

The Board Room Brief



Message from the Chair

Welcome to the September edition of our Newsletter. I hope you all managed to take a break over the summer and that any vacation is not yet a distant memory as the nights begin to draw in.

Whilst the summer inevitably brings a well deserved slow down generally, meetings with the Employed Barristers Committee (EBC) and the Bar Standards Board (BSB) have continued and we welcome the ongoing engagement. There are currently 2 very important open consultations that we would like to highlight: i) the BSB's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion consultation and ii) Harriet Harman KC's Independent review of bullying and harassment and sexual harassment at the Bar. Please do respond if you feel able.

We have had a busy year of events and are in the home straight for 2024. BACFI always prides itself on its work to champion wellbeing and also supporting students. With those key areas in mind, we are hoping to see as many of you as possible at our in-person co-hosted EBC/BACFI event kindly hosted by Proskaur Rose on the 26th September ("Owning Your Imposter") and as many aspiring barristers as possible at our virtual annual student evening (in conjunction with City Law School) on 2nd October. Please join if you can.

As we look to November we will be hosting our virtual AGM (20th November) so, again, please join if you can. We will be hearing from now Vice Chair soon to be Chair of the Bar – Barbara Mills KC.

Last, but absolutely not least, please get your tickets NOW for our annual Denning Lecture (sponsored by Marque Wealth Management and LexisNexis) on 3rd December. We are delighted to welcome Rt Hon Lady Justice Andrews to give the lecture this year hosted at Inner Temple. Not to be missed!

We are already planning for 2025 and have a few events on the horizon so please do send in any suggestions.

Finally, my usual reminder.... 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.

Look forward to seeing you all soon.

Warm regards.

Gaynor Wood, Chair

Society of Caribbean Lawyers: Call for Mentors

The Society of Caribbean Lawyers is seeking UK based barristers and solicitors of all backgrounds to volunteer to mentor aspiring lawyers from the Caribbean community based in the UK. Mentors do not need to be members of the Caribbean community.

Aspiring lawyers of Caribbean heritage are well represented at university but are represented in the UK legal profession at much lower rates. Many aspiring lawyers of Caribbean heritage based in the UK are the first in their families to attend university and / or work in a professional services role. This means they often don't have a built-in network to give them the guidance and insight needed to navigate entry into the profession, such as writing a CV or how to present themselves at an interview.

Research has shown that a successful method for counteracting these social mobility barriers to the profession is through mentorship. Mentorship can provide individuals from underrepresented backgrounds with the knowledge, resources and skills to navigate the legal profession.

This Society of Caribbean Lawyers mentorship scheme does not require immense amounts of time. We merely ask mentors and mentees to meet at least three times during a nine-month period and for mentors to be available to answer mentees career related questions from time to time. Meetings can be online or in person.

Last year's staging helped aspiring lawyers gain insight into the profession, receive application and interview advice as well as inspiration from professionals.

The Society of Caribbean Lawyers is an organisation that seeks to improve the experiences of students and junior lawyers of Caribbean heritage and those working in the Caribbean, strengthen ties between the legal profession in the Caribbean and the UK, advocate for the Caribbean region and her diaspora, and create a network of lawyers of Caribbean heritage and those practising in Caribbean jurisdictions based in the UK. You can learn more about us at <https://www.socalawyers.com>.

Please sign up to be a mentor using: <https://forms.office.com/e/hXk7ZCHz4x>

For questions or further information please email our Student Outreach team at info@socalawyers.com



Thomson Reuters Sweet & Maxwell, the leading legal publisher since 1799 and proud publisher of The White Book, is pleased to share that we are sponsoring the upcoming *Student Evening Webinar: The Employed Bar* organised by BACFI, in conjunction with City Law School.

We are looking forward to supporting this event which is set to be an insightful discussion and an engaging and educational look at what it takes to succeed at the Employed Bar.

A Tradition of Legal Publishing Excellence Celebrating 225 Years of Sweet & Maxwell

BACFI PUPILS AND NEW TENANTS: 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 pupil barrister and new tenant BACFI members who are within three years of call.

Receive 50% off when you order *The White Book 2024* Volumes 1&2 print and eBook Service. Additionally, all other White Book 2024 purchasing options are available at a discount of 40%. Offer valid until 28th February 2025. Simply fill out the attached form and return it to julie.johnson@thomsonreuters.com, quoting discount code BACFIWB5 – 50% discount or BACFIWB4 – 40% discount.

How AI is affecting the Bar

The pivotal question surrounding AI isn't about its emergence, adoption, or permanence. AI is here to stay, offering barristers unexpected, exciting opportunities.

So the biggest question is this: how will the Bar leverage AI?

While new technologies warrant a cautious approach, the potential of generative AI is immense. Don't let caution hinder you, lest you miss out on pivotal advancements and become the proverbial abacus in a calculator's world.

Sam Townend KC, Chair of the Bar Council, has stated, "The growth of AI tools in the legal sector is inevitable [and] the best-placed barristers will be those who make the efforts to understand these systems so that they can be used with control and integrity."

Consider AI tools as akin to pupils: possessing essential skills and knowledge yet requiring oversight. Your accountability for their outputs is paramount, especially with open-source or free models. Even secure platforms like Lexis+ AI demand vigilance.

Lexis+ AI, now available in the UK, enables you to do more at speed, with results that are always linked to verifiable, citable authority or source. For more information please [visit our website](#).

The immediate impact of AI

Dubbed the new industrial revolution, AI's impact is likened to the steam engine's 42% efficiency boost, with AI's current estimates at 37%. For barristers, this could translate to significant time savings, better work-life balance, or the ability to handle more cases, thus enhancing earnings and output. Beyond the obvious, some barristers may allocate this newfound time to pro bono work, furthering the rule of law. With AI potentially automating 44% of legal tasks, barristers can focus on what machines can't replicate: client relations, collaboration, and creative strategy.

Experience [Lexis+ AI](#) now by booking a free demo. Be among the first to explore this generative AI solution that's set to reshape legal work in the UK. To register for a demo please [visit our website](#).

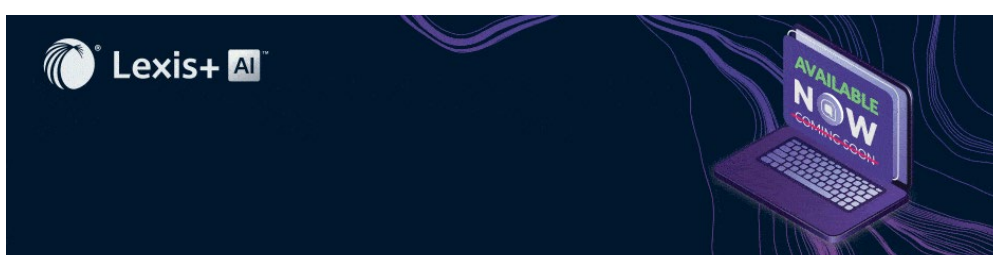
During Lexis+ AI's development, discussions with the Bar revealed a keen interest in employing AI for research, drafting, and analysis. Early adopters have already leveraged AI to anticipate counterarguments, strengthening their cases.

Preparing for change

The takeaway is clear: preparation for AI's integration is crucial. Large law firms are already training, recruiting, and developing AI policies. The Bar, however, lags behind, with only 8% taking similar steps.

After all, that 37% efficiency increase is on the line, with the potential time saved and output increased it would mean. Perhaps now is the time to put that abacus aside and consider a calculator.

[Lexis+ AI](#), now available in the UK, enables you to do more at speed, with results that are always linked to verifiable, citable authority or source. Experience it yourself with a free trial now.





The Bar Council's Employed Bar Awards showcase the wealth of talent amongst the Employed Bar and are presented to barristers for high-quality legal advice and outstanding contributions to the work of their organisations and the law more generally. The Bar Council has announced the shortlisted nominees for this year's awards. The winners will be announced at the Gray's Inn Employed Bar Dinner on Thursday 10 October.

Read the shortlist: <https://www.barcouncil.org.uk/support-for-barristers/employed-bar/the-employed-bar-awards/shortlisted-nominees.html>

Buy your ticket for the Employed Bar Dinner: <https://www.graysinn.org.uk/events/employed-bar-dinner-and-awards/>

The Employed Bar Awards Panel takes place at 6pm, before the awards, and is an event that will bring together barristers with diverse perspectives and experiences to discuss life at the Employed Bar as well as the importance of the awards in recognising the achievements and stories of those nominated and shortlisted and of the Employed Bar more widely.

Our expert speakers come from the Government Legal Department, Armed Forces, Law Firms, the Crown Prosecution Service and the Judiciary and they share a passion for the outstanding and varied work undertaken by employed barristers. The event and panel promise to be a forum for discussion that will showcase the legal excellence at the Employed Bar.

Link to the event - <https://www.graysinn.org.uk/events/employed-bar-committee-panel-event/>

Bar Standards Board Equality, Diversity and Inclusion consultation

The Bar Standards Board (BSB) has just launched a [public consultation](#) on new rules to promote equality, diversity and inclusion at the Bar.

We want to ensure that the Bar is as inclusive as possible and that it is truly representative of the society it serves. Regulation alone cannot achieve that, but regulation can help by supporting barristers to challenge practices which work against diversity and inclusion.

We are very keen to hear views on our proposals from all interested stakeholders, including members of the Bar, the Inns of Court and Circuits across England and Wales, the specialist Bar Associations, and equalities groups who represent those who face barriers at the Bar.

We would greatly appreciate it if you could take the time to respond to [our questions](#) and also circulate the consultation within your professional networks.

The consultation will be open until 5PM on Friday 29 November and you can contact equality@BarStandardsBoard.org.uk for any questions you may have.

We hope that you will take this opportunity to share your views with us, so we can ensure our proposals are fully informed by your experience.

Please join us for our webinar on 19th September at 6pm where we shall be seeking views as to whether we should replace the current Core Duty 8 ('You must not discriminate unlawfully against any person') with a new, proactive **duty to 'advance equality, diversity, and inclusion'**. This new duty would apply to every individual at the Bar and seeks to achieve a step change in behaviours and culture within the profession in relation to equality, diversity, and inclusion. In this roundtable we wish to explore with the employed Bar how this applies in practice.

Will paying for long-term care affect my inheritance planning?

The wise proverb says to consider our lives “before the *days of distress come* and the years arrive when you will say: “*I have no pleasure in them*” – Ecclesiastes 12:1

- Many more of us people are living to 100, and we may need social care for years – making a big dent in our savings and the inheritance we may leave.
- With careful forward planning, you can mitigate the impact that care fees can have on your inheritance.
- Financial advice can help you to plan ahead to cover your social care costs and leave money to younger generations.

Many of us find it hard to think about ourselves or our parents needing help as we get older, and when we do start to think about it - perhaps *in our 50s or 60s, the cost implications can make us wince*.

The high cost of social care can quickly swallow up any inheritance that we planned to pass on to our children or grandchildren. It's also important to remember that the proposed **£86,000 care-fees cap**, which the UK government is planning to introduce in **England in October 2025**, isn't a silver bullet either. The proposal does increase the lower and upper thresholds for social care funding, but it *only caps some care home costs, not all*.

However, with careful forward planning, you can mitigate the impact that care fees can have on your inheritance.

How long might I need to pay for care?

None of us can see into the future but you may need to cover social care costs for longer than you imagine. More and more of us can expect to live to 100, and the chances of getting to the end of a 100-year life without needing care of some form is unlikely.

The longer you live, the more the bill goes up and the less money there is for the family.

Not only that but your children might have a long wait for their eventual inheritance. To counteract this, some older people are now choosing to skip a generation by passing their wealth directly to grandchildren, during their lifetime.

A multi-generational approach to financial advice keeps money flowing through families in the most tax-efficient way.

When should I make a long-term care plan?

Most people want to leave a meaningful legacy to their children and it's a key part of later life planning. However, it's important to get a reality check at an earlier age.

Discussing and planning for a range of scenarios earlier in life, when children are still living at home for example, makes good sense. It's important for *everyone's peace of mind that everyone knows how social care would be funded*, if and when it's needed. It can come as an unwelcome surprise to discover that an expected inheritance has been swallowed up by care fees.

Talking to your family about long-term care

The first step is to start *talking to your children about your plans* and your wishes for later life care. This can be easier said than done, *conversations about growing old and dying can be difficult* for all sides. Emotions can run high too, especially between siblings, and a lot of feelings need to be considered. A *financial adviser who's one step removed can bring the parties together* and find common ground and consensus.

Having these conversations early means everybody knows what to do, and is comfortable with it, should long-term care be needed.

Will I need a Power of Attorney if I need long-term care?

More often than we'd like, we hear from client families who suddenly find they need to pay bills or arrange social care on behalf of their parents – but they can't do so because they don't have an appropriate [Power of Attorney](#) (POA) in place.

A POA means that if you lose mental capacity and can no longer look after your financial affairs or your own health and welfare, someone you trust can act on your behalf. Depending on where you live in the UK, you might need a [Lasting, Enduring or Continuing POA](#).

Making sure there's a Power of attorney in place is one of the first things to get sorted when you're starting your financial plan. Not having a POA can add needless distress and pointless delay at a difficult time.

Can I avoid paying for care by giving away my assets?

The Government's means-tested threshold sets your eligibility for State help with social care costs. If you have assets of **more than £23,250 in England and Northern Ireland, £35,000 in Scotland or £50,000 in Wales**, your local authority won't normally step in to help. Which leads some people to think that, if they can **give some assets away to other family members**, they can duck below the means-tested threshold.

Although this sounds tempting, it comes with a large health warning labelled '**Deprivation of Assets.**'

Deprivation of Assets is when someone gives assets to other family members in an attempt to reduce their level of wealth below the means-tested threshold so they can apply for local-authority funding.

If the authorities spot that you've done this, **they'll treat the assets as if you still hold them**. You'll be liable for your own care fees, and worse – **you may have given away the very assets that you would have used to fund care**. It's a lose-lose situation.

Reducing your assets by gifting money

[Gifting](#) can reduce your estate legitimately. However, you must be clear what your intention is with the gift. If not, it could be considered as **deliberate 'Deprivation of Assets.'** If you're gifting money to **help another family member afford a house deposit, this is more likely to be seen as a legitimate gift**, depending on when the gift is made. Always keep a **written record of gifts** that you make, when they were made, to whom, and the intention behind the gift. Just in case it is ever queried by the local authority. And **speak to a financial adviser before you make any gifts**, to be sure that you aren't making a costly mistake that you can't reverse.

Just before you make a gift, there are two important considerations to remember. Firstly, whether you might need that capital back to pay for long-term care. And secondly, a local authority may not offer you the same care homes you would have chosen for yourself, if you were self-funding, which can limit your options.

Financial planning for the whole family

If, or when, you need to put long-term care plans into action, it's a decision that affects everyone in the family. In practical terms, you may need your family members or your Powers of Attorney to step in if you're not able to manage.

Having a multi-generational financial plan that considers the impact on inheritances and legacies, as well as the care bills, is reassuring for everyone.

Planning with the long-term future of your family in mind, as well as your own later-life care helps protect your future, and theirs.

To find out more about family-based later-life planning, **do get in touch**.

If you'd like a financial adviser by your side to help you exploit tax planning opportunities, do get in touch with **Marque Wealth Management** and we can help you enjoy the peace of mind that you are making the most of your hard-earned income/capital.

• **Contact Mark Quaye (APFS) - Chartered Financial Planner: 020 7516 2225 / 07764 963 701 www.marquewealth.co.uk**

We can also put you in touch with our partners at Karehero (formerly Care Sourcer), experts in arranging the right long-term care for you or a loved one.

Advice given in relation to a Power of Attorney and from Karehero will involve the referral to a service that is separate and distinct to those offered by St. James's Place. Powers of Attorney are not regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority.

Dates for your diary

19th September: BSB Roundtable – Equality Rules Consultation. Via MS Teams 6pm – 7pm (see above).

26th September: “Owning Your Imposter” - a wellbeing event in conjunction with the EBC. In person only at Proskauer Rose, 6pm. Speakers: Judith Kark, Counsellor and Psychotherapist, Ann Collier, Business Consultant and Executive Coach, Gaynor Wood, Chair, BACFI and Heidi Stonecliffe KC, Chair of the EBC. Free for all to attend. Followed by networking and refreshments.

2nd October: BACFI Student evening in conjunction with City Law School, 6pm via MS Teams. Chaired by Dan Byrne (AA Thornton) with Gaynor Wood (CLS Services Ltd), William Sprigge, Alexandria Carr (Societe Generale) and Charlotte Pope-Williams (3 Hare Court). Free for all to attend. **Kindly sponsored by Thomson Reuters.**

9th October: Having an Agile Career at the Bar - Opportunities for Career Returners and Movers at the Employed Bar, 5pm in the Sherrard Room, Middle Temple and also online. Middle Temple's Employed Bar Society and Talent Retention Working Group invite members of all four Inns of Court to attend this session about opportunities at the employed Bar for career returners and movers. Please call the Treasury Office on 020 7427 4800 to book your place.

10th October: Gray’s Inn Dinner for the Employed Bar and the Employed Bar Awards (see above).

13th November: “The UK Budget 2024 – How Will This Impact Your Financial Planning?” 6pm via MS Teams– Mark Quaye of **Marque Wealth Management** will be looking at the implications of the budget. Free for all to attend.

20th November: BACFI AGM, 6pm via MS Teams. Speaker Barbara Mills KC, Vice Chair of the Bar.

3rd December: Denning Lecture to be given by **Rt Hon Lady Justice Andrews**, Lady Justice of Appeal of the Court of Appeal of England and Wales at Inner Temple, 6pm. Kindly sponsored by **Marque Wealth Management and LexisNexis.** Followed by the **BACFI Christmas Reception.** Tickets: £45 BACFI members and their guests, £55 others. Contact Sandra to book yours now.

Looking forward to 2025.....

60th anniversary dinner: 10th October 2025 at The House of Lords hosted by Lady Hale. Please contact Sandra if you wish to register your interest. Guests are very welcome. The cost will be approximately £170 per head but will be confirmed as soon as possible.

BACFI members on Bar Council and BSB Committees 2024

Bar Council

Gaynor Wood, Lucinda Orr (elected), Lorinda Long (Treasurer), David Bunting (BACFI representative), Mike Jones KC (elected), Hannah Smith (elected), Rebecca Dix (elected).

General Management Committee

Lorinda Long, Gaynor Wood, Lucinda Orr

Employed Bar Committee

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

Finance Committee

Lorinda Long

Regulatory Review Working Group

David Bunting

European Committee Law Committee and Retained Law Working Group

Alex Carr

Bar Representation Committee

Lucinda Orr, James Kitching,

Race Working Group

Sharon Blackman

Money Laundering Working Group

Shahmeem Purdasy

Education and Training Committee

James Hampson

Bar International Co-ordination Group

Charlotte Pope-Williams

Ethics Committee

Brian Cahill, Hannah Smith

Wellbeing at the Bar Group

Shahmeem Purdasy

BACFI Committee 2024

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 Sonia Hayes Shahmeem Purdasy Patrick Rappo Laurence Fry Rebecca Dix

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**REPRESENTATION, EDUCATION AND SUPPORT FOR EMPLOYED
BARRISTERS FOR NEARLY 60 YEARS**