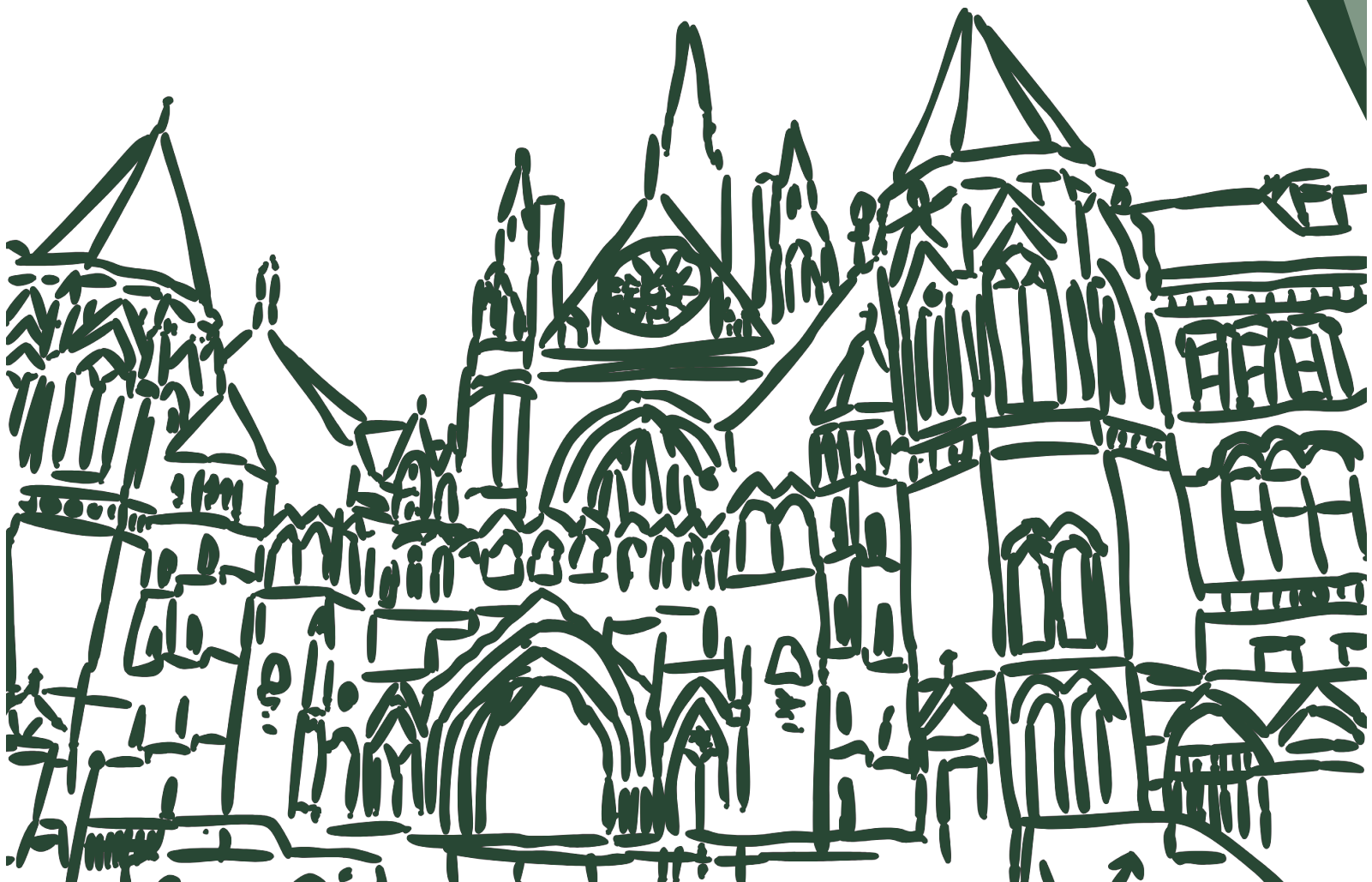


# Annual Review 2024

Editor: Lara Kuehl



# Chair's Letter

Given that, at the time of writing this article, I have only been "in post" for little over 5 months (two of which were in the Long Vacation), it will be obvious to all that the achievements listed elsewhere in this publication are not mine and are ones in relation to which I will not attempt any form of précis in case it should detract from the remarkable catalogue of hard work and achievement recorded elsewhere in these pages and of which I am both in admiration and truly grateful. On behalf of the Association at large, I would wish to record our (and my) thanks to those individuals who have made it possible.

I should also record at the very outset of this report the Association's debt to Andrew Twigger KC, who stood down as Chair in the Summer. His good humour, attention to detail and sound judgment has benefited the Association enormously for a substantial period of time, during which the foundations for and the achievements set forth elsewhere in this publication were made possible. Two other departees from the Committee also deserve special mention and thanks: Alexander Learmonth KC leaves, having chaired the consultations sub-committee for a significant period and in doing so, ensuring that proposals for legal and procedural change relevant to Chancery practice each received expert scrutiny and input. It is a demanding role and one that was discharged to the highest standard. The other long-standing member of the Committee whose retirement I should record is that of Nicola Preston, whose wise counsel has been of benefit for many years.

Thank you both! The Committee now has a full complement of officers following the constitutional changes brought in at the AGM (Yasmin Yasseri was appointed E&D Secretary following the AGM, while Andrew de Mestre KC was simultaneously appointed as Pro-Bono Secretary); the Committee also welcomes Mairi Innes, Elizabeth Atkinson and Tim Koch as new members.



However, there is one aspect of the Association's development which is not covered elsewhere in this publication: the growth of student membership. Conceived in response to an observation at the Black Inclusion Group's Report meeting that too few individuals from "non-traditional" backgrounds had any real appreciation of the workload undertaken by the membership of the SBAs, I am delighted to report that the Student Membership of the Chancery Bar Association currently stands at 81, 30 of whom are undergraduates, 40 of whom are postgraduates and the remainder (11) are pupils.



If the objective of Student Membership is to promote an understanding of Chancery work to those from underrepresented backgrounds, the equality and diversity data to date can only pronounce this initiative a success; for my part, I hope it continues to flourish and that the Association can assist in the career choice and development of those who choose to take part. It represents a novel and exciting opportunity and I would hope members feel able to publicise it.

For those not immersed in the day-to-day administration of the Association, it might be easy to consider its activities largely focused on the “flagship” educational events of the Summer and Winter Conferences plus the highly successful CLIPS and Bankruptcy schemes. Whilst these are, indeed, eminent (if not pre-eminent) jewels in the Crown of the Chancery Bar Association, members who focus unduly on these might miss noting the sheer breadth of the Association’s engagement in the profession at large. At the time of writing this report, the Association is (for example) preparing responses to the BSB’s proposed changes to its equality rules consultation; it is collaborating with the other SBAs on the consultation paper in connection with reforming the law of contempt; it is starting to engage with the potentially far-reaching issues posed by the apparent desire to bring in guideline hourly rates in connection with counsel’s fees, all at the same time as planning the Conferences, encouraging support for CLIPS and maintaining a full, topical and first-class seminar programme.

None of this would be possible without the support, insight and administrative genius afforded to the Association by Francesca Compton (to whom the debt of gratitude that I as Chair will own her is only beginning to become apparent...) and the enthusiasm and dedication of time so freely given by the other Officers and members of the Committee and Sub-Committees. But – and the prescient reader may have already anticipated the “but” – these resources are not infinite nor inexhaustible; in a profession facing increasing regulation and scrutiny, the Association not only needs to engage and engage well, but in many aspects also needs to ensure that it has “boots on the ground” at meetings and on working groups. The Association’s current success should not discourage any member of the Association from considering volunteering at Committee or Sub-Committee level, whether generally or for a specific project of personal interest. It is (genuinely!) rewarding and I would strongly encourage it. I can only ask that you keep an eye on the Newsletter – applications on a postcard, please....!

**Ian Clarke KC**





# Junior Chancery Bar

The Junior Chancery Bar (JCB) has had a busy and successful year. Throughout the year, the Anatomy of the Law series has been in full swing. In this series, junior practitioners and pupils are introduced to the main practical issues at each stage of civil proceedings. So far, pleadings and the CMC have been covered. In upcoming seminars, disclosure and witness statements will be covered. This series will run all the way to the trial and appeal stages of proceedings. It is led by JCB members with occasional guest panellists, such as Master Francesca Kaye. In addition, the JCB hosted its annual Freshers' Drinks in October 2024. This was to welcome new members and pupils to the Association. Other upcoming events include a specialist seminar on banking disputes with a focus on PPI claims and commissions.

The JCB sub-committee's composition has also changed in recent months. Albert Sampson has retired as Chair of the JCB after many years of service and successful stewardship of the JCB.

Albert has been replaced by Philippe Kuhn as Chair. Lara Kuehl has also stepped down from the sub-committee. The current JCB sub-committee members are Philippe Kuhn, Karl Anderson, Niamh Davis, Rumen Cholakov and Scarlet Taylor-Waller.

## Philippe Kuhn



# Equality & Diversity

This year the E&D sub-committee oversaw the formal launch of the Fairness Charter. The Fairness Charter contains 12 practical suggestions which we believe will assist Chambers in seeking to achieve fairness in work allocation, career development, marketing and earnings for female barristers in a meaningful way. Currently, 11 Chambers have adopted the principles and are proudly displaying the Charter mark on their websites.

In April 2024, we hosted a webinar aimed at those in practice at the Bar with additional caring responsibilities, whether those be children with additional or complex needs, parents with dementia or other age-related challenges, or something else altogether. The webinar was chaired by Marcia Shekerdemian KC, who was joined by Wendy Showell Nicholas, a psychotherapist and wellbeing practitioner. The event was a valuable online opportunity to convene and discuss work/life balance and share tips on achieving good outcomes for those with additional caring responsibilities.

Charter for  
Fairness  
2024

CHANCERY BAR ASSOCIATION

One of the recommendations of the 2022 Black Inclusion Group's (BIG) report, concerning recruitment was that SBAs should collaborate with existing organisations, networks and groups supporting aspirant pupil barristers of Black heritage on their career path. To that end, the Association sponsored Targetjobs' Aspire to the Bar event held at the Ashworth Centre in April 2024. The Association is grateful for those of its members who participated, including joining panels to provide essential advice and information, and networking opportunities for the Black heritage students who attended.

Another of the BIG report's recommendations, this time in respect of outreach, was to develop online content directed at attracting school students and undergraduates to the practice areas available at the Chancery Bar. In adopting that recommendation, the sub-committee has created 10 short videos aimed at school students to (a) demonstrate the possibility of having a career at the Chancery Bar and (b) de-mystify the practice areas that comprise recognised Chancery practice. The videos were previewed at the Summer Conference in June 2024, with a formal launch online in July 2024. They can be found online on the Association's LinkedIn account and website. The Association continues to lead the way in menopause awareness at the Bar. We hosted menopause cafes in February and October 2024. These were wonderful opportunities for those interested or impacted to get together in an informal and welcoming environment to share insights and experiences.

The members of the Equality & Diversity Sub-Committee are Yasmin Yasseri (Chair), Ruth Hughes, Faith Julian, Gary Pryce, Carly Sandbach and Cameron Stocks.

**Yasmin Yasseri**

# Women @ the Chancery Bar

## Careers Event

### Are you...?

- **articulate, analytical, diligent, and self-motivated?**
- **looking for a career which is**
  - **Challenging?**
  - **Stimulating?**
  - **Varied?**
  - **Well-paid?**

**A career at the Chancery Bar might be for you.**

**Monday, 9<sup>th</sup> December 2024**  
**[Gatehouse Chambers](#), Gray's Inn, London – in person only**  
**5.30pm Panel session**  
**Followed by drinks**  
[CLICK HERE TO BOOK](#)

**Chancery  
Bar**  
ASSOCIATION



# Pro Bono

Members of the Association provided more pro bono support than ever before in 2024 as the two existing schemes (CLIPS and CLIPS at Central London) became three when the Bankruptcy Representation Scheme (BRS), providing help to litigants in person in the bankruptcy court, launched in conjunction with Advocate in January. The addition of the BRS and the fact that CLIPS once again operated in the summer vacation as well as during the legal terms resulted in some 300 days of volunteering from members and our other partners. This was a truly outstanding effort and one of which the Association can rightly be proud. Indeed, if imitation is the sincerest form of flattery, the commencement of a range of regional schemes (B-CLIPS, M-CLIPS....) in the manner of CLIPS is testament both to the foresight of the Association in devising the scheme and to the brilliance of the volunteers who have made it work so seamlessly.

We were also delighted to see that the range of both individual volunteers and their chambers or firms continued to expand with more than 130 different volunteers from more than 50 sets/firms contributing at least one day. Those who volunteered three times or more – 21 members and counting at the time of writing – were well-deserved recipients of the Pro Bono Champion Award for 2024.

However, we must not be complacent. The numbers of litigants in person are rising in all areas of the Court system and their needs are getting more complex. Moreover, all three schemes can only work to their best advantage if all of the volunteering slots are filled so that both litigants in person and Judges can be confident that assistance will be available when needed. For this to be the case, we cannot just rely on a small core of members and Chambers to provide the majority of our support. If therefore you have not volunteered at all, or have been away for the schemes for a while, I would encourage you to sign up for a day (or more). You will find an experience that is both professionally and personally rewarding and provides invaluable assistance to litigants in person and the Court alike.

My sincere thanks go to all of the Pro Bono sub-committee members – Rahul Varma, Zach Bredemear, Matthew Morrison, Eleanor Holland, Faith Julian, Christopher Buckingham, and Karl Anderson; to Francesca without whose work the schemes simply would not run; and to the volunteers who continue to provide their time and expertise to those who need it most.

**Andrew de Mestre KC**



# The Interview: Lady Justice Andrews

## 1. Who has inspired you during your career and why?

I was fortunate enough to see many fine advocates and appear before many outstanding judges, but I will confine my answer to three people:

- (1) My pupil supervisor Mark Saville (Lord Saville of Newdigate) has been a source of inspiration throughout my career for his incisive mind, his clarity of thought and his kind and generous treatment of everyone he worked with. He taught me how to analyse a case long before such matters were part of the training that students and pupils receive through the Inns. He also treated his colleagues – including pupils – as equals whose views were as worthy of consideration as anyone else's, and that was a huge support to someone like me who was stepping into an alien environment as the only woman practitioner in Chambers. I tried to emulate his example with my own pupils.
- (2) Sir Sydney Kentridge, the finest advocate I ever had the privilege to watch, who displayed extraordinary courage in his work in South Africa representing, among others, Nelson Mandela at the height of apartheid. He demonstrated that it is possible to conduct a devastating cross-examination (or present a compelling legal argument) without ever raising your voice, provided that you have complete mastery of your materials. He was mesmerising to listen to.
- (3) Lord Bingham. He was simply the perfect judge. He had one of the finest minds of his or any other generation, but he wore his intellect lightly. He was an absolute pleasure to appear in front of, courteous even when testing your submissions to destruction, and he was staunch defender of the rule of law. His judgments are models of their kind – never a word too long and always crystal clear.





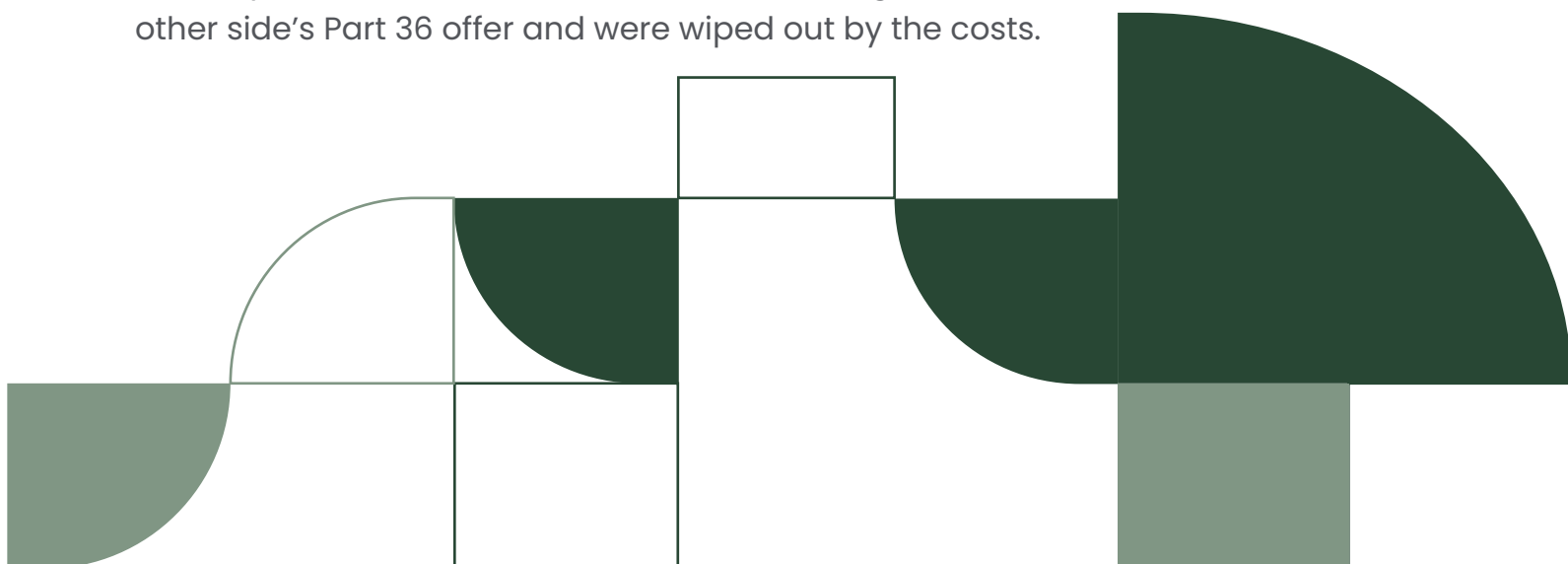
## 2. During the course of your career has anyone given you a great piece of advice and what was it?

Yes – Dame Victoria Sharp, the President of the KBD. If someone senior criticises you for something you said or did, and you disagree or even think the criticism is unfair, take it as a learning opportunity. Don't waste time trying to defend your position. Rightly or wrongly, someone in authority genuinely believes you are in the wrong, and they are entitled to their point of view however much you believe you were in the right. It is wise to accept that they reached that view for a reason. Reflect on their perspective and how it was that they came to reach it, and then think about how you can avoid a similar situation occurring in the future.

## 3. Name two of your most memorable cases as an advocate?

*The Litsion Pride* [1985] 1 Lloyd's Rep 437. I came into the case as a lowly junior to Gordon Pollock QC, standing in temporarily for the official junior, Jonathan Gilman, who had to undergo emergency dental treatment. I ended up staying on as a second junior when he returned, because the case took an unexpected turn of events, described in detail in the judgment, which led to our client waiving legal professional privilege. Every day thereafter there were fresh developments which frankly nobody could have anticipated. Both our instructing solicitors and Jonathan Gilman ended up in the witness box being cross-examined by Sydney Kentridge QC and Jonathan Sumption. We eventually won the case, and I got to see some really fine advocates in action from the best vantage point, the back row.

*Jackson v Royal Bank of Scotland* [2005] 1 WLR 377, my sole appearance as leading counsel in the House of Lords. Everything was going really well until I had almost reached the end of my reply, when Lord Walker (silent up to that point) asked the unanswerable question "Miss Andrews, these figures are pure fantasy, aren't they?" (referring to the computation of damages). I had to stop myself from responding "well not pure fantasy". He had rumbled the weak spot in our case which nobody else had spotted, which was due to deficiencies in the evidence at trial (before I was instructed). The case turned out to be a Pyrrhic victory – we established that the Respondent bank was liable, but the damages awarded were less than the other side's Part 36 offer and were wiped out by the costs.



#### **4. Has anything about the Bar or the judiciary changed over the course of your career? If so, what was it and was it an improvement?**

From what I can gather from earlier generations, the higher judiciary has become considerably more collegiate. It is no longer an isolated job; it is much more like being in chambers. The Court of Appeal is particularly sociable, and it is a particular pleasure to sit with colleagues whose practice fields were different and to learn new insights from them.

#### **5. What tips would you give advocates appearing before you?**

Be thoroughly prepared. Remember that the judges will have read into the papers in some depth, so don't go through the facts in turgid detail unless this is unavoidable because of the nature of the appeal. Concentrate on the key issues; cases on appeal tend to turn on no more than three points, often only one.

Don't assume that if a judge asks you a question they are against you, and do listen carefully to the question and answer it straight away unless there is a good reason not to, in which case, explain what it is. We do tend to ask questions because we are genuinely interested in the answers and we are looking to you for help. If you need more time to think about the answer, be upfront and tell us – but remember to come back to the question once you have had time to digest it. There is nothing more frustrating than hearing an appeal in which we don't get the help from counsel that we feel we need.

#### **6. What advice would you give to those hoping to become judges in future?**

We have the great advantage in this jurisdiction of getting an opportunity to find out if a judicial career would be right for us before we commit ourselves full time. Not all good advocates make good judges (and vice versa). Be brutally honest with yourself and ask if you are temperamentally suited to it: if you are indecisive or liable to mood swings, this is not the job for you.

By all means take the opportunity to work shadow a judge if you know one well enough to ask them, just to see first-hand what the job entails. Then, if that hasn't been enough to deter you, apply to be a recorder or to sit part-time as a DDJ or in a tribunal, or if you have sufficient seniority enter the section 9(1) or 9(4) competition as a Deputy High Court judge. I do think it is an advantage if you are thinking of the KBD to sit as a Recorder first. It tells you a lot about judge-craft especially if crime is outside your comfort zone. I would not have wanted my first experience of addressing a jury to be in a murder trial.

If you do get a part-time appointment, ask for feedback on how you are doing, if you can, get someone to observe you sitting, and take on board what they have to say. Take advantage of the opportunity to discuss the job and the work with full time judges in the court centre where you sit, over lunch or a cup of tea. Be honest with yourself about your ability to produce judgments within a reasonable time, and to take accurate notes of counsel's submissions. Would you have the patience to listen to someone presenting a case badly without succumbing to the temptation to interrupt?

## **7. Is there something in your daily or weekly routine which you could not do without?**

A supply of Fortnum and Mason's Royal Blend tea.

## **8. What would your Desert Island book and luxury item be?**

If I couldn't get away with a complete set of Dickens, *Our Mutual Friend*, and my violin and bow with a good supply of sheet music.

**Lara Kuehl**

# **Academic Liason**

It was an end of an era as Lesley Anderson KC stepped down from her role as chair of the sub-committee. We are grateful for her time over the years to the Association in general but, in particular, the Sub-Committee. I assumed the reins in September.

The main event to date has been the Bar Council Pupillage Fair which ran from 14-19 October. Despite the on-line strapline cherishing "a diverse bar", the fact that the in-person event fell on the first Saturday of half-term meant that all the Sub-committee members had pressing engagements with their families. I am all the more grateful to Jessica Lavelle, Blessing Mukosha Park, Sajid Suleman, Ahmed Elhussiny and Thomas Keane who all answered Philippe Kuhn's call to arms to the Junior Chancery Bar. The association was thus well represented at the Fair.

My first task as chair was to approve the academic member application of Lionel Smith, ex Downing Professor of Law at Cambridge and now Professor of Comparative Law at Oxford. We welcome him to the Association. It is one of the main virtues of the association that academics of the highest calibre all over the world give their time to speak at the annual conference and other events.

Going forwards, we plan to record a podcast on pupillage. All other suggestions for further activity to the usual address please.

**David E. Grant KC**



# Winter Conference

It was a great privilege as well as being a daunting proposition to be asked to chair the Association's Winter Conference in 2024 which turned out to be the 20th Winter Conference. The theme of the conference was "practice makes perfect" and was aimed at exploring issues such as limitation, privilege and disclosure both on the main stage and in workshops, which hopefully resonated with delegates whichever area of the chancery bar they practised in.

As always, a huge amount of work went into the talks on the mainstage and the workshops and from the excellent members of my committee who made my task so easy. I am extremely grateful to Joe Curl KC, Tracey Angus KC, Kavan Gunaratna and Charles Raffin. It hardly needs saying as well that there would be no winter conference without the skill and experience of Francesca.

Guest speakers included the Treasury Solicitor with a fascinating talk on her role, a talk on proprietary estoppel (my favourite subject) from academic member Professor Macfarlane and a brilliant talk on witnesses from our former chair Mr. Justice Rajah. We were also pleased to welcome the Chancellor whose annual slot engendered much lively discussion.

We also had experts on disclosure (the audience emerging rather more knowledgeable on AI) and leading practitioners from the offshore world. All were excellent but perhaps the slot everyone wanted to go on forever (in spite of the imminent promise of champagne) was the interview by Bobby Friedman of Baron Neuburger.

## Penelope Reed KC



**Chancery Bar Association**  
Annual Conference

# Practice Makes Perfect 2024

The Royal College of Physicians  
11 St. Andrew's Place,  
Regent's Park,  
London NW1 4LE  
Tel: 020 7935 1174  
#chbaconference · www.chba.org.uk

**Learning objective:**  
to improve my knowledge and understanding of current trends and important developments in Chancery-related law and in the Business and Property Courts, and in particular to attend lectures and workshops concentrating on my specific areas of interest within Chancery practice.

**Learning rationale:**  
To enable me to maintain and further develop my competence and performance in my core areas of practice.

**Friday  
12th  
January 2024  
13:30 to 18:30**  
Followed by a reception  
Until 21.00

**Saturday  
13th  
January 2024  
09:00 to 13:30**

**Chancery  
Bar  
Association**

# Summer Conference

The title this year for the Chancery Bar Association 2024 summer conference was “Future Chancery” The conference aimed to provide stimulating current material on both substantive law and practice-related issues which will also be salient in the future to Chancery practitioners. As always, the conference also provided an opportunity to for a substantial number of practitioners to meet together to learn about relevant topics and catch-up with friends and colleagues in pleasant surroundings.

Mr Justice Zacaroli (as he then was) delivered a thought-provoking speech on proprietary claims in insolvency, which raised a number of novel issues for attendees to consider. There was an illuminating address from the Right Honourable Sir Geoffrey Vos, Master of the Rolls on very recent developments in non-court-based dispute resolution. The Master of the Rolls drew upon his recent judgment in *Churchill -v- Merthyr Tydfil* [2023] EWCA Civ 1416, to consider the circumstances in which a court may direct the parties to a claim to engage in non-court-based dispute resolution processes, including but not limited to formal mediation.

There were two tremendous workshops both inspired by 2024 Court of Appeal decisions. The contentious probate workshop, explored undue influence in the context of inter vivos gifts and wills and was skilfully led by Brie Stevens-Hoare KC. Dan McCourt Fritz KC dynamically led the Company workshop, examining statutory limitation periods for unfair prejudice petitions.

Laura Durrant, CEO of the Black Talent Charter (BTC) spoke inspiringly and practically on the opportunities for Chancery barristers and chambers to take further steps to tackle the under-representation of black African, black African Caribbean and mixed heritage counsel practising at the Chancery Bar by joining with the BTC, and participating in their development programmes.

Yasmin Yasseri, Chair of the Equality and Diversity sub-committee gave an update on current and future initiatives by the Association across the whole field of equality and diversity, including giving a preview of brand-new online practice area student explainer videos available online on the Association’s website and LinkedIn page, amongst other places. The videos are intended to be as widely shared as possible by members of the Association and others. The explainer videos give manageable introductions to what different Chancery practice areas entail, principally directed at school and university students who may be considering a career at the Chancery Bar.

The conference closed with an excellent multi-disciplinary professional services panel of speakers, enlightening us all on what next for Crypto assets disputes, which was knowledgeably and skilfully chaired by Sophia Hurst.

It was gratifying to have such a large number of attendees at the conference. My thanks go to Lara Kuehl, my conference vice-chair, who skilfully assisted me with all aspects of organising and delivering the conference program. I would also like to thank Andrew Twigger KC (chair of the Association in summer 2024) and Francesca for the generous help and guidance they each extended to me in advance of and during the summer conference.

**Gary Pryce**



## International

What a year this has been... In April, twenty of us descended on Geneva. This was the Association's first conference in Geneva, and I'm sure it won't be our last. There was fantastic attendance from the local bar – from those who registered, all but three attended – which is unheard of! We had some great talks from our excellent speakers, and it was finished off perfectly with drinks afterwards at Chez Philippe. The feedback from Geneva has been universally positive. It also feels like good work connections were made, with real opportunities there for chancery barristers, particularly for trusts work and arbitration. In many respects, European destinations such as this could be more interesting for us than the traditional local offshore destinations (like the Isle of Man, Jersey etc).



Then, in November, a 31-strong delegation travelled to Cayman for our long-haul annual conference. We were almost thwarted by Hurricane Rafael, with the Cayman airport closed for a day and some of our flights cancelled. But thankfully the hurricane did not hit Cayman in any serious way – and those who were already on Island emerged from their barricaded hotels unscathed. As always, we held a relaxed and fun dinner on the evening before the conference. The conference itself was a great success, held over the Thursday afternoon and Friday morning, and punctuated by an evening cocktail reception next to sea attended by more than 100 people, including local first instance and court of appeal judges. The speakers were excellent, they kept to time and entertained our audience. The feedback already (I write this just a few days after our return) has been brilliant, and I am sure that work will flow from it.

As always, huge thanks to Francesca. It is not an over exaggeration to say that these events could not happen without her. The organisation has been exemplary, both before and during the conferences. Thank you also to everyone who came on one of the conferences, or submitted an expression of interest to speak. The conferences are only as good as those who make the time and effort to attend or speak, and I am very grateful to you all.

### **Iain Quirk KC**



## **Education and Training**

2024 was another busy year for the Education and Training Sub-Committee.

In January, we were excited to host a back-to-basics seminar on presenting and resisting bankruptcy petitions as part of the Association's promotion of its latest pro-bono project, the Bankruptcy Representation Scheme. The key note speaker was Chief ICC Judge Briggs whose continued support has been a critical part of the project's success.

In the spring, we then held our second Advocacy Masterclass seminar, this time with a focus on advocacy in non-court situations including mediation and arbitration. As ever, the star of the show was Lord Hoffmann with his practical (and at times humorous) advice to members of the Chancery Bar.

In November, we held a panel seminar on directors' duties in the context of climate and environmental risks. Amongst others, the speakers included Lord Carnwath (from the Supreme Court) and Paul Benson (from Client Earth).

In December, we held an online seminar on the work of the Land Registration Division with Judge Michael Michell, the Division's Principal Judge, giving an invaluable insight into this highly important and relevant jurisdiction.

2025 promises another full programme with one obvious highlight being a long-planned (and twice postponed) talk on "Success fees in the context of Inheritance Act Claims" arising out of the anticipated Supreme Court judgment in *Hirachand v Hirachand*.

I am particularly grateful to my sub-committee of Kavan Gunaratna, Robyn Cunningham, Cameron Stocks and Laura Inglis for their continued support and assistance throughout the year.

**James Pickering KC**



# Wellbeing & CSR

There have been two particular highlights this year. One was a wellbeing event and the other a new social responsibility project.

In January 2024 we hosted an event entitled “The Art and Science of Sleep” at 5 Stone Buildings. This was chaired by Eliza Eagling and featured a fascinating talk by Professor Guy Leschziner, consultant neurologist at Guys & St Thomas’. The aim of the event was to discuss and promote better sleeping patterns. The recording of the event is on the Association’s website.

Earlier on in the year the committee launched a new school mentoring scheme through the Promise Foundation. This replaced a previous mentoring project which had taken place in 2020.

This project aims to mentor young people at 5 different schools in North West London during the 2024/25 academic year. There was a great deal of interest in this scheme and about 40 members of the association have signed up to be mentors.

In addition to the above members of the committee continue to sit on and work with the Bar Council’s wellbeing at the bar committee and to work with the Bar Council’s Sustainability Network.

The committee is currently exploring new wellbeing and social responsibility events and projects for 2025. If anyone would like to join the committee, please get in contact with Gary Blaker KC at Selborne Chambers.

**Gary Blaker KC**

# Mentoring

2024 saw a subtle repositioning of the Association’s mentoring programme which is the oldest SBA mentoring scheme. As hopefully all those able and motivated to read this column will know, there are two schemes. The main mentoring scheme is open to all members of the Association irrespective of the seniority.

People may wish a mentor for a variety of reasons including seeking advice about an application for silk or a judicial appointment, returning from parental leave and transferring to the bar from another profession. The designated pupil mentoring scheme has been in operation since June 2020. It was borne of a realisation that, despite the fact that individual chambers invariably had their internal support structures, there was a real need for and interest in an external scheme. As a pupil supervisor at the time of lockdown, I am all too aware of the pandemic’s impact on the concept of learning by osmosis and a pupil’s sense of isolation.



As a testament to the work of the Association over the years, we were invited to write an article for the November Counsel magazine explaining the virtues of the pupil mentoring scheme. Some of the feedback we received from members of the Association bear repeating, e.g. "I found the scheme to be extremely helpful. The most useful aspect was having a sounding board outside chambers, so that one could ask the questions that (no matter what you were told) really did seem too stupid to ask one's supervisor" and "Mentoring – whichever side of the fence one is on – is a hugely valuable exercise and something I would recommend to anyone in the profession."

I would invite all members of the association to volunteer to be a mentor at some point in their practice. One is never too junior or too senior. Such support networks were not around when I was a pupil and they are worth their weight in gold.

I am hugely grateful to all those who have given time, in particular the sub-committee of Justin Higgo KC, Carly Sandbach and Tim Sherwin and, above all, Francesca without whom – in common with many aspects of the Association – the system simply would not operate.

**David E. Grant KC**

## Publications

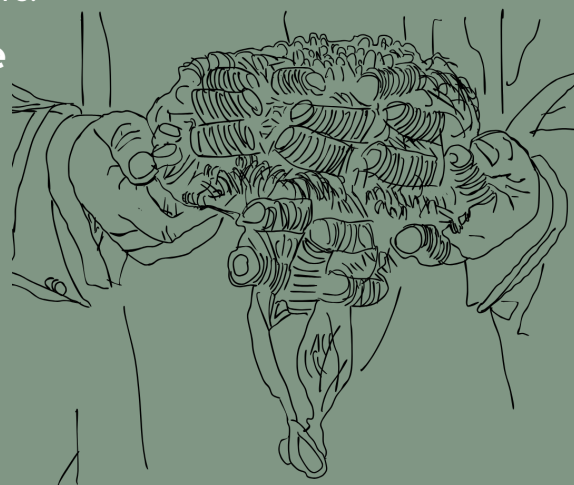
The publications sub-committee has had a busy 2024, working on the rebranding of the Association and the associated redesign and relaunch of the website. The old website, while much used, was out of date in terms of both design and functionality. The new one seeks to address these issues, allowing easier access to online resources and bookings for our members, and providing a smarter public face of the Association to the wider world.

Over the course of the year, the sub-committee has also continued its usual work on other periodical publications.

The decision was taken this year to move the Association's social media presence away from X (as Twitter has become) and to launch a page on the more professionally focussed LinkedIn social network.

Looking ahead, we will be looking to ensure the new branding extends to all the Association's publications and merchandise, starting with the banners we display at conferences and careers fairs.

**Oliver Marre**



# Consultations

Transparency of land ownership involving trusts	Baroness Penn – Dept for Levelling Up	David E Grant KC Oliver Marre Ian Peacock
Permanent storage of wills	MOJ	Alexander Learmonth KC James Kirby
Digital Assets – consultation on draft property legislation	Law Commission	Sophia Hurst (in conjunction with Combar)
Digital Assets: Which law, which court?	Law Commission	Sophia Hurst Chloe Bell (in conjunction with Combar)
Contempt of Court	Law Commission	Dan McCourt Fritz KC Andrew De Mestre KC (collaborating with Combar)
Law of Burial and Cremation	Law Commission	Alexander Drapkin Timothy Clarke
Third Party Litigation Funding	CJC	TBD
Enforcement in Civil Proceedings	CJC	John Campbell, Justin Perring

It has been a pleasure and a privilege once again this year for the Association contribute to the shaping of the law, both substantive and procedural. We are grateful to all our members who have so generously given up their time to work on responses to the consultations above, and those who have responded individually to calls for evidence and the like in the regular weekly newsletters.

In addition, a number of our members have been working with the Law Commission on the final stages of their Wills project, reviewing the draft Wills Bill that will accompany their final report in early 2025.

With increased liaison with the Bar Council's Law Reform Committee and appropriate collaboration with our friends at ComBar, it feels like the voice of the Chancery Bar is being heard.

The one exception to that has been the Civil Procedure Rules Committee: the committee neglected to inform any of the Specialist Bar Associations, or even the Bar Council, about its consultation on an important change being proposed to the rules on CPR r.5.4 relating to the right of members of the public to inspect court documents, and it only came to light when the time for responding had expired. Fortunately, it seems the committee will be rethinking the proposal anyway.

**Alexander Learmonth KC**  
**Sophia Hurst**