

Speech: New Queen's Counsel appointment ceremony speech

It is a pleasure to be here today in Westminster Hall to preside over the formal appointment of all 119 barristers and solicitors to the rank of Queen's Counsel, as well as those being appointed as Honorary Queen's Counsel.

Let me welcome you warmly, the only warmth you will feel for a while. This is the day when your hard-earned achievements are publicly recognised by the Crown and by your peers. It is also a proud day for your long-suffering spouses, parents, children, friends and wider family, who I hope will enjoy the ceremony and importance of this day for you.

Today represents a journey to the pinnacle of your profession. That journey has been more marathon, than sprint, and I congratulate you on lasting the course so far.

The title of Queen's Counsel is a mark of excellence, not just in this country but around the world, where it plays an important role in supporting the attractiveness of English and Welsh legal services more broadly.

Since the eminent jurist, Sir Francis Bacon, who was the first person to be titled King's Counsel in 1604, the title has been sought after both by practitioners and by clients seeking to instruct counsel.

It recognises the depth of expertise and eminence you have in your particular field of law. It is also a mark of distinction in the art of advocacy, in developing and advancing a client's case and getting the best outcome for them.

As you will be well aware, the process for becoming Queen's Counsel is a robust and rigorous one, based on competence and merit. It is important that it is a process open to all suitably qualified advocates – including solicitors.

Given my own background, I was pleased to see that there are solicitor-advocates who are being awarded the title of Queen's Counsel amongst us today.

It's now 21 years since the first solicitor advocates were appointed as Queen's Counsel. One of those appointed in 1997 subsequently served on the Supreme Court. We should recognise and promote talent from whichever branch of the profession it comes.

I am also pleased to note that this year, 64% of female applicants have been recommended for practising QC, and 55% of BME applicants. As the leaders of your profession, you are role models for all aspiring lawyers and I hope you take this responsibility seriously.

This year there are 119 awards of silk. Her Majesty the Queen makes the appointments on the advice of the Lord Chancellor. My predecessors and I would not be able to undertake this role without the valuable advice of an independent selection panel. I am incredibly grateful for the work Sir Alex Allan has done in chairing the panel – and to all its distinguished members; including:

- Wanda Goldwag
- Tony King
- Martin Mann QC
- Edward Nally
- Quinton Quayle
- Dame Janet Smith
- Dr Maggie Semple OBE
- Shaun Smith QC
- Ranjit Sondhi CBE

They continue to provide advice of the highest quality, and run a transparent and open competition which ensures that we can have confidence that appointments have been made fairly and justly on merit.

In addition to those who have been awarded silk, there are also seven awards for Queens Counsel, *honoris causa*. I would like to thank the highly qualified selection panel, chaired by Scott McPherson, a former Director General at the Ministry of Justice and consisting of:

- Amelia Wright
- Professor Peter Alldridge
- Andrew Langdon QC
- Joe Egan
- Lord Justice David Richards

This award is recognition for lawyers who have made a major contribution to the law of England and Wales outside of practice in the courts.

Honorary QCs

I would like to say a few words about each of those who are receiving the title of Honorary Queen's Counsel today.

Professor Michael Bridge is a leading academic and Fellow of the British Academy who has made a major contribution to the law of England and Wales in relation to the sale of goods.

Professor Louise Gullifer has contributed widely through her work in academia and beyond, including as Professor of Commercial Law at Oxford and her work on Security Interests as part of the UK delegation to the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law.

Dr Charles Harpum, who unfortunately is unable to attend today's ceremony, is a barrister and former academic who served as a Law Commissioner and made a major contribution to the law of England and Wales as a significant architect

in the shaping of the Land Registration Act 2002.

Janet Legrand is a pioneer in enhancing the role of women in the law, promoting social mobility, diversity and inclusion within her own firm and the wider profession through the board of PRIME.

Professor Nigel Lowe has done a mixture of international work and family law and is particularly known for his work relating to the Hague Convention.

Professor Nicola Padfield has made a huge contribution in both academia, where she is Professor of Criminal and Penal Justice at Cambridge University, and in the criminal justice system, where her research focuses on sentencing and parole.

Finally, Professor Maurice Sunkin has pioneered an empirical approach to the law and undertaken a number of leading studies of the use, operation and effects of judicial review in England and Wales.

Conclusion

I'd like to warmly congratulate all of you and thank you for your contribution to the law across such a diverse range of disciplines and fields.

The role of Queen's Counsel is not only a mark of quality recognised around the world, it also promotes high standards of advocacy in the legal profession.

All of us here today, and all those who supported your appointment, have shown confidence and belief in you. That's a confidence and belief that I entirely share.

I would like to again thank everyone involved in the process of appointing this year's selection of barristers and solicitors to the rank of Queen's Counsel and Honorary Queen's Counsel.

I would like to congratulate you all again on being appointed Queen's Counsel and wish you well for the future.

[News story: Digital and service solutions to NHS challenges: apply for funds](#)

NHS prescriptions sign in pharmacy shop window.

Innovate UK is to invest up to £4.5 million on behalf of the [Office for Life Sciences](#) in projects that combine digital and service innovations to significantly improve healthcare.

[NHS England](#) is to invest a further £1.5 million specifically in projects that apply digital approaches to supporting people with type 2 diabetes.

Test in real-world settings

We are seeking initial expressions of interest from both businesses with innovative digital projects and NHS organisations willing to lead a series of trials.

Successful applicants will be invited to a workshop where they will be able to meet and select partners. Consortia will then be invited to submit a detailed application to apply for funding.

It is part of the [NHS test beds programme](#) that aims to help innovators work with the NHS and test innovations in products and process in real-world settings.

Projects must meet NHS priorities

Business should have a market-ready digital product that meets safety and regulatory standards and could address a health and care challenge.

Projects will need to meet the priorities set by NHS England in its [5 Year Forward View](#).

NHS organisations must have a clearly defined health and care challenge and be willing to lead a consortium that will test whether a combination of product and service innovation can address that challenge.

Projects must produce significant health improvements at the same or lower cost.

Competition information

- we are now inviting expressions of interest and the deadline is midday on 27 March 2018
- to apply you can be:
 - an NHS organisation or partnership
 - a business of any size, but funding is only available to micro, small and medium-sized enterprises
- we expect projects to range in size from £500,000 to £1.5 million and to last up to 18 months
- businesses could receive up to 70% of their costs. NHS organisations will receive 100% of their costs
- there will be a briefing event on 2 March 2018

[Press release: Government appoints new VCSE Crown Representative](#)

Claire Dove has been named as the new Crown Representative of the Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise sector (VCSE).

Ms Dove, who succeeds Michael O'Toole, will work alongside government departments and the Crown Commercial Service to strengthen the sector, support the upcoming Civil Society Strategy, and encourage VCSE organisations to operate more commercially.

Claire Dove VCSE Crown Representative, said:

It's an honour to take on this role. Millions of people benefit from the work that charities and social enterprises do and I cannot wait to get started to ensure this sector continues to go from strength to strength.

Tracey Crouch, Minister for Sport and Civil Society, said:

Claire will bring a lot of passion and experience into this role – having chaired Social Enterprise UK among other organisations. I am looking forward to working alongside her and the Crown Commercial Service to help support the VCSE sector and societies across the country.

ENDS

NOTES TO EDITORS:

Claire Dove's biography:

Claire Dove OBE, DL, has been a key player in the social enterprise movement since the early 1980s and has led the award-winning Blackburne House Group, one of the leading providers of adult and community education in the country, since its inception.

From December 2007 to January 2017 Claire was Chair of Social Enterprise UK (SEUK). She is a member of the Alder Hey Hospital Trust and, until recently, was a Board Member for the Charity Commission. She has chaired the Liverpool Fairness Commission on behalf of Liverpool City Council, is currently serving on the Liverpool Mayoral Development Board and is chair of the Society Advisory Board for the British Council.

Claire was awarded an MBE for her work in the mid-nineties. She received an OBE in 2013 and was given the Queens Lifetime Achievement Award for Enterprise Promotion.

Crown Commercial Service

- The Crown Commercial Service runs the Crown Representative programme across a number of business areas, of which the VCSE Crown Representative will be part
- Crown Representatives help the government act as a single customer. They work across departments to:
- Ensure a single and strategic view of the government's needs is communicated to the market
- Identify areas for cost savings
- Act as a point of focus for cross-cutting supplier-related issues

[News story: CNC officer takes on marathon challenge for charity](#)

PC Mike Frost is based at Hinkley Point and over the next few months will run the Bath Half marathon, the Weston Half marathon and the London marathon, a total of 52.4 miles.

Mike is carrying out the runs to raise money for the Miscarriage Association, a charity founded by a group of people who had experienced miscarriage which offers support and information to anyone affected by the loss of a baby in pregnancy and to raise awareness. Find out more from their [website](#)

Mike said: "I have been fundraising for the charity for a number of years, as prior to the arrival of our beautiful son, we suffered three miscarriages and the charity provided invaluable support to both me and my wife at this extremely upsetting and difficult time.

"I have run the Bath Half Marathon for the last two years and raised over £2,000 for the charity, however other commitments mean that this is the last year I will be able to fundraise, so I wanted to go out with a bang and complete two halves and a full marathon.

"The thought of completing three long distance runs is daunting but I have been training a lot, which has meant the added bonus of a two-stone weight loss! My aim is to complete the London Marathon in just over four hours and 30 minutes so that is what I am working towards at the moment.

"Miscarriage is a subject that is not talked about much, especially amongst men, so I have also found running a way of dealing with my issues and hope that by completing these marathons, I will also raise awareness of the

charity. My goal is to raise £1,500 and I would very much appreciate any donations people can spare.” To sponsor Mike in his fund-raising efforts, visit his [fundraising page](#).

[News story: Second wave of NHS England test beds launched](#)

NHS England and the Office for Life Sciences have launched a new competition to identify a second wave of ‘test beds’.

The test bed programme is a joint programme between NHS England and government. It involves the NHS working with innovators using technology to address complex issues facing patients and the health service.

The new competition will allow businesses and NHS organisations to apply for a share of up to £4.5 million. This funding can be used to evaluate different combinations of innovations from small and large organisations to address a locally identified clinical challenge.

The competition will be run in collaboration with Innovate UK.

The first wave of the test beds programme saw first-of-a-kind collaborations. Over 4,000 patients were recruited in 7 test bed sites across England and 51 digital innovations were trialled in partnership with 40 innovators. An evaluation report will be published in summer 2018.

Lord O’Shaughnessy, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Health said:

The test beds programme has enabled ground-breaking digital innovations to transform the lives of patients with dementia, diabetes and mental illness.

Phase two of this pioneering research will allow us to learn even more from emerging technologies so that NHS clinical practice can adapt to the big health challenges we face.

Jonathan Burr, founder & CEO Howz, which was took part in the first wave of the test beds, said:

There have been many advantages to being part of the Technology Integrated Health Management test bed. We have been able to benchmark ourselves against others, had access to a world-class university and the project has created visibility. Most importantly, being part of TIHM means that Howz is now part of a

clinical pathway – without the test bed this would have taken us years to achieve.

The projects will be evaluated rigorously, providing the evidence which will give more areas the confidence to adopt the innovations over the coming years.