

The Board Room Brief



Celebrating 60 years of Representation, Education and Support for Employed Barristers.

Message from the Chair

As I write this edition of the newsletter, I am hopeful that the torrential rain that is coming down today does not mark the end of Summer, and in particular I hope that the weather gets its act together in time for next week's **Employed Bar Garden Party** at Middle Temple (more on that below)!

It was lovely to see so many of you at what has now become our annual Wine Tasting event in April at Bedales. Thank you as always to our sponsors, Marque Wealth Management and to Sandra for organising. It was a fantastic evening!

Staying on the subject of events, thank you to Sara George (BACFI GC member and Chair of the Employed Barristers Committee) and Sidley Austin LLP for hosting an insightful discussion of **the legal implications of Trump's first 100 days back in power**. Whilst I was not personally able to attend, I have had excellent feedback, and we look forward to future insights.

Following the Employed Bar Garden Party, we will take our customary a short hiatus for the Summer but as you will see towards the end of our Newsletter, we will be back with events in September, and I very much look forward to those.

For those who receive Counsel magazine you will see that there are now regular articles relevant to the Employed Bar as well as the Sara's Employed Barristers Committee Chair updates. Our work with the Employed Barristers Committee, the Bar Council, the BSB and the Inns continues, and we send huge congratulations to Lucinda Orr on her re-election as Treasurer for a second term, and to Heidi Stonecliffe KC as the recently elected Vice Chair of the Bar for 2026. Fantastic news.

There is more to come this year so please regularly check-in with the BACFI website where you will find a wealth of information pertinent to our practice at the Employed Bar, including career opportunities, links to relevant information from other organisations (eg the Bar Council) and details regarding how to join us and please do not hesitate to contact me or Sandra with any questions, comments, or ideas.

I look forward to seeing you all soon and I hope you have a relaxing Summer!

Warm regards, Gaynor Wood, Chair

Subscription payments

Thank you to everyone who has paid their 2025/26 subscription. If you have yet to pay and wish to continue with your membership, please pay as soon as possible. If payment is not received by the end of June your membership will be terminated. Any queries, please contact Sandra.

BACFI Lexology Newsstand

Receive regular updates from over 900 of the world's leading law firms keep you informed of legal and regulatory developments globally via the [BACFI Lexology Newsstand](#).

You can specify your interests across over 50 work areas and over 170 jurisdictions and receive a customised daily intelligence briefing on the topics that matter to you. Contributing firms provide articles, guides, podcasts, and video content, exploring the implications of relevant developments for in-house counsel and private practice lawyers.

Lexology's global research hub allows you to search the extensive archive by work area, jurisdiction, content type or topic. Credible sources and sophisticated search tools ensure you can find accurate answers at speed.

Register with [BACFI Lexology Newsstand](#) for free to access current awareness, receive a tailored daily newsfeed and benefit from our broad, searchable archive.

BACFI Wine Tasting at Bedales – 23rd April

We returned to Bedales for our annual wine tasting event and were pleased to see lots of familiar faces! Thank you to FTI Consulting for supporting us again by bringing along a number of their employees and to Mark Quaye of Marque Wealth Management for once again sponsoring the event. We will be booking for next year!



An Agile Career – The Bar has it all – 30th April

By Charlotte Pope-Williams

On Wednesday 30 April 2025, on a resplendent sunny late afternoon I had the pleasure of speaking about having an agile career at the Bar, including opportunities for career returners and movers at the Employed Bar. As much as I have lots of information to share, I am pleased to report that it was not just me speaking. I had the privilege of speaking with Stephen Parkinson, current Director of the Public Prosecutions, Dan Byrne, Partner at AA Thornton and Deputy

District Judge (and one of BACFI's very own) together with Genevieve Harris, Legal Counsel and an Employed Barrister in the Bank of England's Legal Financial Stability Division and who was the Chair on the day.

There should be a link to a recording of the event on Middle Temple's website for those who want to watch the session for themselves.

The event was organised by the Middle Temple's Employed Bar Society and Talent Retention Working Group in collaboration with BACFI. One of the aims of the event was to demystify the process of moving to and from different parts of the Bar and illustrate how the Bar can be a more inclusive space for all. I have set out a few takeaways from the session below:

- ***Moving is no longer taboo but remains somewhat mysterious:*** In days of old it was taboo to move chambers, and it seemed impossible to move from employed practice to self-employed practice and back again. Thankfully, that is no longer the case but there is still opacity around moving from employed to self-employed practice not least because chambers are not always as transparent as they could be about their approach to lateral hires in the way that employers are. Further, for those who have never been employed the prospect of applications and interview processes can be overwhelming. There is still much work to be done to demystify the practicalities of moving between different parts of the Bar. This event was a step in the right direction.
- ***Independence and Advocacy skills do not fall away on receipt of a salary as a Barrister*** – I repeat this sentiment so much it has become a sought of refrain or mantra. However, one of the misconceptions that persist in respect of the Employed Bar for those considering it, is that somehow employed practitioners are less independent and never undertake advocacy. This simply is not true. *All* Barristers, whether employed, self-employed or dual capacity are subject to the core duties in the BSB Code of Conduct which include the requirements to (i) maintain independence [CD4] and (ii) act with honesty and with integrity [CD3]. There are ample opportunities to undertake advocacy at the Employed Bar whether through organisations such as the CPS or litigation boutiques and/or through pro bono work. Moreover, often employed practitioners engage in a broader range of advocacy than some of their self-employed colleagues before Courts and tribunals, internal quasi-judicial decision-makers, and boards to name but a few.
- ***Portfolio practice is possible:*** agility at the Bar includes portfolio careers where individuals can be part-time judges, sit on boards, act as mediators and/or arbitrators and more. There is a sense that a varied and more dynamic career is increasingly possible at the Bar of today.
- ***The CPS's new one-year secondment – Go Prosecute*** – the CPS is trying to support barristers and solicitors who have left the criminal bar or otherwise taken a break and who would like to return by offering a paid one-year secondment. Please see their website about Go Prosecute which formally launches on 9 June 2025.
- ***Have a business plan:*** Wherever you are in your career at the Bar it can help to have a business plan setting out your short term, medium term and long term aims.
- ***Seek out mentors and allies:*** All speakers highlighted the benefit of mentors and/or allies who have experience or knowledge of the work that you want to undertake as a means of facilitating career development.

The Legal Implications of the first 100 days of the Trump administration – seminar at Sidley – 14th May

Sara George (Partner, Sidley, London, Employed Barristers' Committee Chair and member of the BACFI committee) chaired this panel discussion.

Speakers, Thomas Ward (Partner, Sidley, Washington D.C. who has extensive experience in U.S. government, having served at the U.S. Department of Justice during the first Trump administration and at the U.S. Consumer Financial Protection Bureau during the Biden administration), Michael E. Borden (Partner, Sidley, Washington, D.C. who leads Sidley's Government Strategies practice) and Joe Palombo (Partner, FGS Global who served as a U.S. diplomat with postings to Kigali, Mexico City, and Hong Kong and now advises private equity, sovereign wealth, and family office decision-makers on political and policy risk and opportunity at both the transaction and portfolio-levels) gave their personal insights into what happened during the first 100 days of Trump's second term of office and also commented on how things may look in the future

Thanks to Sidley for hosting this event and providing wonderful refreshments.



The Employed Bar Garden Party – 9th June

The sun didn't quite shine but the rain held off! Middle Temple provided lots of bubbly and canapes and everyone enjoyed meeting up with friends old and new. Thanks to Middle Temple for hosting and the Bar Council for promoting this event.



Pro Bono Week 2025

We are pleased to announce the dates and theme for Pro Bono Week 2025, which will take place in the UK from 3 to 7 November 2025.

As you may know, Pro Bono Week offers an opportunity to recognise and support the voluntary contribution made by the legal profession across the UK in giving free legal help to those in need.

The overall theme for 2025 set by the organising committee is ***Pro Bono in Action***, within which there are 3 suggested sub-topics:

- ***Pro bono: Stories of impact*** – hear from the frontline about how pro bono lawyers transform lives and support charities to make a difference in our communities and abroad.
- ***Pro bono: win-win for professional & business development*** – develop skills, experience and a professional network, and an asset in recruitment and retention.
- ***Pro bono: Getting involved*** – advice and practical steps about how to start making a difference through pro bono.

Plan an event in Pro Bono Week: law firms, chambers, legal societies, charities, in-house lawyers, law schools and universities are encouraged to plan events both internal or external. It is also an opportunity to publish reports or launch new initiatives to an engaged pro bono audience. More information can be found on the [Event Planning page](#).

Plan to post on social media or your website in Pro Bono Week: show your commitment to pro bono, or to thank your volunteers, or to showcase a particular pro bono lawyer or project. Follow us on [Linkedin](#), [Bluesky](#) or on Twitter/X at [@ProBonoWeekUK](#) for updates and news. The official hashtags are [#ProBonoWeek](#) and [#WeDoProBono](#)

To gain ideas on how to celebrate Pro Bono Week, please see our report on [Pro Bono Week 2024](#) and our [Wakelets](#) highlighting some of the best articles and social media posts.

BACFI is organising a webinar in November looking at Pro Bono opportunities for employed barristers so look out for details.

News from the Employed Barristers' Committee of the Bar Council

The EBC was absolutely thrilled at the news that Heidi Stonecliffe was elected as the Vice Chair of the Bar Council for 2026. In a career of firsts, including being the first woman to take silk at the CPS, Heidi will now be the first employed barrister in the 132-year history of the Bar Council to take on this role. Heidi's dedication to public service and her commitment to the employed Bar and to improving equality, diversity and inclusion across the whole of the profession is evident throughout her career. The EBC has no doubt that she will reflect these qualities in her role as Vice Chair and we are delighted that another glass ceiling for the employed Bar has been shattered.

Both Susanna McGibbon, Treasury solicitor and Permanent Secretary of the Government Legal Department, and Douglas Wilson OBE, Head of the Attorney General's Office were awarded KC Honoris Causa this year. Only 9 Honorary KC appointments were made in 2025 compared with 105 KC appointments. We are interested to know why so few appointments were made and will be making enquiries looking into this.

Following the last newsletter, the EBC has been working closely with partners from across the employed Bar to develop a case for why the current KC appointment process needs reform. Our case is simple, there is excellence at the employed Bar that is not being properly recognised because our advocacy primarily takes place outside of a courtroom and not in the presence of judicial referees. We will set out, in a letter to the Chair of the Bar, a positive and concrete proposal for how the working definition of advocacy can be expanded and identifying individuals of appropriate standing and independence, in order to better recognise the excellence of employed barristers, as it is so clearly in the public interest.

In a year when professional ethics is such a key work stream across the sector, we are ensuring that the Bar Council and the Employed Barristers' Committee recognises and responds to the challenge and ensures employed barristers are empowered and supported when navigating ethical dilemmas at work. We are undertaking research looking at the ethical dilemmas faced by employed barristers. If you would like to participate, please get in touch with EBC@barcouncil.org.uk.

The EBC is sponsoring 5 places at the BACFI 60th anniversary dinner at the House of Lords on 10th October for employed barristers in income bands 1 and 2. If you wish to be considered for one of the £100 awards, please contact Sandra.



BACFI Member Discounts

Young Bar: Save up to 50% on Sweet & Maxwell titles

White Book 2025 Special Offers

The White Book 2025 edition published in March and is fully updated with all relevant legislative and procedural changes to the Civil Procedure Rules and Court Guides plus expert commentary, including coverage of key Court of Appeal cases such as *Al Sadeq v Dechert LLP*; *Deutsche Bank AG v Sebastian Holdings*; *Morris v Williams & Co Solicitors (A Firm)*; *Solicitors Regulation Authority Ltd v Khan*; *Commercial Bank of Dubai PSC v Al Sari*; *Dos Santos v Unitel SA*; *Parsdome Holdings Ltd v Plastic Energy Global SL*; and, from the Supreme Court, *Re McAleenon*, *Application for Judicial Review (Northern Ireland)*.

Included with the White Book 2025 is the 11th edition of **Costs & Funding following the Civil Justice Reforms: Questions & Answers**, fully updated with recent costs and funding case law, developments, and new questions and answers.

A June supplement will bring the White Book fully up to date.

See [here](#) for more general information about the White Book.

BACFI Young Bar: Save 50% on the White Book Volumes 1&2 Print and eBook Service

Thomson Reuters Sweet & Maxwell is making a special offer available to all Young Bar BACFI members who are within five years of call. Receive 50% off when you order The White Book 2025 Volumes 1&2 print and eBook Service. Additionally, all other White Book 2025 purchasing options are available at a discount of 40%. Offer valid until 30th March 2026. To make your order email julie.johnson@thomsonreuters.com, quoting discount code WBBACFI50 - 50% discount or WBBACFI40 - 40% discount.

Sealy and Milman 2025 Special Offers

Sealy and Milman: Annotated Guide to the Insolvency Legislation (2025) has been fully updated and now in its 28th edition, this annual guide offers practitioners annotated commentary and clarification on the legal and practical implications of the latest insolvency legislation, whether in Acts of Parliament, Statutory Instruments, or relevant Practice Directions, and on the relevant case law. An annual supplement (which is included in the subscription) will follow towards the end of the year.

For more information on Sealy and Milman see [here](#).

BACFI Young Bar: Save 50% on Sealy and Milman Volumes 1&2 Print and eBook Service

Thomson Reuters Sweet & Maxwell is making a special offer available to all Young Bar BACFI members who are within five years of call. Receive 50% off when you order Sealy and Milman Volumes 1&2 print and eBook Service. Additionally, all other Sealy and Milman 2025 purchasing options are available at a discount of 40%. Offer valid until 28th February 2026. To make your order email julie.johnson@thomsonreuters.com, quoting discount code SMBACFI50 - 50% discount or SMBACFI40 - 40% discount.

Special Discount for BACFI Members

A special 10% discount is available to all BACFI members on all Sealy and Milman 2025 purchasing options. Offer valid until 28th February 2026. To make your order email julie.johnson@thomsonreuters.com, quoting discount code SMBACFI10.



What is the seven-year rule in Inheritance Tax?

At a glance

- If you want to gift your family more than £3,000, you will need to survive for seven years after making the gift, otherwise it could potentially be liable for inheritance tax (IHT).
- Structuring your gifting over the longer term and making full use of your annual gifting allowance, along with any other IHT exemptions which may be available to you, such as the gifts out of normal expenditure exemption, can help you manage your IHT liability.
- Financial advice can be invaluable in helping you gift larger amounts and plan your legacy.

Not all inheritances happen once you've died. Gifting larger sums of money to loved ones while you're still alive is **both a practical and tax-smart way to get money flowing between generations**. Some people call this a 'living inheritance,' since they're passing on money that would have been inherited – just sooner, rather than later.

As long as you're aware of the seven-year rule.

If you **die within seven years of making a substantial gift, the value of the gift will be counted as part of your estate** (if not covered by an IHT exemption) and will therefore potentially be liable for IHT if you do not have **sufficient nil rate band available** on death to protect the gift.

These are the essentials you need to know.

1. The seven-year gifting rule

Two thirds (68%) of UK adults say it's important to them to **leave an inheritance**, and **65%** of retired people plan to **pass property or money on**.¹

However, changes which will potentially bring more assets into scope for IHT and proposed amendments to the IHT treatment of pensions announced in the **Autumn Budget**, mean that thousands of taxpayers may find themselves facing **a much higher tax bill** – and leaving a much lower legacy. As a result, many people are **considering gifting** money or assets during their lifetime.

Under the seven-year gifting rule, however, you need to **live for seven years from the date of the gift**. Otherwise, your beneficiaries may end up returning some of the gift back to HMRC.

2. What counts as a gift?

HMRC defines **a gift as anything you give away**. This includes money, property or land, stocks and shares listed on the London Stock Exchange, household and personal goods, furniture, jewellery or antiques. It also covers **unlisted shares if you held them for less than two years before your death**.

These gifts are called **Potentially Exempt Transfers or PETs** (unless they fall under an IHT exemption, such as the £3,000 annual exemption). The name sounds more complicated than it actually is. Essentially, **your gift is 'potentially exempt' from IHT** – an outright gift from one person to another, and you'll only pay IHT on a PET if you do not survive for 7 years from the date of the gift, and the gift is not covered by your available nil rate band on death.

A gift over £3,000 could also be considered **a Chargeable Lifetime Transfer (CLT)**. A CLT is most commonly a gift made into a **discretionary trust, where you pay the IHT upfront – at 20%** on any amount over the Nil Rate Band (currently £325,000 per person).

Gifting and IHT can seem complex – it certainly has its fair share of financial jargon. We do **strongly advise that you talk** to a financial adviser if **you're considering a CLT or any kind of Trust**, so you can check that it's the right choice for you and your family.

3. The 'tapering off' rule

The good news is that the rate of IHT on gifts made above the available nil rate band tapers off on a sliding scale. This is known as **taper relief**; and it **ranges from 32% to 8%** if you die six years after gifting.

The rule of thumb is, longer you live, the more you'll give. **Survive for seven years**, and your **gift is IHT tax-free**.

How taper relief works

- If you die 3 to 4 years after gifting, the rate of IHT on your gift reduces to 32%
- If you die 4 to 5 years after gifting, the rate of IHT reduces to 24%
- If you die 5 to 6 years after gifting, the rate of IHT reduces to 16%
- If you die 6 to 7 years after gifting, the rate of IHT on your gift to 8%.

4. Can I protect my gift from IHT?

If the amount of your gift exceeds, your available nil rate band, you can **protect it by taking out a 'gift inter vivos policy'**. This is a form of life insurance that protects the recipient from Inheritance Tax (IHT) should you not live for seven years. These policies are designed to **mirror the tapering effect of your liability**. So that, for example, if you die in year six, it'll pay out the exact amount you'd need. It's a less commonly known insurance, but a financial adviser will **be happy to help if you'd like to know more**.

It is also possible to protect gifts which are made within the available nil rate band using a level term assurance policy, with the term arranged to match the period until the gift falls outside of the estate - this would be 7 years if the gift had just been made.

5. What other gifts can I make tax-free?

You can make tax-exempt **gifts of up to £3,000 every tax year**. Your annual gifting allowance can be split between several people or given in full to one person.

When making **your first gift**, you can roll the gifting allowance from the **previous year, so you can gift £6,000**. Smaller gifts under £250 are tax free. And any gift to your **civil partner or spouse is automatically tax exempt too**.

Regular gifting each year can steadily reduce the size of your estate, while increasing the financial security and wellbeing of the rest of the family.

6. What's the best age to start making larger gifts?

Generosity is good at any age! But building gifting into your long-term plans **over several decades** means that, statistically, you're less likely to need to worry about the seven-year rule. If you're in your early sixties, with children and grandchildren, a substantial gift to help with a **house deposit or school fees** means you can enjoy seeing the **difference it makes while you're still around**.

Making bigger gifts earlier in your lifetime means you stand a better chance of your gift passing in its entirety to the next generation tax free.

"Gifting between generations keeps money going where it's needed most." Tony Clark, Senior Propositions Manager, SJP

Keeping track of your gifts

Keep a written record of each and every gift you make – it could save your family time, energy and tax. If you can't prove when you made a gift, for example, you may end up paying some IHT whether you like it or not.

We're sometimes asked how HMRC actually know what gifts you've made if no record or receipt existed. **The short answer is – they don't.** However, your **executors must sign a legal declaration** that all information provided must be full, accurate and truthful when they settle your estate. That **includes all gifts made**.

Keeping a written gifting record, including when you made it, how much it was worth, and who you gave it to will **set the record straight**.

HMRC have a specific form "**IHT403**" you can use to record the details of all gifts you make.

Planning your gifting

In the first chapter of our recent consumer survey, **The Real-Life Advice Report**, over **47%** of those in receipt of regular advice said that their adviser had helped them pass money on to loved ones.²

If you start gifting annual lump sums or regular amounts in good time, you can **make a substantial difference to your family's financial wellbeing in the here and now** – and their IHT bill in the future. That's an invaluable legacy to leave.

Need some sound, sensitive advice on estate planning? **Get in touch with Marque Wealth Management** and we can help you to **estate plan and gift effectively**.

• **Contact Mark Quaye (APFS) - Chartered Financial Planner: 0203 917 5304 / 07764 963 701 www.marquewealth.co.uk**

The levels and bases of taxation, and reliefs from taxation, can change at any time. The value of any tax relief is generally dependent on individual circumstances.

Source

^{1 & 2} Research conducted for St. James's Place by Opinium, among 4,000 UK adults between 27th February – 8th March 2024. All results are weighted to nationally representative criteria.

The Real-Life Advice Report was commissioned by St. James's Place. Opinium surveyed 12,000 UK adults between May and August 2024. Quotas and post-weighting were applied to the sample to make the dataset representative of the UK adult population. Quantitative data referenced is sourced from the first poll which had a total sample of 7,995 respondents.

We've looked at the impact of all forms of professional financial advice and guidance - from that offered by a financial advice firm or individual (including a wealth manager), an independent financial adviser (IFA), a qualified financial planner, to advice received through a bank and building society. We have also looked more broadly at understanding the impact of the help people receive through organisations such as Citizen's Advice, Pension Wise and others.

Dates for your diary

11th September: Legal Coffeehouses of London walking tour, 6pm – 8pm meeting at Cornhill. We will be exploring London's original coffeehouses in the City and move on to Fleet Street and Temple. Dr Matthew Green will lead the tour which includes sampling 17th century style coffee and a cup of "clairret", the lawyer's preferred drink in 18th century London. Cost £45 each for BACFI members and their guests, £55 others.

60th anniversary dinner: 10th October at The House of Lords hosted by Lady Hale. Tickets are £175 each for BACFI members and their guests, £185 others. A Champagne reception will be followed by a three course dinner with wine, coffee and chocolates. **Tickets are selling fast!**

22nd October: Annual Student evening in conjunction with City Law School webinar 6pm – 7.30pm. Speakers: Dan Byrne (Partner, Venner Shipley and Deputy District Judge), Janet Mernane (Senior Crown Prosecutor, CPS), Patrick Rappo (BNY), Alexandria Carr (Societe Generale) and Gaynor Wood (CLS and BACFI Chair). Free for all to attend. Kindly sponsored by Thomson Reuters.

3rd November: King's Counsel appointments - the case for review. In person at Sidley, 6pm. In conjunction with the EBC. Followed by drinks and networking. Free for all to attend.

13th November (provisionally): The Post Office Scandal – update. Webinar at 6pm with speakers Flora Page, Professor Richard Moorhead and Dr Alan Brener. Free for BACFI members, £20 others.

Denning Lecture and Christmas Reception: TBC

BACFI members on Bar Council Committees 2025

Bar Council

Gaynor Wood, Lucinda Orr (elected Treasurer), Lorinda Long (Elected), David Bunting (BACFI representative), Mike Jones KC (elected).

General Management Committee

Lorinda Long, Gaynor Wood, Lucinda Orr

Employed Bar Committee

Mike Jones KC, Lucinda Orr, James Kitching, Sara George (chair), Patrick Rappo, Charlotte Pope-Williams, Hannah Smith

Finance Committee

Lucinda Orr

Regulatory Review Working Group

David Bunting

European Committee Law Committee and Retained Law Working Group

Alex Carr

Bar Representation Committee

James Kitching,

Race Working Group

Sharon Blackman, Rebecca Dix

Money Laundering Working Group

Shahmeem Purdasy

Bar Council Ethics Committee

Sara George, Hannah Smith, Brian Cahill

Bar International Co-ordination Group

Charlotte Pope-Williams

Wellbeing at the Bar Group

Shahmeem Purdasy

BACFI Committee 2025

Chair:	Gaynor Wood
Senior Vice-Chair:	Ian Brookes-Howells
Junior Vice-Chairs:	Sharon Blackman OBE David Bunting James Kitching
Hon. Treasurer:	James Kitching
General Committee:	Ryan Porter Stephen Potts Lorinda Long Alex Carr Daniel Byrne Charlotte Pope-Williams Sara George Shahmeem Purdasy Patrick Rappo Laurence Fry Rebecca Dix Sara Lawson KC Hannah Smith

Contact BACFI:

**27 Brook Street, Edlesborough, Dunstable, Bedfordshire LU6 2JG Tel: 07507237218 –
please note that the PO Box address is no longer operational**

secretary@bacfi.org

www.bacfi.org