



**Judiciary of
England and Wales**

National Listing Framework

Guidance Note No. 7

Court Listing Plans

September 2026



Contents

Court Listing Plans	3
Using the National Template	3
What belongs in the Plan	3
Review of existing listing arrangements	4
Essential content	4
What should ordinarily be left out	6
Responsibility, approval, publication and review	6
Checklist before submission	6

Court Listing Plans

This note accompanies the **Court Listing Plan National Template**, and should be read with it. The template is the working document: it sets out, section by section, what a Plan needs to contain, and prompts the local content.

This note explains what belongs in the Plan, what may remain in separate local guidance, and what Presiding Judges will need to see before approval. It is not necessary to reproduce the Practice Direction on Listing in the Criminal Courts ("the CrimPDL"), and the Plan should not be a local Crown Court handbook.

Using the National Template

Court Listing Plans should follow the structure and headings of the National Template. A number of practical benefits follow, and they are the reason the template exists.

- A practitioner appearing at several centres finds the same material under the same heading in each Plan.
- Presiding Judges can review Plans consistently.
- A Resident Judge preparing a Plan is not starting from a blank page, and can see from the template what the CrimPDL requires and where it belongs.

Where the template's prompts do not fit local arrangements, the prompts can be completed differently; the structure need not change. A centre which does depart from the structure should explain why when the Plan is submitted for approval.

Two **Model Plans** are issued with the template, for a medium and a small centre. They show the same template completed in materially different ways. They are intended to be read rather than copied: the local content in each describes an invented centre, and a Plan which reproduces it may not describe the centre it is made for.

What belongs in the Plan

The Plan is not a substitute for the CrimPDL, for separate local judicial or operational guidance, or for internal HMCTS instructions. Its purpose is narrower: to tell judges, staff, practitioners and other court users how the National Listing Framework operates at that centre, and to record the local listing arrangements which the CrimPDL requires to be published.

A matter ordinarily belongs in the Plan if it answers one of three questions:

- How is the centre's judicial and courtroom capacity organised and allocated?
- How does the centre implement a choice or arrangement which the CrimPDL leaves to it?
- What does a court user need to know in order to engage with listing at that centre?

A local listing arrangement must be identified and described in the Plan. The detailed procedure need not be.

Take section 28 as an example. A timetable reserving particular sessions each week for recordings is a listing arrangement, and belongs in the Plan. The section 28 procedure itself may remain in separate local guidance. The same test applies to appeals days, specialist lists, reserved capacity and anything else which affects when, where or how cases are listed.

Review of existing listing arrangements

From 1 October 2026 the CrimPDL replaces the previous listing provisions of the Criminal Practice Directions and any local listing practices or guidance (Ch1 §2). Chapter 2 §3 then permits local listing arrangements, but only where the arrangement is consistent with the CrimPDL, complies with Senior Presiding Judge guidance, is identified and described in the Court Listing Plan, and is published. That is the condition on which such an arrangement may be relied upon.

It is sensible to review existing arrangements before settling the text of the Plan. For each existing arrangement, consider:

- Is it still necessary or useful?
- Is it consistent with the CrimPDL and applicable national guidance?
- Should it continue after commencement?
- If so, is it described in terms fit for publication?

The review should extend to any separate local guidance the centre maintains, which may contain listing arrangements of its own.

Essential content

The table sets out what a Plan must contain, what it should record, and what it should ordinarily address. The three groups are different in kind and should not be run together: only Group A is required by the CrimPDL to appear in the Plan. The template section given in the third column is where the prompt for that content can be found.

Requirement	CrimPDL	Template
Group A – the CrimPDL requires these to be IN the Plan		
Local listing arrangements identified and described	Ch2 §3(c)	Section 3
Allocation of capacity among types of work and Priority Tiers	Ch4 §24(c)	Section 4
Approach to Fixed and Flexible Date listings, and the form of Flexible Date used	Ch4 §2(e), §24(c)	Section 5

Requirement	CrimPDL	Template
Local initiatives, including any Short Trial Court or Review Court	Ch4 §24(c)	Section 7
Publication of the Advance List and Firm List	Ch4 §24(c)	Section 8
Day and time of the Case Progression Meeting, and how parties engage with it	Ch4 §24(c), §7(c)	Section 8
The means by which representations may be made	Ch4 §7(c), §7(g)	Section 9
Best contact information, and how the court engages with court users	Ch4 §24(c), §23	Section 12
GROUP B — the CrimPDL requires these to EXIST; the Plan should record them		
The system for Certificates of Trial Readiness	Ch4 §6(b)	Section 8
Circumstances in which a Listing Officer may agree a consensual trial-date variation	Ch4 §9(d)	Section 10
GROUP C — not required in the Plan, but ordinarily to be addressed		
Court-centre profile and available capacity	–	Section 2
Use of shared trial capacity	Ch4 §4	Section 6
Trials not reached, and the limits of delegated authority	Ch4 §10(a)	Section 10
Custody time limits, live links and other standing arrangements	Ch4 §13(d); Ch2 §8	Section 11
Referral and escalation, and monitoring of trials not reached and ineffective trials	Ch4 §6(c)	Section 13
Regional and cross-centre arrangements	Ch4 §27	Section 14
Review, amendment and version control	Ch4 §24(b)	Section 15

What should ordinarily be left out

The Plan need not include the following matters:

- the CrimPDL, the Priority Tier criteria or substantial passages of national guidance, or annexes of material available from a maintained national source;
- detailed PTPH procedure, case-management directions, or specialist procedure for section 28, appeals, sentencing or confiscation — except to the extent necessary to identify a local listing arrangement;
- rigid numerical rules for the number of Flexible Date cases to be listed against the same capacity;
- default time estimates for routine hearings, unless they form an essential part of the published local listing model;
- individual judicial deployment, DCS conventions or other internal administrative instructions.

Where detailed local operating guidance is useful, it may be maintained separately and cross-referred from the Plan.

Responsibility, approval, publication and review

The Resident Judge is responsible for the Plan, and should prepare it with the Listing Officer and relevant HMCTS operational managers. Discussion with local judges, prosecutors, defence practitioners and other regular court users can help establish whether the proposed arrangements are workable.

A draft Plan must be submitted to the Presiding Judges within **six months** of commencement, and the final Plan approved and published within **nine months** (Ch1 §6; Ch4 §24(d)). Presiding Judges must take steps to secure consistency of listing practice across the circuit (Ch4 §25). The purpose of approval is consistency of approach, not uniformity of local arrangements.

Some decisions cannot wait for the Plan. The form of Flexible Date listing used at the centre affects what judges and staff tell parties from commencement, and should be settled and communicated before 1 October, with the position then recorded in the draft Plan.

The published Plan should identify the centre, the date of approval, the date of publication and the version number, and a single current version should be maintained. The Plan must be kept under review so that it remains consistent with the CrimPDL and Senior Presiding Judge guidance (Ch4 §24(b)) — periodically, and whenever there is a material change to national guidance or to the arrangements it describes. Review should include whether any new local practice has developed which amounts to a local listing arrangement. Material amendments should be submitted for approval before publication; changes to contact details and other minor administrative corrections can ordinarily be made without renewed approval.

Checklist before submission

For the Resident Judge before submission, and for the Presiding Judge on review.

- Has the centre reviewed its existing local listing arrangements, and is each continuing arrangement consistent with the CrimPDL, identified in the Plan and fit for publication?
- Does the Plan follow the structure of the National Template — and if not, is the reason explained?
- Does it address every matter in Group A of the table above?
- Are the matters in Group B recorded, or is there good reason why not?
- Is the form of Flexible Date listing expressly identified, with the other option deleted?
- Does it explain the centre's capacity model without creating rigid quotas or a numerical formula for shared capacity?
- Are local initiatives identified — or their absence stated?
- Is the run-up to trial clear, from Advance List through readiness review and the Case Progression Meeting to the Firm List?
- Can a practitioner see how and when to make representations, and to whom?
- Has the Resident Judge determined and recorded the circumstances contemplated by Ch4 §9(d)?
- Does it make clear that a trial not reached cannot be re-listed administratively?
- Are contact and escalation routes clear and current?
- Does the Plan preserve judicial discretion, and distinguish judicial decisions from operational implementation?
- Has handbook material been kept out or moved to separate local guidance, while any underlying listing arrangement is still identified?
- Is the summary panel at section 1 complete — including approval, publication date and version — and consistent with the sections which follow?
- Have all square brackets been completed and all drafting notes removed?
- Is it concise and usable enough to be read in practice?

Issued as part of the National Listing Framework implementation programme.



© Crown copyright 2025

This publication is licensed under the terms of the Open Government Licence v3.0 except where otherwise stated. To view this licence, visit nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/version/3

Where we have identified any third party copyright information you will need to obtain permission from the copyright holders concerned.