

Professional profile

Lawyer, technologist, author, independent judicial decision-maker and charity chair, with a career spanning public service, information technology, governance, higher education and civil society.

Parole Board member since 2017, chairing complex hearings involving liberty, risk and public protection since 2019. Current appointments also include Deputy Lieutenant of the Royal County of Berkshire and independent member of the Community and Voluntary Service Honours Committee. Previous appointments include Presiding Justice in the Family Court from 2021 to 2025 and member of the Lord Chancellor's Advisory Committee from 2023 to 2025.

Professional experience includes senior international leadership in the technology industry, two decades of independent consultancy, academic research and teaching, and the co-founding of a digital identity business. Sustained voluntary and charitable service since 1996 includes leadership of the WCIT Charity, Prior's Court Foundation and the Inside Out Trust.

Past Master of the Worshipful Company of Information Technologists and author or co-author of widely used books on legal skills, the English legal system, contract, criminal and tort law, criminology and cybercrime.

Current appointments

Justice and public service

Independent Panel Chair, Parole Board for England and Wales

July 2017 to present · tenure to 30 June 2032

Chairs parole hearings involving some of the most serious and complex cases in the criminal justice system, including life-sentence prisoners, people serving sentences of imprisonment for public protection and those serving extended determinate sentences. Determines whether the statutory test for release is met, exercising independent judicial decision-making responsibility where liberty, risk and public protection are directly engaged. Accredited to determine first-instance release decisions, reconsideration applications, set-aside applications and appeals concerning non-disclosure. Supports decision-making quality and consistency across the Parole Board through mentoring new members, trainee oral-hearing chairs and members undertaking reconsideration and set-aside work.

Independent Member, Community and Voluntary Service Honours Committee

July 2025 to present

Contributes to the independent assessment of nominations for national honours recognising exceptional voluntary and community service across the United Kingdom. Supports the fair and rigorous consideration of nominations for the New Year and Birthday Honours Lists.

Deputy Lieutenant of the Royal County of Berkshire

February 2023 to present

Supports the Lord-Lieutenant in representing His Majesty The King across the ceremonial, civic, voluntary and community life of Berkshire. The role includes participation in citizenship ceremonies, mayoral installations and community recognition events, engagement with the armed forces, emergency services and voluntary sector, and support for the assessment and promotion of The King's Award for Voluntary Service.

Charitable leadership

Chair of the Board of Trustees, Prior's Court Foundation

January 2026 to present

Leads the Board of a national centre of excellence for autistic young people with the highest levels of need, providing specialist education, residential care and young-adult provision. The role encompasses governance, long-term strategy, organisational assurance, safeguarding, regulatory compliance and the maintenance of a constructive relationship between the Board, Chief Executive and senior leadership team. Previously served as a Trustee from July 2022 to December 2025, including membership of the Finance, Nominations and People Committees. This work focused on financial resilience, leadership succession, workforce wellbeing and long-term planning.

Chair of the Board of Trustees, The Inside Out Trust

June 2024 to present

Leads the Board of a charity supporting people under Probation Service supervision through practical, rapid-response financial assistance that removes immediate barriers to rehabilitation and resettlement. Previously served as a Trustee from March 2022 to May 2024. During this period, the charity expanded its geographic remit to support delivery across all regions of the United Kingdom. The role focuses on governance, strategic direction, organisational assurance, operational resilience and measurable social impact.

Professional and academic

Independent Consultant, Briarcliff Consulting

September 2006 to present

Advises at board level across the charity, public and commercial sectors, with a focus on governance, justice, technology, AI and ethical innovation. Assignments have included independent review, strategic advice, governance support and the development of approaches to complex organisational and policy challenges. Previous clients include the Home Office and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime.

Deputy Editor, International Review of Law, Computers & Technology

July 2011 to present

Supports the editorial direction of a peer-reviewed academic journal examining the legal, regulatory and societal implications of digital technology, information systems and emerging forms of technological governance. The role includes oversight of editorial standards and peer-review processes, contributing to editorial decisions and supporting the selection and development of scholarship at the intersection of law, technology and regulation.

Previous professional appointments

Justice and public service

Presiding Justice, HM Courts & Tribunals Service

April 2021 to October 2025

Served as a Presiding Justice in the Tier 1 Family Court, hearing public and private law cases concerning the welfare of children. Appointed to the Thames Valley Family Panel and served as a Mentor and Digital Liaison for the Berkshire Family Bench, supporting the development of judicial colleagues and promoting effective digital practice across family proceedings.

Member, Lord Chancellor's Advisory Committee

October 2023 to October 2025

Supported the recruitment and recommendation of new magistrates for appointment across the South East. Contributed to the quality, independence and diversity of the magistracy through rigorous selection and assessment conducted within the statutory framework established for advisory committees.

Technology and commercial leadership

Co-founder and Chair of the Board of Directors, Sekura.id

July 2019 to March 2022

Co-founded and chaired a technology company specialising in mobile fraud detection and digital identity verification. Led the establishment of governance, legal and financial frameworks and supported the recruitment of senior executive leadership during the company's early growth. Board leadership also included oversight of commercial strategy, demand generation and international partnerships with mobile network operators. The role supported the company's progression from concept to operational delivery within a rapidly developing technology market and prepared the company for eventual acquisition by XConnect.

Senior Director, Professional Services, Aspect Communications

September 1996 to August 2006

Held senior leadership roles with a global provider of enterprise contact-centre and workforce-optimisation technology. Led large, international multidisciplinary teams across professional services, product development and operations, contributing to strategic growth in the United Kingdom and EMEA. Responsibilities included client engagement, commercial strategy, operational leadership and organisational development during a period of substantial technological change in customer communications.

Operations Director, Envoy Systems

April 1996 to September 1996

Held responsibility for project delivery by a team of 35 technical consultants. Handled significant aspects of the transfer of the business to Aspect Communications, subsequently continuing with the acquiring company in senior leadership roles.

Systems Engineer to Project Manager, AIT Group plc

October 1989 to April 1996

Joined AIT during its early development. Progressed through software-development positions into team leadership and project management. Contributed to the company's growth and its admission to the Alternative Investment Market. The business subsequently became Portrait Software plc.

Public, charitable and civic service

Worshipful Company of Information Technologists

Past Master and Liveryman

November 2005 to present

Joined the Worshipful Company of Information Technologists in 2005 and became a member of its Court of Assistants in 2009. Progressed through the offices of Junior Warden and Senior Warden before serving as Master in 2017–18. Contributions have included establishing the Technology Law Panel, founding the Equality Committee, supporting membership growth, strengthening governance and diversity and representing the Company across civic, charitable, professional and military life. As a Past Master, has continued to support governance, audit, succession planning and mentoring.

Master

October 2017 to October 2018

Led the Company through its annual civic, charitable and professional programme. Represented the Company across the City of London and developed its relationships with the technology profession, education, the charitable sector, the armed forces and other Livery Companies.

WCIT Charity

Chair of the Board of Trustees

June 2019 to December 2025

Led the charitable arm of the Worshipful Company of Information Technologists through six and a half years of substantial strategic and organisational development. During the period, the Charity recognised approximately £1.5 million in grants, reported around 340,000 direct and indirect beneficiaries and developed or expanded programmes including AI4C, national PhD bursaries, the Young Coders Competition and IT Pathfinder. Proposed the adoption of a new long-term strategy developed collectively with fellow trustees. The strategy strengthened the Charity's focus, governance, grant-making capacity and organisational sustainability.

Trustee and Director

July 2010 to January 2016 and January 2019 to December 2025

Completed more than twelve years of trustee service across two periods. Contributed to grant-making, governance and the development of educational, research and technology-for-good initiatives. These included the WCIT University IT Awards, the IT Livery Company Professorship at Gresham College and the major Charity IT Awards to CALM and Missing People that helped establish the foundations for AI4C.

Education

Founder Sponsor Governor, Hammersmith Academy

September 2007 to August 2013

Served as one of the founding governors of a new co-educational secondary school specialising in creative and digital media and information technology. Contributed legal, governance and technology expertise during the Academy's development, including work relating to sponsorship, government funding, institutional design, construction and organisational risk. Supported the securing of £1 million in sponsor funding and the negotiation and implementation of a £35.2 million capital funding agreement with the Department for Education. Served on the Buildings Committee during design and construction and subsequently on the Endowment and Investment Committee. Hammersmith Academy opened to its first pupils in September 2011. During its first decade, it educated 2,765 students and developed an enduring identity and record of service to its community. Also served as a Director of Hammersmith Academy Trust from October 2007 to December 2012.

Sponsor Governor, Lilian Baylis Technology School

September 2006 to August 2009

Supported the governance of a multicultural comprehensive school in Lambeth during a period of strategic development. Served on its Governance and Finance Committees, contributing to budget oversight, institutional accountability and the maintenance of its inclusive ethos.

Other charitable service

Founder Trustee, Red Trousers Day

August 2017 to November 2025

Contributed to the governance and strategic development of a national, volunteer-led charity working to improve outcomes for people affected by bowel cancer. Supported research, education and awareness initiatives through oversight of grant allocation, fundraising strategy and stakeholder engagement.

Chair of the Board of Trustees, Timebanking UK

January 2024 to May 2025

Provided national board leadership to the coordinating body for timebanking in the United Kingdom during a period of strategic and financial challenge. Focused on governance integrity, organisational stability and the Board's response to a demanding operating environment.

Committee Member, Lord Mayor's Big Curry Lunch

August 2017 to July 2018

Served on the organising committee for a major City of London charitable event supporting veterans. Contributed to planning, stakeholder engagement and delivery as part of a wider initiative raising funds for rehabilitation and employment programmes.

Trustee, Aspects of Life Fund

September 1996 to August 2006

Supported a corporate charitable fund providing targeted grants to grassroots and specialist charities across the United Kingdom. Contributed to funding decisions supporting disability, economic self-sufficiency and the wellbeing of children.

Education

Doctor of Philosophy in Law (PhD), University of Leeds

2008

Thesis: *Computer Use and Misuse: The Constellation of Control*. The research examined the legal, technological, social and regulatory mechanisms used to control computer misuse. Supervised by Professor Clive Walker KC (Hon.) and Professor David S. Wall. Examined by Professor Graham Dutfield and Professor Martin Wasik CBE.

Bachelor of Laws (LLB), Open University

2004

Master of Arts (MA), St John's College, University of Cambridge

1993

Bachelor of Arts (BA), St John's College, University of Cambridge

1989

Natural Sciences: Physics and Theoretical Physics

Past professional qualifications and fellowships

Chartered Engineer, CEng
Chartered Scientist, CSci
Chartered Information Technology Professional, CITP
European Engineer, Eur Ing
Fellow of BCS, The Chartered Institute for IT, FBCS
Fellow of the Institute of Directors, FloD
Fellow of the Higher Education Academy, FHEA
Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts, FRSA

Additional information

Areas of expertise

Public protection; judicial decision-making; parole and rehabilitation; law and technology; technological risk and regulation; cybercrime; charity governance; board leadership; organisational strategy; education; information technology; professional services; ethical innovation.

Personal interests

A qualified pilot with interests in music, sport and LEGO.

Further information

Detailed accounts of selected public, educational and charitable contributions, together with selected articles and speeches, and contact details are available at stefanfafinski.com.

September 2026