

LINCOLN'S INN BAR REPRESENTATION COMMITTEE
CHAIR'S ANNUAL REPORT
FOR THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF HALL
ON 7 NOVEMBER 2018

Introduction

1. The Chair's Annual Report to Hall is a little unusual this year because the current incumbent has not been in office for a full year. I was only been elected Chair in April 2018.
2. The circumstances of my appointment are well known to members of the BRC and I do not wish to dwell on them. However, in order to report fairly and accurately to Hall, it is necessary for me to record that our previous Chair (Ben Wood) and Vice Chair (Margia Mostafa) both resigned in February this year, following various issues and disagreements over policy which they ultimately could not reconcile.
3. Their resignation was a surprise to many and a great sadness to all. Whilst in post, Ben and Margia worked tirelessly to promote and improve the BRC in all manner of ways. They established the Social Mobility and Social and Well Being sub-committees and were directly responsible for obtaining (for the first time) a budget for the BRC from the Inn.
4. I would like to thank Ben and Margia for the enormous amount of time and effort they dedicated to the job and for the improvements and reforms they implemented. I would also like to thank Gerard Forlin QC for stepping into the breach as a temporary Chair during the interregnum caused by their resignations.
5. It is also only right to acknowledge the calm resolve and wisdom that members of the BRC showed at the time of these events and I would like to thank them for entrusting me with the task of leading the committee over the next few years. Although my election as Chair does show uncharacteristic lack of judgment on their part, the committee is made up of a dedicated and committed group who give up a lot of their time to represent the interests of Hall within the Inn.
6. I am very pleased to say that, despite a difficult start to the year, the BRC has continued to thrive and make a meaningful contribution to the Inn and Hall members.

Social and Wellbeing

7. There is an increasing recognition within the profession of the importance of social and well-being. The BRC is certainly playing its part in meeting the needs of the Bar in this area.
8. The Social & Wellbeing Group (SWG) has organised a number of extremely successful events this year. I am enormously grateful to Linda Turnball and Lauren Husain for the extraordinary work they have put in to make the SWG and its events such a success.
9. Earlier this year the SWG held a joint Wellbeing Event with the South Eastern Circuit. It attracted 89 attendees who all enjoyed the event immensely. All of the speakers were excellent and spoke from the heart about their personal issues and their own coping strategies. Chatham House Rules applied. Valerie Charbit (Wellbeing Officer of the SE Circuit) gave a brief biography of each of the speakers. His Honour Judge Noel Lucas QC, His Honour Judge John Dodd QC, Her Honour Judge Kaly Kaul QC and His Honour Judge Gregory Perrins each spoke for about 10 minutes regarding their own personal issues and how they coped. Each gave tips that they urged us all to try. Lee Moore, a former barrister and founder and past president of the Association of Child Abuse Lawyers spoke about trauma, including secondary trauma and compassion fatigue before going on to give suggestions for self help. A lively Question & Answer Session revealed that several people had issues involving stress and pressures of work that they were unsure of how to resolve. The event gave everyone real food for thought.
10. There was a Sleep Workshop in June, kindly led by Julie Whitby, for which I offer my thanks and gratitude. The Crypt was used for the event. It was fragrenced by essential oils and decorated with fairy lights and candles. The evening commenced with a short talk on the various sleep problems often suffered, with some strategies to deal with them. This was followed by some very gentle yoga and at the end of the evening all attendees were given a little goody bag containing 4 little bottles of essential oils.
11. On 27 September the SWG held a Tea Tasting event with Tea Pigs. The main speaker was very engaging and witty and after a brief talk about the company, he then explained how different teas are made. Samples were tasted and everyone was given the opportunity to select ingredients, from a huge selection, to make their own blend of tea, which they could take home. Hot tea, iced tea, cakes and prosecco rounded off the evening.
12. The SWG's work must be seen in the context of the Inn's wider initiatives in this important area and the work of the Collegiality Working Group under the

chairmanship of Lord Justice McCombe and the results of the survey which the Working Group commissioned amongst members. The Group's report indicated that there was a place for more student/pupil/young barrister events within the Inn. The report also noted that there were some critical comments from respondents to the survey about the "inclusivity" of the Inn and that this was an issue that needed to be addressed. I believe the BRC is doing its part to tackle that issue.

13. Finally on the social matters, the Gourmet Dinner is on 30 November. It has no theme this year, but is designed to showcase the skills of the Inn's catering department. They have been given a free rein to show us what they are capable of and I am looking forward to the event enormously.

Social Mobility

14. This year the BRC has been pleased to see a consolidation of its social mobility initiatives under the auspices of the Social Mobility Sub-Committee.
15. For the second year running we have partnered with the Social Mobility Foundation to mentor undergraduates from non-traditional and less socially advantaged backgrounds. The mentors from the second year scheme met their students at an informal event earlier this Autumn and we look forward to seeing those relationships develop. Although it is fair to say that some of the mentoring relationships did not work out as we had wanted, others flourished. I would like to thank personally all those who volunteered for the scheme.
16. For the coming legal year, the social mobility sub-committee hopes to expand on the breadth and depth of work they do by encouraging participation of members of Hall. The sub-committee is also looking to work with new charities to increase the range of aspiring barristers the Inn can reach. Alongside this the BRC hopes to find new contributions for its 'Bar Stories' section on the Inn's website, which proved popular when it launched last year. The Co-chairs of the committee, Sara Ibrahim and Amelia Highnam, are keen to hear your ideas and invite you to contact them, if you want to be involved in the work of the social mobility sub-committee.
17. Again, I would like to thank Sara and Amelia for their hard work and dedication to this important area.

Junior Members' Association ("JMA")

18. The JMA was formally disbanded by the pre-call committee in July this year. Whilst that came as surprise and disappointment to some, the reasoning behind it was sound enough. It was felt that although the JMA had done an excellent job in bringing together junior members of the profession, the particular needs of student members needed further attention. The Inn therefore took the decision to establish a new students association ("LISA") dedicated to student activities and events.
19. It was nevertheless strongly felt by the Treasurer and the Cursus that the JMA should continue in some guise and BRC the obvious home for it. There has been continuing debate as to how the JMA should amalgamated within the BRC and the form and composition of the sub-committee which will be the JMA. That debate continues.
20. The issue of the JMA has brought into focus the question of whether the BRC is as representative of its membership as it might be and whether rule changes are required to reform the voting system. Although I am reluctant to navel gaze and tinker with rules, I think that this may be a necessary evil in this instance.

The Development

21. The Development of the East Terrace and the wholesale improvements and repairs to the Inn's infrastructure is, at last, drawing to a close. Building work is not expected to be completed until Spring 2019. However, the majority of the work to the education suite and all the work to kitchens and Great Hall is more or less completed.
22. Members of Hall will be particularly interested to know that the refurbishment of the MCR has started in earnest. The Inn generously provided a budget in excess of £330,000 for a complete overhaul and refit of the MCR. The whole area will be transformed with a reconfigured bar area, seating and lighting and a much improved outside terrace.
23. The years of disruption and inconvenience we have all suffered will soon be rewarded. The new facilities promise to be a first class resource. The new lecture hall and conference rooms are to be named the Ashworth Centre, in honour of Mercy Ashworth, the first woman to be called to the Bar by Lincoln's Inn in 1923.

Final thoughts

24. As many of you now know, Mary Kerr, our Under Treasurer, will be leaving in the New Year. She has served the Inn tirelessly, bringing insight, energy and humour to

the job. The new Development was essentially her idea and she has guided it through from start to finish. I am sure you will join with me in wishing her a very happy and fruitful retirement. Mary's replacement is Anne Sharp CBE, the current Chief Executive of ACAS. I very much look forward to working with her in the future.

25. Finally, I would like to thank Wiebke Morgan and Murray Campbell of the Inn's staff for all their support and guidance over the year. I simply could not have done the job without them.

Stuart Hornett

November 2018