



Dear all,

10th January 2019

Happy new year to everyone.

This is my third newsletter to let you know some of the plans for Circuit and other relevant events for 2019. This is also my last news letter as leader and I would like to take this early opportunity to thank you for your support over the last 2 years. I feel sure that my third and final year will go by even quicker than the first 2 years !

CHANGES

There have been some further changes my last newsletter. Following Robert Vernon's appointment as a District Judge, David Gareth Evans (9PP) has joined the education team.

Caroline Rees QC (30PP) stood down as the Cardiff junior after taking silk in 2018. Claire Williams (30PP) has taken on this role. However, Caroline has agreed to remain as a co-opted member of the management committee in order to implement a Women's Mentoring Scheme. Owen Thomas QC (9PP) has also agreed to take on responsibility for the Circuit choir.

There has been one change to the Circuit Management Committee. Oliver Harris (30PP) has replaced Nia Gowan (30PP) as the junior practitioner representative. Many thanks to Nia for her past contributions to the committee.

Attached to this letter is an updated list of the Circuit 'team'.

EDUCATION / TRAINING PROGRAMMES

General update

In 2019 Circuit will be holding the following events:

Pupil supervisor course

It is Heath's intention to run a course on Circuit for future pupil supervisors in June 2019

The new practitioner course

The new practitioner programme will take place this year on 17 and 18 May 2019

Pupil training

Pupil advocacy training will be taking place on 7, 14 and 21 January 2019

Vulnerable witness training

In the event that progress is made with the roll out of vulnerable witness training to disciplines other than crime, Circuit will be at the forefront of such training.

BAR MESS / SOCIAL EVENTS

Circuit Dinners

There will be a Circuit dinner at the Grand Hall of the National Museum of Wales, Cardiff on Friday 15 February 2019. The dinner will mark the appointment of Lady Justice Nicola Davies, former Presider of the Circuit, to the Court of Appeal. The dinner will also mark the appointment of Sir Andrew McFarlane, former regular member of the Court of Appeal when the Court has sat in Wales, as President of the Family Division.

There will also be a Gray's Inn dinner on Circuit for members of that Inn on St David's day 2019 at the Mansion House, Cardiff

Informal bar messes

I have also asked each of the 3 local juniors to arrange an informal mess in each of the 3 centres early in 2019. Further details will follow soon

OTHER NEWS / EVENTS

AGFS Criminal Fees

At the time of completing this newsletter criminal practitioners on Circuit are still digesting the recent figures in the further revised scheme. The CBA is planning a round of meeting around England and Wales to consult on the way ahead. Circuit will facilitate a meeting (probably on 5/2/19) involving all 3 centres – detail to follow shortly

CPS Fees

The Chair of the Bar, the Chair of the CBA and the Circuit Leaders have had an initial meeting with the DPP to seek a wholesale review of CPS fees following the recent changes to defence fees.

The Lord Thomas Commission on Justice in Wales

Along with other members of Circuit, I will be giving evidence to the Commission later this month

'JAC' mentors

Just to remind you once again that Circuit has established an informal panel of members who have recently and successfully navigated the 'JAC' process to offer a confidential mentor service to those considering making any JAC applications. Please contact Abi if you would wish to take up this service.

Women's Mentoring Scheme

Circuit put in place the foundations for the setting up of a Circuit Women's forum. We were pleased to formally announce the project during Justice Week. The Forum is to be led by Caroline Rees QC and supported by a steering committee from different Chambers and practice areas across Circuit. The purpose of the Forum is to encourage and support women members of Circuit in their careers. A mentoring project will also be established. Circuit has agreed funding for a launch event and work is currently being done to arrange a date for the event. It is hoped that this project can follow the example of the successful Western Circuit Women's Forum, with whom we have been working to learn from their experiences."

Visit of the Chair of the Bar Council

The new Chair of the Bar Council is Richard Atkins QC. He will be visiting Cardiff on Tuesday 5 February and Swansea on Wednesday 6 February 2019. He is anxious to meet as many members of Circuit as possible. Details of the proposed meetings with Richard will follow shortly.

Circuit choir

I am delighted that we have been able to re-establish the Circuit choir, which performed at 2 fund raising events in 2018. The choir will be performing next at the Gray's Inn dinner on St David's Day. If you are interested in joining the choir (no previous choral experience required!) rehearsals will be recommencing mid January 2019. Please contact Owen Thomas QC at OTQC@9parkplace.co.uk for more information.

Sports

The circuit cricket and football teams will be in action again this year. Contact Jonathan Rees (Apex) for more details.

OTHER POINTS

Updated circuit lists

Updated Circuit lists should now be in place in the robing room of your local courts. If there is no list at your local court, could you let Abi know.

Video conference facilities

Circuit has invested in secure mobile video conference facilities in order to facilitate Circuit wide meetings. However, in addition, this facility (available in Cardiff, Swansea and Chester) will shortly be made available to members of Circuit / chambers staff who wish to take part in secure video conferences. Further details will follow shortly.

INPUT FROM YOU

The Circuit exists to serve your professional interests. It continues to depend upon your active engagement in Circuit affairs. I hope that there will be something for everyone once again this year in the programme.

Also, if you have any suggestions regarding Circuit, or wish to raise any point connected with this newsletter please contact me, Abi or one of the members of the Circuit team.

Best wishes for the year ahead

Paul

THE CIRCUIT 'TEAM' / TIM Y GYLCHDAITH

Leader	Paul Hopkins QC
Treasurer	Rhodri Williams QC
Circuit Junior & Secretary	Jonathan Rees
Cardiff Junior	Claire Williams
Chester Junior	Jonathan Austin
Swansea Junior	Dominic Boothroyd
Election Officer	Ben Blakemore
Education Officer	Heath Edwards
Young practitioner / pupil training team	Marian Lewis
	Mathew Roberts
	Duncan Bould
	David Gareth Evans
Management Board members	Paul Hopkins QC
	Rhodri Williams QC
	James Tillyard QC
	David Elias QC
	Heath Edwards
	Sion ap Mihangel
	Ben Blakemore
	Mathew Curtis
	Lowri Wyn-Morgan
	Oliver Harris
Co-opted members:	
Women's mentoring scheme /	Caroline Rees QC
Choir	Owen Thomas QC
Bar Council Representatives	Rhodri Williams QC
	Chris Rees
CBA Representatives	Chris Clee QC
	Owen Edwards
	Jonathan Rees
Circuit Administrator	Abi Hobson