

Baroness Jones announced as new Acas Chair

5 March 2026

Baroness Maggie Jones of Whitchurch has been announced as the new Chair of the Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service (Acas) Council.

Baroness Jones is a member of the House of Lords and has held several senior roles within the Government and large organisations. Her previous roles have included being a minister at the Department for Business and Trade, a director at Unison and numerous board and non-executive positions.

Acas Chief Executive, Niall Mackenzie, said:

"I am delighted that Baroness Jones will join Acas as our new Chair. Her varied experience will be invaluable in our role as independent, impartial and trusted employment relations experts.

"Maggie's expertise will help ensure Acas continues our crucial role within the world of work including the implementation of the Employment Rights Act 2025.

"I also want to pay tribute to our current Acas Chair Clare Chapman whose stewardship saw a highly successful period where Acas doubled its reach and helped more businesses and workers."

Baroness Jones said:

"It is a profound privilege to be taking on this role. Acas is the leading authority in workplace relations whose purpose is to make working life better for everyone.

"It is a cause I have supported my entire professional career in my previous roles. The need for a strong successful Acas that can build healthy workplace relationships and encourage productive organisations is more important now than ever.

"We are at a watershed moment as the Employment Rights Act comes into force. My focus will be ensuring that Acas continues to help realise the human and economic benefits of renewed workplace relations."

Baroness Jones will take over from current Acas Chair Clare Chapman, who has completed 2 full terms at Acas that will end on 31 March 2026.

Clare Chapman said:

"I am delighted that Maggie will be stepping into the role of Acas Chair. She brings a wealth of experience and Acas will continue to thrive under her leadership.

"The past 6 years has seen Acas successfully transform the way in which we work, leading to millions more workers and employers accessing our services. Just 6% of early conciliation notifications resulted in a tribunal hearing, saving time, money and further stress for all parties.

"I am proud to have helped deliver significant results for our customers and look forward to a future in which Acas builds on that success to help prevent, manage and resolve conflict for many more at work."

The Acas 2021 to 2025 strategy saw the organisation increase its reach, resolve disputes more effectively and forge consensus on the future of work:

- Over 2021 to 2025 Acas helped to resolve 9 out of 10 of early conciliation cases without the need to go to employment tribunal, reducing workplace conflict for all.
- Acas also sustained record settlement rates in its collective conciliation service, which saw Acas help to resolve 90% of cases between trade unions and workers.
- The Acas website reached twice as many people – web sessions recorded on the website more than doubled from 9 to 20 million. Its online reach grew to 286 million appearances in search results.
- Use of Acas good practice advice and training doubled to over 250,000 interactions by 2025.
- Awareness of Acas support among small and medium-sized businesses increased – from 83% to 90% and among individuals from 56% to 77% by 2025.

Baroness Jones added:

"I want to thank Clare for the outstanding contribution, leadership and commitment shown during her time as Chair. Her stewardship has seen achievements that's helped to reduce the impact of workplace conflict to the economy and within society.

"Under her leadership Acas has improved resolution rates for collective disputes to 93% and 79% of individual disputes handled by Acas. She has also overseen a significant growth in people using Acas and leaves a strong legacy on which to build."

Baroness Jones will start on 1 April 2026 and will serve a 3 year term.

Media enquiries

[Contact the Acas press office](#)

Background notes

1. Baroness Jones of Whitchurch joined the House of Lords in 2006 and was Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State at the Department for Science, Innovation and Technology and the Department for Business and Trade, and Baroness in Waiting (Government Whip) from 9 July 2024 to 7 September 2025.

She has previously served as Shadow Spokesperson in the House of Lords for Science, Innovation and Technology from 2023 to 2024; Environment, Food and Rural Affairs from 2015 to 2022; Education from 2011 to 2015; and Culture, Media and Sport from 2010 to 2014.

Baroness Jones was Director of Policy and Public Affairs for UNISON from 1994 to 2006. Her previous trade union roles have included experience in bargaining, representing members at employment tribunals and regular contact with Acas.

She was previously Chair of Rothamsted Agri-Technology Enterprises Board (2018 to 2024), a Board member at Ombudsman Services (2007 to 2019), a member of the General Medical Council Fitness to Practice Panel (2006 to 2012), and Chair of Circle 33 and Board member of Circle Housing Group (2006 to 2015).

2. Acas is the leading authority on workplace relations and dispute resolution in Great Britain. We provide free, impartial advice to employers and employees on workplace rights, rules and best practice. We also provide training and tailored support for businesses that can help them succeed. Acas is a non-departmental public body that is governed by an independent Council made up of employers, employee representatives and independent members.

3. The current Acas strategy 2025 to 2030 has 3 ambitions to prevent, manage and resolve conflict: [Acas strategy 2025 to 2030](#)