depending on

the circumstances of the individual and the case – but can include the remote provision of evidence or the use of an alternative room within the court location.

**S6W-17081 Donald Cameron: To ask the Scottish Government what action it is taking to ensure that all court locations managed by the Scottish Courts and Tribunals Service are accessible for disabled people.**

Investment in our estate is directed towards addressing maintenance backlogs, maintaining health and safety compliance, reducing carbon output and promoting accessibility. As part of this process we are assessing the viability of installing stair lifts at Oban and Campbeltown.

All new SCTS estates developments and upgrades are designed to ensure accessibility compliance and we continue to schedule investment to meet those priorities assessed as most significant. The historic nature and design of some of our estate can present challenges when seeking to modernise or retrofit facilities.

Recent developments in digital technology, including remote hearings and an increasing use of video links are broadening access to justice – with the parties in a case often no longer having to physically attend court for a range of business and hearing types. Where physical appearance is necessary and accessibility poses a challenge we work hard, on a case by case basis, to make adaptations or identify accessible locations in which the business can proceed.

A copy of this letter will be placed in the Scottish Parliament Information Centre and published on the Scottish Courts and Tribunals Service website.

Yours sincerely



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