

Barbara Mills KC elected as Bar Council Vice Chair for 2024

22nd May 2023

Barbara Mills KC has been elected as the Vice Chair of the Bar Council for 2024, becoming the first specialist family practitioner in 35 years to take up the role and the first Black person and first person of colour to assume the office.

Barbara was called to the Bar by Inner Temple in 1990 and took silk in 2020. She is an arbitrator and a mediator, a Fellow of the International Academy of Family Lawyers, and co-editor of the International Family Law Journal. She specialises in difficult and complex children cases often with an international element.

Barbara is joint head of chambers at 4PB – one of the leading family law sets in England and Wales. She sits as a Deputy High Court Judge and has been a Recorder on the South Eastern Circuit for over ten years.

Barbara is a member of the Bar Council's Equality, Diversity and Social Mobility (EDSM) Committee and co-chairs the Bar Council's Race Working Group, which published the landmark Race at the Bar report in 2020. As a Governing Bencher at Inner Temple, Barbara is also a member of the Inn's EDSM and international committees.

Commenting on her election, Barbara Mills KC said:

"When Baroness Hallett became the first woman to chair the Bar Council in 1998, I was inspired and uplifted, but it seemed like a hopeless dream for me. So, I am deeply honoured and humbled to have been elected as the next Vice Chair.

"As the first specialist family practitioner to take up the position for 35 years, one of my main areas of focus will be to raise the profile of the publicly funded family Bar, following in the footsteps of the excellent work undertaken in recent years to shine a spotlight on challenges faced by the publicly funded criminal Bar.

"My second area of focus is to continue the vitally important work on equality, diversity and inclusion at the Bar. Since we published the Race at the Bar report we have seen some progress but there is so much more to be done across race, gender, disability, and social mobility where the scales require rebalancing.

"I look forward to working with the Bar Council team and colleagues across the Bar to take forward these priorities and represent the profession."

Barbara will join the officer team from 1 January 2024 alongside current Vice Chair Sam Townend KC, who was elected unopposed as Chair of the Bar for 2024, and Lorinda Long, who was re-elected as Treasurer for 2024.

ENDS

Notes to editors

1. Barbara Mills KC was [interviewed by the Guardian](#) in January 2022 about her work co-chairing the Race Working Group.
2. The Chair and Vice Chair are elected by the members of the Bar Council and must be members of the Bar Council at the time of their proposal for election.
3. For more information about the Bar Council governance and constitution: <https://www.barcouncil.org.uk/about/bar-council-governance.html>
4. The Bar Council represents more than 17,000 practising barristers in England and Wales. It promotes:
 - the Bar's high-quality specialist advocacy and advisory services
 - fair access to justice for all
 - the highest standards of ethics, equality and diversity across the profession, and
 - the development of business opportunities for barristers at home and abroad.
5. If you no longer wish to receive Bar Council news releases, please email press@barcouncil.org.uk

Press contact: Press@BarCouncil.org.uk