



# Q&A with Serle Court's New Tenants: John Eldridge, Andrew Gurr and George Vare

## Q&A with John Eldridge

### ***1. If you could change an existing piece of legislation or implement a new legal doctrine, what would it be?***

The Limitation Act 1980 could benefit from a wholesale review. The current law of limitation is comprehensible, but only by dint of great effort - not what one wants on a subject which demands clarity and simplicity.

### ***2. If you were asked to write a fiction novel, who would it be based on?***

I'm fascinated by Thomas Cromwell, who has always struck me as history's most remarkable lawyer. His rise from obscurity to the apex of the Tudor court offers raw material enough for a string of novels. You can imagine my frustration when Hilary Mantel beat me to the punch.

### ***3. In your opinion, what's the most interesting area of law in chancery and commercial?***

In my previous career as an academic, I spent most of my time researching and writing about the law of contract. Surprisingly, many people have asked me why I find contract law so interesting. I think the answer is that it is a body of law that is constantly developing.

### ***4. During your pupillage what's the most important thing you learnt?***

To write (and think) less like an academic and more like a practising lawyer.

### ***5. Have you always wanted to become a barrister?***

It wasn't until I began

studying law that I decided to pursue a career as a barrister. In fact, I doubt I was even aware of the existence of the Bar until I was at university.

### ***6. Do you have any advice for incoming pupils and trainees?***

Don't be afraid to ask questions - it's the fastest way to get answers!



Click [here](#) to view John's website profile.



## Q&A with Andrew Gurr

### ***1. If you could change an existing piece of legislation or implement a new legal doctrine, what would it be?***

If I have learned anything from studying law, it is not to think you can magic up doctrines! Law reform takes careful work and I think that it is best left to bodies like the Law Commission.

But a less boring answer (depending on your point of view) is that I would replace the Prescription Act 1832 with a modern, functional statement of the law on prescriptive easements.

### ***2. If you were asked to write a fiction novel, who would it be based on?***

Psmith (the PG Wodehouse character). I want to read about his career at the Bar, although I doubt I would do it justice.

### ***3. In your opinion, what's the most interesting area of law in chancery and commercial?***

Do I have to choose?

If so, remedies (in a very broad sense). They are often under-theorised but usually the most important thing for the lay client.

### ***4. During your pupillage what's the most important thing you learnt?***

To use fewer words.

### ***5. Have you always wanted to become a barrister?***

I decided to become a barrister at 13 or 14, whilst taking part in the Citizenship Foundation's mock trial competitions. I would not be here if busy professionals had not given up their time to coach and inspire children at their local state school, and I will always be grateful for that.

### ***6. Do you have any advice for incoming pupils and trainees?***

Be honest, be enthusiastic, be a sponge.



Click [here](#) to view Andrew's website profile.



## Q&A with George Vare

### **1. If you could change an existing piece of legislation or implement a new legal doctrine, what would it be?**

I would be a little more specific than John and focus on Section 36 of the Limitation Act 1980. In short, it requires the Court sitting today to consider how a Court sitting before July 1940 would have applied a time-limit to claims for equitable relief. Whilst this provides an opportunity (welcome to some – less so to others) to dust off some old law reports and get lost in a raft of nineteenth-century authorities, that does seem a rather ridiculous situation.

### **2. If you were asked to write a fiction novel, who would it be based on?**

I studied history as my first degree, and always thought I might like to take a stab at writing some historical fiction. Being a mediaevalist at heart I would probably have Emma of Normandy as my protagonist. Not heard of her? Excellent, that's where I come in. Daughter of the Duke of Normandy, Queen to two different Kings (Æthelred the Unready and Cnut), and mother to Edward the Confessor, she was at the absolute centre of the Anglo-Norman world for fifty years and led a pretty remarkable life. There's an 11th-century Latin encomium written in her honour, but I reckon it could do with an update and a tad more artistic license.

### **3. In your opinion, what's the most interesting area of law in chancery and commercial?**

Anything where someone's been a bit dodgy; undue influence, fraud, deceit, conspiracy, breaches of duty – it never ceases to amaze me how people are capable of lying and manipulating their way into furthering their own ends.

### **4. During your pupillage what's the most important thing you learnt?**

There's no single 'right way' to do it. Every barrister has their own style, their own way of working, and their own take on what's effective.

### **5. Have you always wanted to become a barrister?**

My Grandad was a policeman and so he came across barristers a fair amount in his work. Growing up, he would often say to me that I would make a good barrister and so I suppose in one sense it was always on my radar.

### **6. Do you have any advice for incoming pupils and trainees?**

Try to enjoy pupillage. It can be difficult, it can be demanding, it can be incredibly daunting – so I know that is easier said than done. But if you can, try to remember how fortunate we are to be able to do what we do. This job provides you with a unique insight into the lives, emotions and concerns of a wide range of people from a host of different backgrounds. It enables you to learn about the peculiarities of different businesses, and exposes you to parts

of the working world you would never have previously even known existed, as well as, being able to work with some truly fantastic minds. We are privileged to do what we do – remembering that should help you keep perspective during those more taxing moments.



Click [here](#) to view George's website profile.

