

Judging Your Future

The monthly e-newsletter from the
Judicial Appointments Commission (JAC)



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Welcome to the May edition of the Judging Your Future e-newsletter. This month we feature an interview with The Honourable Mr Justice John Goldring. Following interviews with Her Honour Judge Frances Kirkham and The Right Honourable Lady Justice Heather Hallett DBE, John is our third judicial Commissioner to be profiled.

The newsletter offers a further opportunity to book a place at the JAC candidate roadshow events, which are being held across the country over the coming months. Also featured are details of current and forthcoming selection exercises.

You will also find a report on the JAC's participation at the recent Minority Lawyers Conference and information about the new Ministry of Justice launched on 9 May 2007.

If you have any queries or would like to receive further information about anything featured in this newsletter, please email us at judgingyourfuture@jac.gsi.gov.uk.

0.1 Current selection exercises

Applications for the following selection exercise are currently being accepted:

President – Social Security and Child Support Appeal Tribunals

Closing date: 31 May 2007

Location: London

Vacancies / 1

Please ensure that you check the eligibility criteria for this role on our website.

Further information about the selection exercises can be found at -
<http://www.judicialappointments.gov.uk/current/current.htm>

0.2 Forthcoming selection exercises

We are committed to providing as much information as we can about selection exercises that are scheduled to commence.

However, we can only announce selection exercises when we have received an official vacancy request from our customers at Her Majesty's Court Service (HMCS) and the Tribunals Service, or the Ministry of Justice. The vacancies detailed below have had an official vacancy request and are due to commence in the next couple of months.

Please be aware that scheduled start dates are provisional and subject to change.

Senior Circuit Judge (Technology and Construction Court)

Provisional launch date: May 2007

Location: Manchester

Vacancies / 1

District Judges (Magistrates Court)

Provisional launch date: June 2007

Location: across England and Wales

Vacancies / 21

Financially Qualified Panel Members – Social Security and Child Support Appeal Tribunals

Provisional launch date: June 2007

Location: South East England, South West England and Scotland

Vacancies / 3

Please ensure that you check the eligibility criteria for the roles on our website when the selection exercises are open for application.

0.3 JAC Candidate Roadshows

The first candidate roadshow took place in London on Wednesday 9 May. Well attended and highly engaging with a great deal of lively audience participation the first event proved to be a resounding success. The main topics of discussion were the perceived barriers to appointment and the new JAC selection processes. Georgina Kent, barrister at 5 Essex Court

recounted her experiences as a Recorder and the challenge of juggling her judicial career with her other commitments.

Places are available at the forthcoming JAC candidate roadshows. To register your place send an email to outreachevents@jac.gsi.gov.uk or call 020 7210 0173. If registering by email please include your postal address and telephone number, and of course the event that you would like a place at. Come along and take part in lively debate!

Date	Location	Address
4 June	Liverpool	Liverpool Civil and Family Court Liverpool, L2 1BX
6 June	Newcastle	Newcastle Combined Court Newcastle-upon-Tyne, NE1 3LA
3 July	Nottingham	Strathdon Hotel Nottingham, NG1 5FT
10 July	Exeter	Exeter Combined Court Exeter, EX1 1UH
11 July	London	Clive House London, SW1H 9EX

0.4 Myth of the Month

This month sees the return of our monthly myth! The JAC is committed to dispelling myths about the world of judicial appointments. This month's example is:

Myth – Oxbridge educated middle aged white males will no longer be successful in applying for judicial office

Fact – The JAC selects on merit and merit alone. We are committed to selecting the best possible candidates, regardless of race, gender, age and background. We are not concerned with quotas or with engineering hypothetical proportions. We are only concerned with finding merit, by widening the range of qualified meritorious candidates applying for judicial office.

0.5 Profile of a Judge

This month's interview is with The Honourable Mr Justice John Goldring. John has been a JAC Commissioner since February 2006. He was called to the Bar in 1969 and was appointed a QC in 1987. He has been a Recorder, a Deputy Senior Judge of the Sovereign Base Areas of Cyprus and a Deputy High Court Judge. He has also been a Judge of the Courts of Appeal of Jersey and Guernsey and currently sits in the High Court – Queen's Bench Division.

1) How long have you been a judge?

Since December 1999.

2) Why did you decide to choose a judicial career?

I was in practice as a silk. I was offered a job in the Queens Bench Division in the pre-JAC days. I was not sure whether I would enjoy sitting as much as I did appearing as an advocate (which after many years I still greatly enjoyed). However, when I sat part time (for example as a Deputy High Court Judge or in the Court of Appeal in the Channel Islands and Jersey) I had enjoyed it. I have not regretted it since.

3) What are the best aspects of your role?

It is hugely stimulating. One's colleagues are helpful and good company. The work varies, one day a criminal case, soon after a judicial review. Some of the administrative roles can be rewarding too. I enjoyed being a Presiding Judge on a Circuit. If I dare say so, I find the JAC very stimulating (on occasion, perhaps to too great a degree).

4) What are the worst aspects of your role?

Sometimes the workload can be a little too much. Judgment writing takes time, and we do not always have it. There is the odd distraction too, like the JAC.

5) What advice would you give to someone considering a judicial career?

If you do not know about a particular area of law, visit a court which deals with it. Ask a judge or Tribunal Chair if you can shadow him or her. People will be amazingly helpful. Obtain as much information about part time judicial roles as possible.

Editor's note - for more information about the work shadowing scheme and how to apply, please visit the Judiciary of England and Wales website at - www.judiciary.gov.uk/publications_media/general/work_shadowing.htm.

0.6 Minority Lawyers' Conference

The Judicial Appointments Commission (JAC) made its first appearance as a sponsor and participant at the Minority Lawyers' Conference (MLC) on 28 April. Organised by the Law Society, the MLC is an important feature of the legal calendar, providing a unique forum for Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) lawyers. For the JAC it marked an important platform to directly reach members of minority groups from the legal sector.

In a well received panel session, JAC Commissioner HH Judge Frances Kirkham and Director of Tribunal Appointments, David Truscott outlined the new judicial selection processes and emphasised the fact that the JAC does not positively discriminate or have any targets or quotas.

The JAC selects purely on merit, while actively focusing its efforts to encourage a wider and more diverse group of people to apply for judicial appointments. Extensive tailored marketing and working closely with stakeholder groups are just two of the new measures implemented to reach a more diverse group of people from the legal profession.

Joining the panel session were District Judge Azmat Nisa and Mrs Justice Linda Dobbs, who both shared their valuable experiences and lessons learnt in the judiciary.

The questions raised at the panel session and to representatives at the JAC's exhibition stand at the conference, demonstrated a genuine interest from delegates about the new selection process and the range of judicial careers available to them.

As part of its outreach programme to encourage applications to judicial appointments, the JAC will continue to participate in a wide range of events organised by the legal sector.

0.7 Ministry of Justice

The new Ministry of Justice was launched on Wednesday 9 May with a focus on improving the justice system for the public. The key themes of the Ministry will be:

- protecting the public
- reducing re-offending
- sense in sentencing

For further information about the Ministry visit - www.justice.gov.uk

0.8 Any questions?

As always we welcome your questions and comments. Please send them in to judgingyourfuture@jac.gsi.gov.uk

Do pass on details of our Judging Your Future e-newsletter to your colleagues. Access and subscriptions to the newsletter are via our website at www.judicialappointments.gov.uk.