

Martin Callan FCILEx, President

Inaugural Speech, 21 July 2016

Dear friends, thank you all for coming this evening to celebrate CILEx.... and thank you for your continued support.

It is an enormous honour and privilege to become the 53rd President of CILEx... an Institute dedicated to access to the profession with a proven commitment to equality and diversity.

I am deeply passionate about equality and diversity... Our members know what it's like to face barriers. There have been many occasions where our members, myself included, have been on the receiving end of professional disadvantage... and I know how lonely that can feel.

Today, CILEx is opening the door to people from an amazingly diverse range of backgrounds.... Many of whom would never have dreamed of a career in law.

Another great example of this is the Lord Edmund Davies Legal Education Trust – LEDLET.

I would particularly like to thank my fellow trustees of LEDLET for attending this evening.... And I would like to extend a very warm welcome to this year's Summer Scheme Students ... we are very pleased to have you with us. Every year LEDLET funds a Summer Scheme for Welsh Sixth Form students to come to London to experience lawyers and judges.

LEDLET's aim is to inspire those with talent, but without connections with the law, into the legal profession. I am sure our Patron, Lord Morris, would agree that Wales is a hotbed of talent and I am proud of the contribution that LEDLET has made to access to the Profession and Equality and Diversity..... I am also very grateful to CILEx Council for supporting LEDLET from the outset.

I am very proud to say that aspiration and success are open to all at CILEx. Our education, qualification and regulation are delivered with high standards high standards that anyone can achieve with hard work and determination.

We have no entry barriers at CILEx. We have a diverse mix of members, a strong female majority, a strong mix of race, religion, age and orientation.

Our Fellows and other grades of membership share aspiration, professional standards and near parity with the more traditional branches of the legal profession.

I feel pleased and proud that today the legal profession is more balanced than ever before and I am hopeful that more of our members will seek out Judicial Appointment in the coming years to contribute further to this balance.

I am delighted to see in tonight's audience, alongside my Council colleagues, representatives from many of our branches. These hard working volunteers work tirelessly across the country to maintain events and relationships that help deliver CILEx as a route to a career in law.... To anyone from any background.

CILEx is its members... and I hope very much you will all have an opportunity to meet some of them this evening.

On behalf of Council, I thank all the Branch Representatives for their continued commitment to their branches... I know how much of a difference our branches can make.

As the Legal Market, Profession and Judiciary continue to adapt to a changing, challenging and dynamic landscape, it is easy to forget that there is a wealth of talent across the entire country with aspiration to be a lawyer ... a partner ... a judge.

I believe we should harness and recognise this talent so as to ensure our profession has a bright future. CILEx too has had to adapt to changing circumstances.... But we remain committed to our members, our branches and our proud history of equality and diversity.

I ask our Branch Representatives here tonight to try and meet this years' LEDLET students and to take the message back to your branches that CILEx gives opportunity to all and that the hard work you do in your branch is worth it.... Hard work we can all be proud of.

I very much look forward to working with Council, our branches, our Regulator, Benevolent Fund, Pro Bono Trust and CILEx Staff across the group over the coming year....

And to working with colleagues across the profession to help shape our future and harness the next generation of talent from any background, so as to ensure that high standards, and equality and diversity remain at the heart of the legal profession.

Thank you all for being part of tonight's celebration.

Ladies and Gentleman, before I introduce our guest speaker, it is my honour to hand out the CILEx Branch Member of the year award. CILEx values the important work that our branches do, and this award recognises an individual, who has been nominated by their branch, for their commitment, contribution and dedication to the branch, its activities and members throughout the year.

This year's winner has shown an outstanding level of hard work and commitment to making her Branch a success during the past year. She devotes a considerable amount of her own time in promoting the branch and CILEx, and so I am delighted to announce that this year the CILEx Branch Member of the Year is Chair of the CILEx Cardiff & South East Wales Branch, Alexis Thomas.

It now gives me great pleasure to introduce our guest speaker this evening, Lord Toulson, who will say a few words.

Aside from being a fine and experienced jurist on the Supreme Court, he has of course also played a key role as both a Judicial Appointments Commissioner, and as chair of the Law Commission. His contribution to the law has been considerable, and we are delighted to have him here today.

Sadly, Lord Toulson is retiring soon. When he was sworn in as a justice of the Supreme Court he swore to "do right to all manner of people... without fear or favour, affection or ill will", an oath he has admirably upheld.

When your successor comes to take their place on the bench, they will have a fine example to follow.

Ladies and gentleman please welcome, Justice of the Supreme Court, Lord Toulson.