

Catherine Brown

Call: 1990
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AREAS OF EXPERTISE

Personal Injury, Industrial Disease, Clinical Negligence, Public Authority Liability, Abuse, Employment & Discrimination, Health & Safety, Inquests, Costs & Litigation Funding, Arbitration

JUDICAL APPOINTMENTS

Recorder: 2008

Catherine is a specialist personal injury barrister. She is recognised as a leading junior in both Chambers & Partners and Legal 500. She is known, in particular, for her expertise in occupational stress and occupiers' liability claims. However, she is experienced in all fields of personal injury and industrial disease (including fatal claims). She also undertakes clinical negligence cases.

Catherine is regularly instructed in public authority liability cases. In addition to personal injury claims, her public authority practice includes human rights law, social work and educational negligence, misuse of private information, property damage, and disability discrimination.

Catherine also has a strong defendant health and safety practice, she is regularly instructed at high profile inquests, and she has an expanding practice in the field of costs.

Catherine has been a Recorder since 2008 and she sits in the criminal (including serious sexual offences) and civil jurisdictions (Wales Circuit).

When not working, Catherine is often to be found walking her retired racing greyhound (or watching her run around the local park).

Abuse

Catherine is frequently instructed in cases involving sexual and physical abuse, including historical abuse and bullying. In particular, she frequently acts on behalf of local authorities in cases where allegations of social work negligence are made.

However, she also acts for claimants, including, for example, a claim on behalf of a young girl who was sexually assaulted by her GP, and in criminal injuries compensation (CICA) claims and a claim by a Naval officer assaulted and

sexually harassed in the course of her service.

Catherine's practice in this field (and others) includes human rights law, issues concerning disclosure, the misuse of private information, and limitation, as well as the specific causation and quantum issues which arise in abuse cases, including apportionment of damages.

Catherine is authorised to try serious sexual offences as a Recorder. When acting as an advocate, she is therefore particularly aware of the needs of vulnerable witnesses.

Catherine's cases in this area include:-

- *W v MOD* (ongoing case) – claim by Naval officer for assault and harassment (C)
- *D v University College, London & 1 other* (settlement 2015) – post-graduate student alleging sexual abuse against senior academic (D1)
- *Welsh Government v Hillcrest Care Ltd & 2 others* (Newport Magistrates Court 2015) – prosecution of children's home following suicide of 15 year old resident alleged to have been bullied at the home (D1)
- *Oates (deceased) v 2 others & West Suffolk College* (settlement 2015) – human rights and negligence claim against local authority, health authority and FE college following suicide of disabled student alleged to have been bullied at college (D3)
- *Morley and Hyde v North East Lincolnshire Council* (QBD, Lincoln DR 2014) (permission to appeal refused 2015) – social work negligence claim relating to familial sexual abuse in late 1960s-1970s – summary judgment granted following joint statement of liability experts (D)
- *M v The Trustees of St Benedicts Abbey, Ealing* (settlement 2014) – claim arising out of alleged sexual abuse (D)
- *P v Dr Collins* (settlement 2012) – sexual abuse of young female patient by GP (C)
- *ADW v City of York Council* (2011) – York sex slave case (D)

Qualifications

- University of Birmingham: B Com (Hons)
- Polytechnic of Central London (now University of Westminster): Diploma in Law

Appointments & Memberships

Recorder: 2008 (Wales Circuit – Crime, including Serious Sexual Offences, and Civil)

Barrister Member of Bar Standards Board Professional Conduct Committee 2009 – 2015 (continuing role as a retired pool member)

Previously Faculty Member, SE Circuit International Advocacy Course, Keble College, Oxford (Advocacy and Ethics trainer)

Personal Injuries Bar Association

Professional Negligence Bar Association

Association of Women Barristers

South Eastern Circuit

Middle Temple

Directories

Chambers & Partners 2017 says that she is widely recognised for her broad expertise and delicate handling of psychiatric injury, stress at work and sexual abuse claims. “She very quickly picks out the key details from vast swathes of information.” “She’s excellent, a joy to work with.”

Legal 500 2016 says “She has a wonderful knack for putting difficult legal concepts into plain language”.

Chambers & Partners 2016 said “She provides very authoritative and clear advice and she has the ability to assimilate a large amount of documentation very quickly. She is an expert in stress and harassment cases”.

Legal 500 2015 said “Her intellect is immense and solicitors trust her judgement implicitly”

Earlier editions of the directories included the following:

“The “decisive and robust,” Catherine Brown is a skilled negotiator who is “able to explain complex issues in straightforward terms” and put clients at ease.” She has “sound judgment and focus” and was commended for having skills associated with a far more senior advocate. She is respected for her “detailed and comprehensive” approach and the fact that she was “ever-prepared to make hard decisions. “Catherine “is widely held out as one of the leading personal injury juniors on the circuit” who is well known for her “tenacious cross-examination.” Fellow barristers note that she is “tough but sensible – she will hold her line but never if it is a foolish one.”

She has also been described as “clued up” and “regularly briefed on important personal injury cases”. The entry continued by saying that she was “a tenacious trial lawyer and a formidable opponent who is outstanding on large stress claims”. Clients have described Catherine as an “exceptional cross-examiner” and “always extremely supportive of her clients”.