

Dear Circuit,

When I wrote to you a week ago - although, don't know about you, but feels like a lifetime ago - I reminded you all of the Circuit Hardship Fund. My gentle reminder was, of course, primarily aimed at those at the publicly-funded criminal Bar. The action this week, and in the weeks to come, will inevitably see cases adjourned, new instructions refused and the continuation of no returns. That is bound to have an effect on you financially so please, please get in touch on this email if you are struggling. Application form on the website or from Clare at the Admin office via this email.

What I hadn't expected - but knowing you lovely people as I do, I *should* have expected - was the outpouring of generosity from those who took the reminder as a prompt to donate. It wasn't, in fact, but thank you so much. I have been moved by your kindness, the loyalty and support you have shown to your fellow Circuiteers and the overwhelming sense of unity across Circuit, irrespective of your practice area or your view of the action. You simply want to help, and I'm truly grateful to you.

May I thank our local Judiciary who have, as I had hoped, treated their friends at the Bar with understanding and with patience. Can we please keep that going? There is an 'after' to all of this, in which we all have to work alongside each other. For a very long time. With our very long memories. Let's continue to do that as respected colleagues and, importantly, as friends.

May I also thank those who took action, who supported action even if not outside Crown Square and those who did *not* support it but, as we all know, still share the common desire that we all have, namely for a better justice system for all and one which recognises the remarkable job that the criminal Bar does.

Everyone, whatever their stance, conducted themselves beautifully and you were all a great advert for our Circuit. A few years ago - pre Leader days - I spoke at an event in London to an audience whose criminal practices were a mixture of fledgling and established. I then listened to their tales and I had two key words of advice: move north.

A friend of ours, now a very senior judge but forever a Northern Circuiteer, had his own words of advice to the audience to whom he spoke the other day - be kind and be gentle to each other. Can't say it better than that.

I continue to be immensely proud of you all. Whatever your stance, let's stick together, eh?

As ever,

Lisa

PS

A few useful links.

The statement from the MoJ:

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-statements/detail/2022-06-30/hcws168>

The message sent by the CBA earlier, with links and info:

<https://www.criminalbar.com/resources/news/article-11-defence-29-06-22/>

Info from Nina Grahame QC about where to meet on Monday for those who are participating in the action:

Monday 4th July 2022

QUEEN ELIZABETH II LAW COURTS

Derby Square

L2

9.30 until 2pm

Lisa Roberts QC

Leader of the Northern Circuit