

Jardine calls for diversity in judiciary

Jardine marks Lady Hale's retirement by calling for greater diversity.

The Scottish Liberal Democrats have called for action to tackle the lack of gender balance in Scotland's justice system.

It follows a freedom of information request by the party and comes as Lady Hale is about to retire as Lord President of the Supreme Court next week.



Lady Hale with the Rt Hon Lord Provost Frank Ross, Lord Neuberger and Lord Carloway of the Court of Session during the Supreme Court's sitting in Edinburgh in summer 2017.

The request shows that just 37% of those in the role of Justice of the Peace were women in 2019. This imbalance is replicated throughout the court system. Statistics from the Judiciary of Scotland show that only 25% of Scotland's judiciary are women, including 23% of Sheriffs and 26% of High

Court judges.

Women and Equalities spokesperson Christine Jardine MP said: "Despite the fact that it's now a century since women were given the right to hold judicial office these jobs are still stubbornly out of reach for too many of them.

"Lady Hale is to be congratulated on the progress she has encouraged, but this headway feels fragile. The exodus of women from public office in the run up to the general election showed that we can't take improvements for granted.

"All work places need to be welcoming to people from all backgrounds. Liberal Democrats introduced shared parental leave and gender pay gap reporting when in government. Both the Scottish and UK Governments now have a responsibility to see these policies through.

"In 2020 there can be no reason for this kind of disparity. Making decisions is not just a man's job. As we enter a new decade, surely it is time for a generation of gender equality."