

# INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY: SPOTLIGHT ON KITTY GEDDES

7BR

KITTY GEDDES



CHRISTIANAH BABAJIDE



*For International Women's Day, Chambers' Marketing and Events Executive, Christianah Babajide, interviews Kitty Geddes, who was a pupil barrister with Chambers and has been a tenant at 7BR for five years.*





As a woman, do you think there were any specific barriers that you had to overcome when joining the independent Bar?



My Dad told me that the Bar was not a good place for a woman to work and steered me away from applying. I never understood why he said this. It was, in fact, thanks to a very generous female barrister, that I ended up disregarding his advice and applying for pupillage. I think there are obstacles to joining the Bar, which have been discussed a lot. I don't think these obstacles were specific to me, or my gender. I needed help navigating the pupillage application process, finding out where funding was available to study and understanding how to apply for that funding. My mentor explained how pupillage worked, what a set of Chambers might be looking for in a candidate and what life as a practicing barrister might look like. Without this support and encouragement, I don't know if I would have applied to 7BR or would be practicing now.





You are currently on parental leave.  
What do you think the challenges  
will be returning to practice?



Perhaps I should already be thinking about returning to work but I'm not there yet. I still feel very much like I am in the thick of being a full-time parent. I'm trying to keep on top of the rapidly changing needs and demands of my baby! I know I will go back to work, and I know I want to go back. There are parents in Chambers who have young children and have gone back to work to continue very successful practices and so they are more qualified than I am to answer the question of what the challenges might be/ are.





(contd)



Aside from the practical challenges of bringing up a child, having a job and juggling time and demands, there is also the reality of needing to build up confidence again in returning to the workplace and accepting that I won't be working in the same way as I was prior to having a child. It's all a bit of a puzzle, which I guess, I will have to work out as I go along.







If you had one piece of advice for women planning a family or mothers with a young baby at the Bar, what would it be?



Each family will work out how best to organise their family life. For me, it is an iterative process which perhaps to the irritation of friends and my partner, I need to discuss a lot. I don't know what is going to be best for us and it's hard to know whether to prioritise pragmatism or equality. I'm sure we will make mistakes and need to take stock and be creative about how we work it. I need to keep an eye on what it is my family and I are trying to achieve.



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*Kitty Geddes has developed a strong practice on a broad range of matters, in particular, in family work. Her background as a senior analyst in political risk and business intelligence firms means she has experience of conducting large-scale asset traces.*