



*** INVITATION ***

Family Justice Council Seminars and Bridget Lindley Memorial Lecture

Adoption in the 21st Century

Monday 1st to Thursday 4th March 2021

5.00pm to 6.30pm

To be hosted on MS Teams

The Family Justice Council invites you to attend its forthcoming series of seminars and Bridget Lindley Memorial Lecture on adoption in the 21st century.

The primary role of the Family Justice Council is to promote an inter-disciplinary approach to family justice. As an advisory body, it monitors how effectively the family justice system operates. Its membership is drawn from all the key professional groups working in the system. More information can be found at: <https://www.judiciary.gov.uk/related-offices-and-bodies/advisory-bodies/fjc/>

These online seminars will replace the Council's interdisciplinary conference (originally planned for March 2020) and will take place during the week commencing 1 March. The final session will be dedicated to the annual Bridget Lindley Memorial Lecture. Please see the indicative programme below.

The Bridget Lindley Memorial Lecture will take place on Thursday 4 March and will be given by **Baroness Hale**, former President of the Supreme Court. This session will be chaired by **Sir Andrew McFarlane**, President of the Family Division and Chair of the Family Justice Council.

The lecture, now in its fourth year, was set up to commemorate the life and work of Bridget Lindley OBE who died in 2016. Bridget served with distinction as a member of the Family Justice Council and as the Family Rights Group's Principal Legal Adviser and Deputy Chief Executive.

The seminars will be hosted by **Mrs Justice Lucy Theis, Mrs Justice Frances Judd and HHJ Jane Probyn**. Speakers will include **Dr Brian Sloan** (University of Cambridge), **Judge Anni Højmark** (Denmark) **John Simmonds** (CoramBAAF), **Professor Julie Selwyn** (University of Oxford), **Dr Julie Doughty** (Cardiff University), **Professor Beth**

Neil (University of East Anglia), **Amanda Boorman** (*The Open Nest* charity) and **Lucy Reed** (family barrister, the Transparency Project and *Pink Tape*). The **Family Justice Young People's Board** will also be represented.

The seminars will explore adoption, not only in England and Wales but across Europe and wider, including a presentation from Judge Anni Højmark on non-consensual adoption in Denmark. The seminars will include a look at Special Guardianship Orders, trends in adoption, tracing family members and contact with birth parents. It will also consider the Wales Adoption Cohort Study on early placement success, conducted by Cardiff University, and hear from an adoptive parent and an adopted child about the challenges they faced.

APPLICATIONS:

To register your interest in these events, please notify the FJC Secretariat at fjc@justice.gsi.gov.uk by **5pm on Monday 22 February 2021**. ***We strongly encourage delegates to attend all the sessions.*** It would be helpful if you would also let us know your profession and organisation. We aim to achieve a cross-section of all the key professions working in the family justice system. Attendance will be on an allocation basis. We will aim to confirm your place and send joining instructions by Thursday 25 February.

There is no charge for attending these events.

PROGRAMME:

All sessions will begin at 5pm and finish by 6.30pm.

1: Monday 1 March

Chair: Mrs Justice Frances Judd

- Dr Brian Sloan – Ireland and the wider common law world from the perspective of the approach to adoption in England and Wales.
- Professor Julie Selwyn – Domestic adoption in Europe. The tensions between consensual and non-consensual adoption, and the debates on children's and parent's rights.
- Judge Anni Højmark – The Danish adoption system - how it works, the role of the judge, the dilemmas and non-consensual adoptions.

2: Tuesday 2 March

Chair: Mrs Justice Lucy Theis

- John Simmonds – trends in adoption and special guardianships. What determines, changes and influences these trends and are we doing the right thing for every individual child?

- Amanda Boorman – The experience of an adoptive parent and post-adoption contact.
- Lucy Reed – Tracing family members and the lifelong consequences for children and adopters.

3: Wednesday 3 March

Chair: HHJ Jane Probyn

- Professor Beth Neil – Contact with birth parents.
- Dr Julie Doughty – Wales Adoption Cohort Study on early placement success by Cardiff University.
- Family Justice Young People’s Board – adoption from a young person’s perspective.

4: Thursday 4 March

The Annual Bridget Lindley Memorial Lecture

Chair: Sir Andrew McFarlane, President of the Family Division

Speaker: Baroness Hale of Richmond – ‘What do we mean by a family now?’