

## **2020 Annual Report from the Bar Representation Committee Chairman**

My final annual report as Chairman of the Bar Representation Committee is inevitably shorter and less upbeat than in previous years.

No one will be surprised to learn that the work of the BRC has been severely curtailed during 2020 due to the consequences of Covid. Indeed, almost every aspect of the Inn's life has been adversely affected by coronavirus.

This is not the first time the Inn has been impacted by a global pandemic. The Inn's archives describe in some detail how it dealt with the bubonic plague of 1664 – 1666. The link to the Inn's website describing the records of events in the Black Books may be of interest to some of you:

<https://www.lincolnsinn.org.uk/library-archives/archive-of-the-month/september-2015-the-great-plague/>

Despite Covid, I am pleased to say that the BRC continued to meet remotely during lockdown and organised a number of initiatives to assist members during difficult times. These included a work scheme for junior barristers, organised by the Junior Members Committee, as well as various welfare and education initiatives.

It seems a long time ago now, but one highlight of the year was the Gourmet Dinner (an annual event put on by the BRC) back in December 2019. Once again, the kitchen team produced some wonderful food and wine (a lot of which was English), all accompanied by live music and dancing (of sorts).

I obviously leave my post with a tinge of sadness in that my last year as Charmain has been eclipsed by the pandemic. However, it has been a privilege and a joy to serve for 2½ years and I have loved every minute of it.

I am delighted that Zoë Barton QC has been elected and I wish her all the best in the role. I am sure she will prove to be an excellent Chair.

Stuart Hornett,

Chairman (to August 2020)

## **2020 Social & Wellbeing Group Annual Report**

The SWG had an exciting Calendar of Events planned for 2020. Our first two events of the year went very well.

- **Thursday 23 January 2020**, Julie Whitby hosted a Buff Bones "Staying Healthy" wellbeing event in the Ashworth Centre. This was a very enjoyable evening, which comprised of a PowerPoint presentation followed by some easy exercises designed to strengthen bones. Participants received some useful handouts. As usual our

wonderful chefs provided some delicious nibbles to accompany the refreshments (wine & soft drinks).

- **Tuesday 10 March 2020.** We held our usual joint well-being event with the South Eastern Circuit in the Old Hall. It was illuminating to be offered an insight into the concerns and struggles of our well-respected Judges. We were very pleased to have Mrs. Justice McGowan as the key speaker. Gillian Higgins, a barrister, spoke on benefits gained through the art of 'Meditation', which was insightful and very helpful. Chatham House Rules apply. There was the opportunity to network at the end, whilst enjoying refreshments. As always the catering staff provided delicious canapés, wine and soft drinks to round off a wonderful evening.

Unfortunately Lockdown was imposed on 23 March 2020, due to Covid-19. This had a significant impact on our ability to hold many of our planned events. However some were re-scheduled to be held remotely and others have been postponed until the restrictions are such that it will be possible to hold them "in person".

- **The "Theatre Works" Drama Workshop** at the National Theatre, which was due to take place on 20 May 2020, has been postponed until 2021. It was considered that it was important for participants to be able to enjoy the "theatre experience". Therefore it was deemed inappropriate to hold this as a virtual workshop.
- **The Family Day**, which was due to take place on 5 July 2020 unfortunately had to be cancelled due to the government restrictions.

In these unprecedented times the social and wellbeing of our members have been of particular importance and we have sought to assist by organising the following events.

- **Monday 15<sup>th</sup> June 2020**  
Post Lockdown Anxiety and how to overcome it. Main Speaker: Julie Whitby. The webinar was excellent in the present climate, providing us with the tools to deal with anxiety, stress and all the emotions associated with lockdown. We were delighted that hall members from abroad participated as well.
- **Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> October 2020.**  
Dealing with vicarious trauma – developing self-awareness and resilience. Mary Jackson ran the event; a qualified BACP Therapeutic Counsellor and Law Care Coordinator since 2008.

This was a dynamic, interactive webinar, which identified the reality of pressures, emotions and mental health for barristers, especially during Covid. Mary explained the impact of 'Vicarious Trauma' on practitioners and the risks to our mental health. Such experiences can trigger trauma in individual practitioners. In the event one feels overwhelmed, it is important to seek help. Top tips given. Resources sheet provided to attendees, including 5 steps to improve wellbeing. There were 89 attendees

- **Wednesday 4 November 2020.**  
Excellent event hosted by our talented Quizmaster Steve Matthews.

**Gourmet Dinner:** Sadly we have had to cancel the Gourmet dinner, which was due to take place on Friday 4 December 2020. We hope to be back in 2021!

**Membership:** Linda Turnbull (Chair), Laureen Husain (Chair), Ben Hamer, Emma Southern, The Venerable Sheila Watson and Julie Whitby

### **Junior Members' Committee Annual Report 2020**

The year since the last JMC Report has been a tumultuous one. As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, the usual in person events held by the JMC (a winter ceilidh, summer dinner and termly drinks) and sporting events have been cancelled.

Where possible, events have moved online. The annual fixtures, such as the Second Six and Beyond event, have taken place via Zoom. We hope to continue to hold events online where possible. The 'Pathway to Pupillage' event, aimed at those seeking roles after the Bar Course to strengthen pupillage applications (such as a judicial assistantship at the Court of Appeal), will take place on 10 December.

The JMC has been in contact with the Inn about the financial provision available to those struggling during the pandemic, and conducted a survey on the impact of the pandemic on levels of work and cashflow on junior members. The JMC also set up the Workshare Scheme, which will be relaunched shortly. The scheme puts senior members of the Inn who are in need of assistance (with matters such as research work) in touch with junior members with capacity.

**Membership:** Ben Hamer (Chair); Hazel Jackson (Chair); Maxwell Myers, Genna King, Harriet Wakeman, Rebecca Costello, Adam Kayani and Imogen Sadler.