

**Bar of Ireland & The Law Society of Ireland Joint Conference:
“Sexual and Domestic Violence – Questions for 21st Century Justice”**

CONFERENCE PROGRAMME

- 9:00 am** Registration - Tea/Coffee
- 9:30 am** Opening of Conference by Minister for Justice, Equality and Defence
- 9:45 am** Remarks of Chair Ms. Justice Maureen Harding Clark
- 9:50 am** Greg Heylin (*Director of Cosc*)
Title: *The National Strategy on Domestic, Sexual and Gender-based Violence*
- 10:10 am** Margaret Costello
Title: *A Second Chance: Breaking the Cycle of Domestic Violence*
- 10:30 am** Jim Sheehan (*Family Psychotherapist*)
Title: *The Impact of Domestic and Sexual Violence on Family Relationships*
- 10:50 am** Tea/Coffee
- 11:10 am** Sean Gillane (*Senior Counsel*)
Title: *A Prosecutors Perspective*
- 11:30 am** Robert Eagar (*Solicitor*)
Title: *Defending the Accused*
- 11:50 am** Cathleen Noctor (*Barrister*)
Title: *Separate Representation of Complainants in Trials for Sexual Offences*
- 12:05 pm** Karen O’Leary (*Solicitor, NI*);
DJ McElholm (*District Court Judge, NI*);
Title: *Experiences in Northern Ireland*
- 12:25 pm** **PANEL – Questions and Answers**
Greg Heylin (*Director of Cosc*)
Sean Gillane (*Senior Counsel*)
Maria McDonald (*Barrister*)
Cathleen Noctor (*Barrister*)
Robert Eagar (*Solicitor*)
Dr. Conor Hanly (*Lawyer & Academic*)
Carol Anne Coolican (*LAB Chief Solicitor*)
- 1:00 pm** Concluding Remarks of Chair Ms. Justice Maureen Harding Clark



Law Society of Ireland

Speaker Biographies

Mr. Alan Shatter: Minister for Justice, Equality and Defence

Alan Shatter was re-elected to Dáil Éireann in February 2011 having represented Dublin South Constituency in the Dáil since 2007 and previously from 1981 until 2002. He was appointed Minister for Justice, Equality and Defence by An Taoiseach Enda Kenny on 9th March 2011.

He was educated at High School, Rathgar, and Trinity College Dublin where he obtained a law degree. He subsequently attended Europa Instituut of the University of Amsterdam where he studied European Law, Politics and Economics. As a student, he was Director of the Crumlin Free Legal Advice Centre (FLAC) and later became Chairman of FLAC. He subsequently became Chairman of CARE (Campaign for Deprived Children).

Alan Shatter practiced as a family lawyer in Dublin and is the author of "Family Law in the Republic of Ireland" now in its 4th edition and the best-selling novel "Laura" (1989).

As a TD representing Dublin South Constituency he has held various positions on the Fine Gael Front Bench including Spokesperson on Justice and Law Reform, Health, Labour, Defence and Children. He has served on the Joint Oireachtas Committee on Foreign Affairs and on the Joint Oireachtas Committee on the Constitutional Amendment on Children from 2007 until that Committee completed its work in February 2010.

Ms. Justice Maureen Harding Clark

Maureen Harding Clark is a justice of the High Court. She was called to the bar in 1975. She served as a judge at the (ICTY) at The Hague and then as a judge of the International Criminal Court. She also conducted an inquiry into events in the maternity Unit of the Lourdes Hospital in Drogheda and then presided over the compensation tribunal for the victims of unwarranted caesarean hysterectomy and oophorectomy. She has served as a High Court judge since late 2006.

Greg Heylin, Cosc

Greg Heylin is Acting Director of Cosc, the National Office for the Prevention of Domestic, Sexual and Gender-based Violence. He is also currently the first Director of the Victims of Crime Office, an Executive Office of the Department of Justice and Law Reform. Greg is also currently Chief Executive of the Mental Health (Criminal Law) Review Board. Greg is author of *Evaluating Prisons, Prisoners and Others*, the fruit of his *Research* Fellowship in the Policy Institute, Trinity College Dublin. He has worked in Prisons and Probation Policy, Equality and Data Protection in his career to date in the Department of Justice and Law Reform. Prior to that he worked in the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment, the Department of Labour, and on secondment to the Houses of the Oireachtas and the National Economic and Social Forum.

Margaret Costello

Margaret Costello worked as an advocate and an activist in the field of violence against women for over twenty years. She has been a manager of a women's crisis refuge; the national coordinator for all crisis refuges and support services in Ireland;

a training and development officer for the prevention of violence against women and is currently working as the national lead for domestic, sexual and gender-based violence for the HSE. Margaret's activism and interest in this area has been driven by her own personal experience of domestic violence which is what she will speak about today.

Jim Sheehan

Jim Sheehan retired in February of this year as Director of Family Therapy Training at the Mater Misericordiae University Hospital, Dublin. He is part-time Professor of Family Therapy & Systemic Practice at the Diakonhjemmet University College, Oslo, Norway. He has assisted the Irish family courts in child and family disputes over the past thirty years. He is a Social Worker and Family Therapist.

Sean Gillane

Sean Gillane (Senior Counsel) is a graduate of UCC. He was called to the bar in 1997 and took silk in 2009. Sean does a lot of criminal work for both prosecution and defence and is a former Chairman of the Irish Criminal Bar Association and a former lecturer in advocacy in the Kings Inns.

Robert Eagar

Robert Eagar qualified as a solicitor in 1978. His initial experience was gained in the office of the Chief State Solicitors as a member of the prosecuting staff in the District Court. In 1984, he joined Sheehan and Partners where he has remained, becoming a partner in 1995. In recent years, he has worked mainly in areas of alleged sexual offences and has pioneered many of the leading Judicial Review cases in this field often in the Supreme Court. Over the years he has also dealt with many major extradition cases. He has been involved in many leading Court of Criminal Appeal cases in all areas of criminal practice. He is a former member of the Law Society Criminal Law Committee. He regularly lectures on Criminal Law topics for the Society. He is a member of the European Criminal Bar Association.

Cathleen Noctor

Cathleen Noctor BL is a practising barrister in Dublin. A significant amount of her practice is criminal law based. She has represented numerous complainants in trials for sexual offences in which the defence have sought to cross-examine the complainant about other sexual offences. She is a current member of the Legal Issues Sub-Committee of the National Steering Committee on Violence Against Women.

Karen O'Leary

Karen is a native of Cahersiveen in County Kerry and was educated at The United World College USA (New Mexico), Birmingham University and The College of Law (Chester). She qualified as a Solicitor in England & Wales in 1994 and worked for three years for Gouldens in the City of London and Brussels before moving to Northern Ireland in 1995 when she was admitted as a Solicitor in both Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. She has been a partner in Caldwell & Robinson since 1998. She is an accredited member of the Northern Ireland Childrens' Panel, the Family Law Committee of the Law Society of Northern Ireland, and the Northern Ireland Inter-Agency Forum on Domestic Violence. She has a Diploma in European Competition Law from King's College London, a Diploma in State Aid from the

University of Louvain in Belgium and is a qualified Advanced Advocate in Northern Ireland.

District Judge Barney McElholm

District Judge Barney McElholm was educated at the Christian Brothers schools in Omagh and Queen's University, Belfast. He was called to the Bar of NI in 1981 and admitted to the Roll of Solicitors (NI) in 1986. In 1995, he was appointed Deputy Resident Magistrate and was subsequently appointed full-time RM in 1998. He was assigned to PS District of Londonderry in 2002 and has been District Judge for same since 2008. He has previous extensive experience in Family Proceedings Court, but now only sits in criminal courts.