



BAR COUNCIL NEWS UPDATE – FRIDAY 4 JANUARY 2019

Women at the Bar

[BBC Radio 4: Woman's Hour](#) – Vice Chair of the Bar, Amanda Pinto QC, appears on Woman's Hour on 4 January discussing the centenary of women lawyers and the progress that has been made, along with Christina Blacklaws, President of the Law Society.

Amanda Pinto QC discussed issues of judicial bullying, harassment and retention of women in the barristers' profession, as well as highlighting support available for those facing such issues, including the Bar Council's confidential equality & diversity helpline, and mentoring schemes.

Pinto also pointed out the problems flexible operating hours (FOH) in courts can cause for women with caring responsibilities and explained that the Bar Council has lobbied the government to stop FOH going ahead in criminal courts.

Women at the Bar – The next 100 years

[The New York Times Post](#), Radio Plymouth, Wave 965, Three FM, Wire FM, Wish FM, Kingdom FM, Signal 107, Lincs FM, The Wave, Ridings FM, Rutland Radio, Lovesportradio, Tower FM, Jersey Peeps, Radio Newark, Panda Radio, Black Country Radio, Dee 1063, Open Paper, Silk 1069, Coast FM, Newspaper 24 – Further coverage of [Sky News'](#) report that a campaign is being launched this year by the Bar Council to mark 100 years since women were legally allowed to practise as lawyers.

[Sky News reports](#) that the Bar Council wants to promote "meaningful discussion" around the future of women at the Bar.

In a broadcast interview, new Vice Chair of the Bar, Amanda Pinto QC, says: "One of the main things is that people get to a particular point in their career and they think it's too difficult or it's not working out well.

"For women in particular, we have discovered that the problem really is with retention at about the time that women have children. The Bar is a difficult profession because you don't necessarily know if you're going to be working a very long day or get home to pick up your children. It's that uncertainty that makes it hard. We at the Bar Council are trying to put things in place to make it more simple."

Sky News reports that the latest statistics show that while there is an almost equal split of male and female pupils studying to be barristers, just 14.8 per cent of QCs were female as of December 2017. That figure shows a rise of just over one per cent compared to the previous year.

The story is also covered by many other national and local broadcasters and media outlets.

Brexit

[thejournal.ie](#), [Law Society Gazette](#) – Ireland's prime minister has said the country is exploring how to take legal business from the UK after Brexit. Taoiseach Leo Varadkar has in mind a partnership of the legal representative bodies to exploit the UK's departure from the EU.

After the first meeting of the Cabinet of the New Year, Varadkar said that ministers had decided to prepare Brexit legislation in detail over the next two weeks, but that any no-deal legislation wouldn't be introduced to the Dáil until March, if at all. He said that the government agreed to explore post-Brexit opportunities for legal services.

"A partnership with the Bar Council and the Law Society, they take a view that one of the areas that could benefit from Brexit are legal services, on the basis that Ireland could... take some business from the UK."

Legal aid

[Press Association](#) – Press Association picks up Andrew Walker QC, 2018 Chair of the Bar's Counsel column.

Legal aid has been dismantled on the grounds of political expediency, a senior barrister says. Andrew Walker QC says the legal aid system was built "with pride" in the late 1940s. But he says it has been "taken apart" without any "national decision".

Mr Walker, 2018 chair of the Bar Council, which represents barristers in England and Wales, has lamented Government legal aid cuts in a magazine article. He says this year will see the 70th anniversary of the introduction of legal aid, under the 1949

Legal Aid and Advice Act, but questions whether there will be any cause for celebration.

"When did we decide, as a nation, to do this: to dismantle legal aid and degrade our court system?" he asks in the December issue of Counsel magazine, which is aimed at barristers.

[Legal Cheek](#) - A long-serving Labour Lord Chancellor has admitted that his party's attempts to reduce the legal aid budget while in government paved the way for swingeing cuts made under the Conservatives since 2010.

Lord Falconer QC attacked the current government for slashing spending on access to justice since 2010 but says that Labour "opened the door" with its own attempts to reduce legal aid expenditure in the 2000s.

The Ministry of Justice is due to publish a review of the Laspo cuts "early in the New Year", having originally promised it in 2018. Ahead of the report, **the Bar Council** and openDemocracy have released a [series of videos](#) documenting the real-life effects of legal aid cuts.

Other news of interest

Demand for pro bono advice on the rise, reports LawWorks ([Legal Futures](#), [LawCareers.net](#))

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In his inaugural column as Chair of the Bar for 2019, Richard Atkins QC @AtkinsQC sets out his aims and priorities for the year ahead – not least a happier Bar. Read the first Chair's Column of the year in full at bit.ly/2SwQUe8 @thebarcouncil



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The Bar Council @thebarcouncil · 1d

Young barristers: apply to the International Grant Programme by 14 Jan for the chance to get funding for an international legal event of your choice. More details and eligibility criteria at bit.ly/igp19.

“The grant I received helped me to attend a surrogacy and adoption conference in Jersey. My attendance at this fascinating conference assisted me with the progression of my interest in surrogacy law, and with my research for co-authorship of a book on surrogacy law.”

Victoria Flowers, FLBA, 2017 grantee

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Amanda Pinto QC, Vice Chair of the Bar, discusses bullying, harassment, and the progress of women lawyers with @LawSocPresident on @BBCWomansHour this morning



The Law Society ✓ @TheLawSociety
Tune in to @BBCWomansHour on @BBCRadio4 now to hear @LawSocPresident Christina Blacklaws discuss the centenary of women being able to qualify as lawyers @thebarcouncil @First100years

10:20 AM - 4 Jan 2019

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Thank you @BBCWomensHour: you put #womeninlaw at the top of your programme and talked about retention of women in the profession, career advancement and judicial bullying.

Whatever the challenges let's be clear - the law is a brilliant profession for women so come and join us!!

The Bar Council ✓ @thebarcouncil

Tune into @BBCWomansHour this morning at 10am to hear Vice-Chair of the Bar, Amanda Pinto QC, discussing gender, the law, and the centenary of women lawyers along with @LawSocPresident bbc.co.uk/programmes/m00... #next100years

