**children,** **family, private, crimes, evidence, England, offender**

## How the courts work

There are different types of courts in \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_and Wales which deal with legal disputes, from defendants accused of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, consumers in debt, children at risk of harm, businesses involved in commercial disputes or individuals asserting their employment rights. **The main three types of court are:**

* **Criminal courts** - dealing with all cases where a crime has been committed and there is enough \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ gathered against the alleged \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ for there to be a reasonable chance of a conviction
* **Civil courts** - dealing with disputes between \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ individuals and/or organisations, such as the non-repayment of a debt, personal injury, the breach of a contract concerning goods or property, housing disputes, bankruptcy or insolvency
* **Family courts** - dealing with disputes relating to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ matters including divorces, disputes about financial issues or custody of the children following the breakdown of a relationship, domestic violence, adoption or protection of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ from abuse or neglect

**Civil disputes and the county courts**

In England and Wales, most \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ disputes are dealt with at the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_courts. These are also sometimes called the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ claims courts, although they also hear more serious cases. The most serious ones are heard in the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Court.

About \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_civil claims and petitions are brought to the county courts each year. Typically only about 3-4% of these require a \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. In the vast majority of cases, either the defendant does nothing so the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_can ask the court to order the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to pay the amount claimed, or the disputes are settled without a court hearing being needed.

**There are two main types of hearing:**

* \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_claims hearings (for value less than £10,000) - typically last no more than about an hour.
* \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (for value usually above £10,000) - may last more than a day. Claimants and defendants often wish to be represented by a solicitor at the hearing, particularly for complex cases.

**Small, defendant ,claimant, Trial, hearing, small ,county, 1.4 million, civil, High**

**3.6 Solving Civil Disputes**