

## CORRESPONDENCE

Dear Secretary

April 1988

I am writing to tell you about a new television series "The People's Court", which is being made in Newcastle for Daytime Television on BBC-1.

The idea of "The People's Court" is that individuals or organisations having small claims against each other – the sort that would normally be heard in a small claims court – should come into the television court instead and fight out their cases in front of our arbitrator.

Our main task at the moment is to find the cases and I'm writing to you in the hope that among your members are some who may be about to become involved in litigation as either plaintiffs or defendants and who would be interested in taking part in the programme. Perhaps you could do a piece about the programme in your newsletter to members.

Once cases are referred to us we will make a rapid judgement about their suitability for the programme – both sides for example must agree to appear. We will also ensure that the cost of any claims awarded by the arbitrator will be met out of a programme fund.

I have attached an information sheet (see over page 40) about "The People's Court". If you or any of your members have a suitable case then please telephone "The People's Court" office on 091 2617617.

Yours sincerely,

Assistant Producer,  
Sue Whittaker.  
BBC  
London

## **PEOPLE'S COURT**

THE PEOPLE'S COURT is a new television series being made for Daytime Television by BBC North East at their new studios in Fenham, Newcastle.

Each of the half hour programmes will be introduced by broadcaster Valerie Singleton and will feature a real court case presented by real people. A senior legal figure will act as arbitrator, and his decision will be legally binding on both parties.

We are looking for cases that would normally be dealt with in the County Court under the small claims procedure.

The two parties will present their own cases and may call witnesses in support of their arguments. Family and friends will be welcomed as part of the television audience.

The production team will provide support for both sides in the presentation of the cases. Two short videos will be made to illustrate the two viewpoints and legal advice will be freely available. Costs on both sides will be covered by THE PEOPLE'S COURT, and we hope that those selected will be able to get their cases resolved more quickly than by going through a conventional court.

We are now in the process of compiling a short list of suitable cases, and would like to hear from anyone who has a legal argument and would prefer to have it sorted out on television rather than in the County Court.

We will look at each case on its merits and contact the opposing party for their agreement to appear on THE PEOPLE'S COURT. There will be no obligation on either party to proceed with the case, and each will have the opportunity to withdraw at any time before the case is recorded.

If you have a case which you think may be of interest to us please contact us now.

**CALL THE PEOPLE'S COURT 091 2617617.**