

Change of Her Majesty's Consul General to Hong Kong: Brian Davidson

News story

Mr Brian Davidson CMG has been appointed Her Majesty's Consul-General to Hong Kong and Non-Resident Consul-General to Macao.



Mr Brian Davidson CMG has been appointed Her Majesty's Consul-General to Hong Kong and Non-Resident Consul-General to Macao in succession to Mr Andrew Heyn CMG OBE, who has now retired from the Diplomatic Service. Mr Davidson will take up his appointment during July 2021.

Brian joined the FCO in 1985 and has served in Beijing, Guangzhou and Shanghai in China, and in Lithuania and Australia, before his most recent overseas posting as Ambassador to Thailand. While in the UK Brian has worked for the Cabinet Office as an analyst on international terrorism and on secondment to International Financial Services London as Deputy Chief Executive.

On his appointment, Brian said:

I started my overseas career in Beijing in the late 80s and have had two further postings in China, so returning to Hong Kong as Consul General very much feels like a role I've been working towards for much of my life. Scott and I are really excited about making Hong Kong our family home for the next few years.

Brian married his husband, Scott, in 2014 in one of the first same-sex marriages performed at the British Embassy in Beijing. They have three children.

CURRICULUM VITAE

Full name: Brian John Davidson CMG

Married to: Mr Scott Kelly Chang

2016 to present Bangkok, Her Majesty's Ambassador
2011 to 2015 Shanghai, Consul General
2006 to 2010 Guangzhou, Consul General
2005 to 2006 International Financial Services London, Deputy Chief Executive
2001 to 2004 Vilnius, Deputy Head of Mission
2001 Language training (Lithuanian)
2001 FCO, Hajj Pilgrimage committee reviewer, Consular Directorate
1996 to 2000 Canberra, First Secretary
1994 to 1996 FCO, Head of China Section
1992 to 1994 Cabinet Office, Desk Officer, Assessments Staff
1988 to 1992 Beijing, Second Secretary
1986 to 1988 Language training (Mandarin Chinese)
1985 to 1986 FCO, Desk Officer, East European Department
1985 Joined FCO

Further information

All the latest news is available on the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office page of the gov.uk website at: www.gov.uk/fcdo

Published 7 June 2021

[RSH announces tenant satisfaction measures sounding board](#)

News story

The regulator will consult representatives from across the social housing sector on a set of measures to inform regulation and help tenants hold landlords to account



The Government's [Social Housing White Paper](#) asks us to deliver a new consumer regulation function within the Regulator of social housing to help reset the relationship between landlords and tenants across the sector.

To implement the changes, we will need to make decisions about three broad areas. These are:

- firstly, any changes needed to our consumer standards
- secondly, our operating model for the consumer regulation which will define how we check whether providers are meeting the standards and respond if they are not
- and finally a set of tenant satisfaction measures that will help tenants and us hold providers to account and inform our regulation.

To allow enough time for implementation, we are planning to consult on a proposed set of tenant satisfaction measures in winter 2021-22, ahead of discussions and consultations on the standards and operating model. Draft tenant satisfaction measures were set out by the Government in the Social Housing White Paper. Before we can consult on the measures, we need to develop detailed proposals about how they could be implemented in practice. To help us with this, we have created a sounding board with representatives from across the sector.

Members of the tenant satisfaction measures sounding board include representatives from the following organisations.

- ARCH
- Chartered Institute of Housing
- Councils with ALMOs
- G15
- G320
- Housing Ombudsman Service
- PlaceShapers
- Local Government Association
- National Federation of ALMOs
- National Housing Federation
- Northern Housing Consortium
- TAROE
- Tpas

Alongside the TSM sounding board, we continue to engage with a wide range of

sector stakeholders to understand views on tenant satisfaction measures and inform our thinking. This includes carrying out workshops with tenants. Over the coming months, we will engage further with sector stakeholders across the breadth of our work on implementing the White Paper changes.

Published 7 June 2021

First new board members of Office for Environmental Protection

The first non-executive members of the new Office for Environmental Protection were announced today (Monday 7 June).

The new members are Dr Paul Leinster CBE, Professor Richard Macrory, Professor Dan Laffoley and Julie Hill MBE. They will join chair Dame Glenys Stacey in advising Government and holding public authorities to account for their implementation of environmental law.

Welcoming the appointments, Dame Glenys Stacey said:

I am delighted with the calibre of our new board members. Together they bring a wealth of knowledge and experience of the environment and environmental law, and a real commitment to the OEP.

We will begin work together imminently, setting our ambitions and goals at the highest level so as to make the most difference, on behalf of current and future generations.

Environment Minister Rebecca Pow said:

These appointments will help to establish a world-class Office for Environmental Protection that champions and upholds environmental protections.

Through our landmark Environment Bill, we will ensure the OEP is a strong and independent body that holds the government to account and plays a key role in our commitment to enhance our environment as we build back greener.

The Office for Environmental Protection

- The Environment Bill will create a new, independent statutory body with

the principal objective of contributing to environmental protection and the improvement of the natural environment. It will provide the necessary legal authority to implement long-term environmental governance

- The OEP will provide scrutiny and advice on the implementation of environmental law. It will also monitor and report on progress against Environmental Improvement Plans and targets
- The OEP will be able to receive and investigate complaints on alleged serious breaches of environmental law by public authorities. It will also be able to take legal action in serious cases if necessary as a last resort

The role of the OEP Board

- establish and take forward the strategic aims and objectives of the OEP
- set the long-term direction for the executive team and the tone and pace needed to deliver the agreed strategy and plans
- ensure that in exercising its functions the OEP acts objectively and impartially, and has regard to the need to act proportionately and transparently, and furthers its principal objective
- determine and review when appropriate its own procedures, meeting any statutory requirements
- consider recommended courses of action and provide oversight and direction for staff implementing the OEP's functions, with the Board making decisions where required for those functions that it may not delegate to Individual Board members or staff, including enforcement action against public authorities and approval of the OEP's annual report on progress in achieving environmental improvement plans and targets
- receive, review, and submit regular performance information concerning the ongoing delivery of the OEP against its strategy
- ensure that Parliament is kept informed of any revision of the OEP's strategy
- ensure that effective and high standards of corporate governance are always in place
- comply with the Code of Conduct for Board Members of Public Bodies

Biographies

Dr Paul Leinster CBE

Dr Paul Leinster CBE has over 40 years of practical experience in environmental management, science, policy and regulatory development and implementation in the private and public sectors. He is Chair of Water Resources East, the Bedfordshire Local Nature Partnership, the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment, and BPHA (a housing association), and is a Board Member of both Flood Re and Delphic HSE. He also provides strategic environmental consultancy advice to public and private sector organisations. From October 2015 to December 2020 he was Professor of Environmental Assessment at Cranfield University and a Member of the Government's Natural Capital Committee. Immediately prior to this, he was Chief Executive of the Environment Agency for more than seven years. Prior to

joining the EA in 1998 he worked for more than 20 years in the private sector.

Professor Richard Macrory

Professor Richard Macrory is currently an emeritus professor of environmental law at University College, London, where he set up and was first director of the Centre for Law and the Environment. He has also practised as a barrister at Brick Court Chambers London. Professor Macrory served as a board member of the Environment Agency England and Wales between 1999 and 2004, and was a long-standing member of the Royal Commission on Environmental Pollution. He was the founding editor of the Journal of Environmental Law and was chairman of Merchant Ivory Film Productions between 1988 and 2004. In 2006, Professor Macrory led the Cabinet Office Review on Regulatory Sanctions and his recommendations were reflected in Part 3 Regulatory Enforcement and Sanctions Act 2008. This established the framework for a new range civil sanctions in the regulatory field to be used alongside existing criminal law. Much of Richard's research work over the years has been concerned with various aspects of EU environmental law, and for a short period in the early 1990s he worked in the infringement unit at DG Environment as a visiting academic. Professor Macrory was the first chair of UK Environmental Law Association, and in 2016-2018 was co-chair of UKELA's Brexit Task Force.

Professor Dan Laffoley

Professor Dan Laffoley is a well-respected leader on Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) and conservation. A scientist, communicator, explorer and marine biologist, he has over three decades of experience in the UK, Europe and around the world. He is currently Marine Vice Chair of the International Union for Conservation of Nature's World Commission on Protected Areas responsible for global targets and guidance on ocean protection. Prior to that he led the development and scale-up of the marine conservation work of Natural England and English Nature. He has been responsible for the creation of many global, European and UK public and private sector partnerships, alliances and frameworks that underpin modern-day marine conservation. This work includes creating the concept behind Blue Carbon, scaling up knowledge and action on ocean warming, acidification and deoxygenation, scaling-up work on marine World Heritage and conservation of the High Seas, and various global guidance on implementing MPAs and marine spatial planning.

Julie Hill MBE

Julie Hill has led a career in environmental policy and politics. She is presently the Chair of the Waste and Resources Action Programme (WRAP), Chair of the Institution of Environmental Sciences (IES) and Deputy Chair of the Advisory Committee for Social Science for the Food Standards Agency. Former roles include Director of the environmental think-tank Green Alliance, and board member of the Eden Project, the Environment Agency (England and Wales) and the Consumer Council for Water.

Career Insight: Helen, Legal Trainee, Government Legal Department

"I am a second seat trainee on the [Government Legal Department \(GLD\)](#) commercial law training contract. The Commercial Law Group is a group of teams within GLD that provide specialist commercial legal advice to various government departments. This ranges from advising civil servants on the negotiation of contracts with suppliers, which procedures to use when procuring a product or service and how to resolve commercial disputes.

My first seat was in the team that provides commercial legal advice to the [Department of Health and Social Care \(DHSC\)](#). This includes advising on large-scale procurements for goods and services required by the [NHS](#), advising on contractual issues, and working with DHSC to find creative commercial solutions to achieve new policy aims.

As a trainee, I had a high-level responsibility from the start of the seat, taking control of a piece of procurement advice from its initiation through to the negotiations of the contract between the department and the supplier. This was a fantastic first seat, as the work that DHSC does, and the sorts of contracts it procures, are unique. It was highly rewarding to know that the work I was doing was supporting the department in dealing with COVID-19.

I am currently in my second seat, in the commercial litigation team, which handles commercial disputes for departments across the civil service. This includes procurement disputes, contractual claims and judicial reviews. So far this seat has been really interesting, as there is huge variety in the type of work the team does and the types of cases it deals with.

I have worked with a mini team on a large high profile case, where my responsibilities have included attending and taking notes of witness interviews, reviewing the evidence to build a clearer picture of the case, and managing some of the disclosure documentation. I have also worked on smaller cases with other clients, and it is interesting to see the diverse types of litigation that different departments face.

I started my training contract in September 2020, when GLD was still working mostly from home. Despite the pandemic, I have felt fully supported throughout my training contract. I have had daily catch ups with my supervisor and regular contact with other lawyers on the team. Both of the teams I have worked in have ran virtual social events, so I still felt a fully integrated part of the team despite working remotely."

Career Insight: Ben, Legal Trainee, Government Legal Department

“Following my graduation from a law degree in 2016, I was eager to gain experience of different sectors and spent a year working in industry. During this period, my desire to pursue a legal career solidified and I began investigating training contracts. The opportunity to train at the intersection of law and politics at the [Government Legal Department \(GLD\)](#) stood out immediately and I was fortunate to secure a traineeship in 2017.

Before commencing my training contract in 2019, I took up a non-legal role in GLD’s Commercial Law Group (CLGp) while completing the LPC. CLGp is made up of 7 teams which provide a specialist commercial law service to clients across government. The role gave me an insight into CLGp’s work and I was keen to return in a legal capacity when the chance arose. Fortunately, I would not have to wait long.

I was delighted when my training got underway and spent the first year conducting litigation on behalf of the [Ministry of Justice](#) and [Home Office](#). I managed a significant caseload throughout and worked on cases in courts across the country, including the [Court of Appeal](#). This degree of responsibility is characteristic of training at GLD and provided me with the experience and confidence to develop quickly.

The opportunity to return to CLGp materialised during the third seat of my training contract, when I joined the [Cabinet Office](#) and Central Commercial Team (CLGp B) for a six-month placement. CLGp B is made up of 7 mini-teams which each provide support to specific government clients. I was assigned a supervisor in the [Department for International Trade \(DIT\)](#) mini-team, but had numerous opportunities to work on matters for other CLGp B clients including the [Cabinet Office](#), [Crown Commercial Service](#) and the [Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport](#).

I was struck by the breadth of the CLGp B’s practice, encompassing traditional commercial work such as drafting contracts and advising on contract management, as well as public-sector specific issues including procurement law, grants and subsidy control. To give a flavour of the type of work I completed for my primary DIT clients, I drafted contract variations and extensions, advised on remedies following a supplier default, and worked on a grant agreement to help establish a digital trade network in Asia Pacific.

I also had the opportunity to support the [Cabinet Office](#) in its preparations for the 2021 United Nations Climate Change Conference. This involved negotiating sponsorship agreements with commercial partners to help finance the conference and reduce the expense on the public purse. Communicating the government’s commercial priorities to some of the world’s largest companies was an exhilarating experience and a highlight of my career to date.

The combination of commercial and public law makes CLGp's work unique and, in my opinion, some of the most interesting in the legal sector. Implementing the government's policy objectives brings a new dynamic to commercial work and means that no two briefs are the same. Naturally, this is not without its challenges but the reward of contributing to the national interest is one I am grateful for at the end of every day."