



MA Employer Award 2018

Christine Wong JP, North East and East London MA, explains why her employer – Lloyds Banking Group – is a worthy winner of the MA Employer Award



Lloyds Banking Group – Helping Britain Prosper

This year, the MA introduced a new award to acknowledge the important contribution employers make to the magistracy. From a strong field of nominations, I was delighted that Lloyds Banking Group was selected as the recipient of the MA Employer Award 2018.

Lloyds Banking Group

Lloyds Banking Group is a leading UK-based financial services group, which has been helping Britain prosper for more than 250 years through its products and services; it helps 27 million customers with their financial needs including, as I discovered at the MA Conference in Manchester, some of our fellow magistrates.

A supportive employer

Lloyds Banking Group's commitment to a sustainable and responsible approach to business extends to supporting at least 34 colleagues across England & Wales to fulfil the role of magistrates (47% of whom are under the age of 40 in contrast to only 4% nationally). This support is demonstrated in the provision of paid leave for public duties, the adoption of flexible ways of working and a culture that encourages and values volunteering.

Paid leave for public duties

The law requires employers to make reasonable unpaid leave available to employees appointed as magistrates. Lloyds Banking Group goes beyond this statutory responsibility in two ways: firstly, by a leave policy that includes an entitlement to paid leave for public duties (in addition to annual leave) and secondly by recognising the minimum sitting requirements for magistrates (13 days per year).

Since joining Lloyds Banking Group as a Lead Project Manager, I have been able to balance my work and magistrate commitments successfully thanks to the support of my line manager, my employer's leave policy and their adoption of flexible ways of working.

Flexible ways of working

Being in full-time employment, juggling work and judicial commitments can be challenging. When there is a need to keep pace with project and work commitments after a day's sitting, I value the flexibility of working from home.

My colleague Ian Allott JP works a nine-day fortnight (compressed hours) and normally sits on what is his non-working day. He reserves

his paid leave for public duties to cover any magistrates training in addition to his work with the North and West Yorkshire Advisory Committee.

At Lloyds Banking Group, flexible ways of working extend to flexible start and finish times, and include part-time working and job sharing. However, what I find particularly refreshing here is the willingness to have a conversation with colleagues about a way of working that suits their needs and the culture of trust that underpins this.

A culture of giving back

Another strongly embedded culture in the organisation is the encouragement to, and the value placed on, giving back to the community. Beyond public duty provisions, all colleagues have two paid volunteering days every year to take time off from the usual day job to use their hands, feet, skills and knowledge to make a tangible difference in their community. In 2017, one of the highlights of the *Helping Britain Prosper Plan* was colleagues giving 260,000 volunteering hours to help good causes.

Helping Britain Prosper

The *Helping Britain Prosper Plan* was launched in 2014 through Lloyds Banking Group's recognition that its success is inextricably linked to the health of the UK. The Plan takes Lloyds Banking Group beyond business as usual to tackle the social and economic issues that matter to Britain: its people, businesses, environment and communities.

In conclusion

I am immensely grateful to my employer for supporting my magistrate colleagues and me and am pleased that Lloyds Banking Group is being publicly acknowledged for their contribution to the magistracy.

At the recent MA Conference, two individual magistrates approached me to share the fact they were Lloyds Banking Group customers; one pulled out his bankcards to evidence this and the other intends to share the good news with her branch manager when she next visits. A third magistrate – who works for a London-based American bank – jokingly said he should consider switching employers. My response: you should – we are Lloyds Banking Group, the best bank for customers and the winner of the MA Employer Award 2018!