

Catherine Urquhart

Call 2010

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Introduction

Catherine is a former journalist who switched to law and is now an established civil practitioner, with a particular focus on employment law.

She has wide experience of hearings in Employment Tribunals and County Courts across England and Wales, and she has also represented clients in the High Court and before panels such as the Criminal Injuries Compensation Authority and the National Midwifery Council.

Catherine is qualified to accept instructions from members of the public on a Direct Access basis.

In her former life, Catherine spent nearly 20 years as a journalist, the last ten as travel editor of The Times. She finds the skills she learned on newspapers – such as interviewing and listening to people, arguing with the editor, and getting to grips with large amounts of information in a short time – translate well to her work as a barrister. Clients tell her that they value her wide experience of life and the workplace. She has a calm manner with nervous witnesses and understands that litigating to the bitter end is not always the answer – but if the fight is unavoidable, she is a strong advocate on her clients' behalf.

Outside work, Catherine is a keen swimmer, in open water where possible, and most summers can be found swimming slowly around some of the smaller Greek islands. She is an enthusiastic amateur photographer, and has started learning German.

Housing and Property

Catherine is regularly instructed to represent both landlords and tenants in possession and rent arrears hearings in the County Court, and also has considerable experience of issues arising from a failure to protect tenancy deposits.

She regularly advises on issues of disrepair and has experience of applying for and opposing applications

for interim and final charging orders over property. She has also acted for clients involved in disputes arising from property ownership under the Trusts of Land and Appointment of Trustees Act 1996.

Recent work includes:

- *C v C and C*: Catherine acted for the elderly claimant, who lacked capacity, after her sons were removed from their role as her deputies after dissipating her money. After several years of protracted court hearings, and difficult issues arising regarding property ownership, Catherine achieved a positive settlement for her client enabling her to be financially supported for the rest of her life.
- *London Borough of X v S*: Catherine advised the defendant, who was facing eviction, as to matters of disrepair that constituted a successful counterclaim to the possession proceedings.
- *London Borough of Y v K*: this time representing the claimant council, Catherine successfully applied for a final charging order over the defendant's property in respect of unpaid council tax.

Comments from clients

"I want to write to you specifically to let you know what a marvellous job the barrister, Cath Urquhart, did. She was simply amazing. She is details-oriented, she knew my case inside out, she was highly analytical and she did not miss any point. She was courteous during cross questioning and remained utterly professional at all times... I cannot recommend her more highly." – Claimant represented by Catherine in a lengthy constructive unfair dismissal hearing.

"Please allow me to express my sincere appreciation of the excellent way in which you conducted my recent case. Your initial advice was constructive and throughout you were willing to discuss and explore points with me. Your cross-examination and advocacy in Court were clear and effective. I am most grateful for the preparation and effort you put in on my behalf and that you were able to achieve such a satisfactory outcome." – Claimant represented by Catherine in a trial of a breach of contract matter.

"You rock, baby!" – feedback from nightclub-owner client after Catherine successfully defended his business in a lengthy unfair dismissal claim.

Qualifications and Appointments

- Oxford University: Modern History BA Hons (2:1)
- Nottingham Trent University: LLB (First)
- Graduate Diploma in Law, College of Law, London: Distinction
- Bar Vocational Course, Nottingham Law School: Outstanding

- Middle Temple: Queen Mother Scholarship; Baron Dr Ver Heyden de Lancey Prize

Memberships

- Employment Law Bar Association
- Employment Lawyers' Association
- Public Access Bar Association
- Fellow, Royal Society for the encouragement of Arts, manufactures and commerce (FRSA)