

# Foreword

When my predecessor wrote a Foreword to the edition of this Bench Book that was published in June 2001 she said that we lived in times of change in family law as in all other areas.

Change has continued and the pace has increased. New legislation has been brought into force, most notably the Adoption and Children Act 2002 and the new Adoption Rules. The Family Justice Council is now established and local Councils have been set up which are based upon the Care Centres. Throughout the country courts are operating procedures that are based upon The Private Law Programme. Considerable progress has been made towards the practical unification of the administration of the Family Proceedings Courts with the County Courts.

The JSB's Family Bench Book is particularly intended as a point of first reference for the inexperienced judge who needs to tackle the difficult and sensitive issues which arise in family cases. Both in its main sections and its appendices the Bench Book contains information and guidance about a variety of topics.

The JSB and its team of family contributors are to be congratulated for providing such a guide. I am glad that it will be available to all judges who hold a family jurisdiction.

*Sir Mark Potter*

*President of the Family Division*