

# Judge's 'secret soundings' legal claim hits Court of Appeal



**A judge has received a date for their legal challenge to the use of ‘Secret Soundings’ when deciding on the appointment of judges.**

This highly contentious practice involves seeking the views of existing judges as to the suitability of a candidate and is, according to GMB – the union for judges – a continuation of the “old boys’ network” within the Judicial Appointments Commission [JAC]

The case is seeking to prove the system is flawed, as after an objective and openly assessed appointment process, the deciding factor may still be anonymous, secret feedback from judges, with no right of reply nor even a right to know what has been said.



The challenge, brought by District Judge Kate Thomas now has a scheduled hearing date at the Court of Appeal of Thursday 13 June.

**Stuart Fegan, GMB Senior Organiser said:**

“This case is incredibly important as it seeks to challenge this controversial, and in our view wholly unfair, practice.

“This practice is not in keeping with the objective of transparency for which the JAC was set up and enables continued discrimination when it is clear that the judiciary falls far short of being broadly reflective of the society over which it presides

“If this old boys’ network continues to cherry pick members of its own, we will never see the end of this system which is dominated by white, male, privately educated barristers.

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**Member requiring help?**

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