

Paul Kirtley

Call 1982



Clerks' Details

 Ian Spencer
 0113 203 1971

 Megan Hawke
 0113 203 1971

Appointments

- Recorder (1999) - Civil, Crime and Private Family Work
- Accredited Civil and Commercial Mediator (2004)
- Chairman of the Bar Conference (2006)
- Accredited Workplace Mediator (2014)
- North Eastern Circuit Representative on the General Council of the Bar (10 years)
- Former Vice Chair Public Affairs Committee and Remuneration Committee of the Bar Council
- Senior Accredited Advocacy Trainer (North Eastern Circuit)

Memberships

- The Professional Mediators' Association
- Personal Injury Bar Association
- Employment Law Bar Association
- Professional Negligence Bar Association
- Employment Lawyers Association
- Industrial Law Society

Personal Injury CV

Overview

Considered as one of the leading civil practitioners on the North Eastern Circuit, Paul undertakes work in all areas of the personal injury field and is highly experienced in complex, high value claims. He specialises in:

- Traumatic Brain Injury / Head Injury claims
- Spinal Cord claims – Paraplegia and Tetraplegia
- Upper and Lower Limb Amputee and Complex Regional Pain Syndrome claims
- Serious Road Traffic Accidents: involving difficult liability issues / contested accident reconstruction evidence.
- Fatal Accidents Act claims
- Industrial accidents involving Work at Height claims
- 'Dangerous Sports' claims – motor racing, hang gliding, motor-cross, rallying and motorcycling
- Serious Orthopaedic Injury
- Psychiatric Injury
- Industrial Disease litigation involving HAVS (VWF) and Asbestos Exposure claims, Noise Induced Loss, Dermatitis, Occupational Asthma, work-related Stress and work-related Upper Limb Disorders
- Claims for abuse suffered in care.
- Criminal Injuries Compensation Appeals
- Cross border claims (Rome II etc)
- Cauda Equina claims

Approachable yet analytical, Paul is well known for his friendly and collaborative manner. His effective advocacy style has translated well to the area of Joint Settlement Meetings and negotiated settlements. He has a proven track record in achieving excellent outcomes for his clients.

Often engaged as a senior junior leading more junior counsel in complex claims, he is described as “streets ahead of a number of silks” by one of his instructing solicitors.

Paul uses his experience as an Accredited Civil and Commercial Mediator (10+ years) and his judicial experiences as sitting as a Recorder since 1998 to inform and guide his approach to challenging cases.

Paul provides in-house training and other training events to solicitors and other organisations, attracting Solicitors Regulation Authority (SRA) CPD accreditation.

Recommendations

“He has a great eye for detail.”

“Paul is vastly experienced but also very charming.”

Chambers and Partners 2024

“Paul is very approachable. He brings a very collegiate approach to cases and is able to get a fantastic result in even the most challenging of situations.”

“Paul demonstrates an immediate grasp of the issues in a case. He combines strategic and tactical awareness with great client care.”

“A natural advocate, Paul is the barrister you want on your side.”

The Legal 500 2024

“Paul has a very good knowledge and appreciation for this work. His medical knowledge is vast and he has the ability to interpret complex medical expert opinion.”

Chambers and Partners 2023

“Paul is pragmatic and clients love him. He presents well and is good in negotiation.”

Chambers and Partners 2023

‘A smooth operator and a shrewd negotiator with an open and straightforward client-friendly manner.’

The Legal 500 2023

“He’s very approachable, analytical and excellent with clients. He’s very personable and works collaboratively. The quality of his advice on quantum is very good and his grasp of medical issues and ability to discuss the medical issues in conference with experts is excellent.” “A very astute and client-friendly barrister.”

“His grasp of detail is very good, he’s very passionate and he is empathetic to clients as well.”

“A consummate advocate with a real presence.”

Chambers and Partners 2022

Paul regularly appears as a leader in his field in the list of Expert Advisors, Chambers and Partners Guide and The Legal 500 publications:

“Really experienced, and confident and calm in his approach. You really feel in safe hands when you’re working with him.” “He is an excellent and persuasive advocate. His client skills are unparalleled on the Northern Circuit.”

“An experienced junior - he’s very knowledgeable, pragmatic and good with vulnerable

clients.”

“He is very good with clients and is very reassuring.” “Experienced and very polished.”

Chambers and Partners 2021

“He really knows his stuff.” “He is excellent and very experienced.”

“Paul’s client care skills are second to none; he has a gentle, professional manner and gets good results.”

Chambers and Partners 2020

“It is a joy to watch him cross-examine. He is very experienced and really knows his stuff.” “Paul gets to the key issues very quickly and is an excellent and persuasive advocate.”

“He’s very good at dissecting a case and looking at the pros and cons on liability very quickly. He is also very good with clients.” “Very knowledgeable and excellent with clients.”

Chambers and Partners 2019

“He is bright and meticulous, with a great client manner and just the right amount of gravitas.” “He is an exceptionally clever man, incredibly engaging and generally very highly regarded by everyone.”

“His service level is excellent and he turns papers around quickly. He is approachable and has a very good manner with clients.”

Chambers and Partners 2018

“He’s a very well-thought of and experienced practitioner who has a very good manner with clients.” “He has a thoughtful approach to complex claims and excellent client-care skills.”

Chambers and Partners 2017

“He’s very good in writing, amiable and good with clients.”

Chambers and Partners 2016

“A superb barrister. He is extremely friendly and builds great rapport with the client.”

“Paul is a highly-skilled negotiator who pays careful attention to detail in complex and high value cases. His passion, drive and enthusiasm shines through.”

“A senior junior who operates at the level of a silk.”

The Legal 500 2022

“Very experienced junior. Also sits as a recorder and therefore has a wealth of experience. Very knowledgeable, pragmatic, caring and compassionate with vulnerable clients. Lots of brain injury and amputation injury experience. His eye for detail and considered manner make him perfect for high value serious injury work.”

“In my opinion he is an unrivalled advocate and a master of cross-examination. One of, if not the best employment barristers on the circuit. Paul combines a mastery of subject knowledge with a keen sense of commercial awareness and a focus on practical outcomes. He is a favourite of every client and the barrister I would want representing me if ever I needed one.”

“Extremely empathetic with clients, kind and insightful. Excellent analysis of complex medical and legal issues. Collaborative and just generally a really strong team player.”

The Legal 500 2021

“He has an excellent way with clients.”

“Bright and well-prepared.”

“Vastly knowledgeable and experienced with workplace claims.”

“Delivers his advice in a straightforward and concise manner.”

The Legal 500 2020

“Very experienced in representing clients before the Employment Appeal Tribunal.”

“An insightful, knowledgeable and meticulous barrister.”

“Well known for acting for police forces in regulatory matters.”

“An excellent mediator”.

The Legal 500 2018/19

“He builds good rapport with clients”

“A superb analyst.”

“He has an insightful eye for the heart of a case.”

The Legal 500 2017

“A superb advocate with excellent client skills.”

“He provides superb attention to detail and great empathy.”

“He frequently leaves witnesses lost for words in cross-examination.”

The Legal 500 2016

“His no-nonsense attitude makes him a firm favourite with clients.”

The Legal 500 2015

“He manages experts well.”

“Paul is a skilled and committed barrister who shows great empathy towards clients.

“He leaves no stone unturned and gives the Claimant confidence.

“His attention to detail is first rate and his turnaround time is always impressive.

“A natural communicator, Paul is outstanding in settlement meetings.

“The complete barrister, Paul is streets ahead of a number of silks.”

The Legal 500 2014

“Paul is excellent on his feet – clear and concise. He also have a great manner with solicitors and clients alike, being approachable and user-friendly.”

Emma Gaudern, Managing Director, EMG Solicitors

“He is proactive in his approach to cases, meticulous in his attention to detail and excellent in conference. All round, an impressive advocate.”

Andrew Armstrong, Armstrong Luty Solicitors

“Paul’s greatest strength is his empathy for clients. He is also technically excellent, helpful and approachable.”

Helen Shakespeare, Thompsons Solicitors

“Paul’s breadth of knowledge, eye for detail and meticulous preparation make him an outstanding advocate.”

“Above all, he is genuinely interested in the case and really does care about the client.”

Harry Eyre, Solicitor to the National Union of Mineworkers

“Paul is the ultimate professional.”

“He quickly gains the confidence and respect of clients who appreciate his unwavering commitment to their case.”

“Friendly, approachable and committed to excellence in every case he takes on, Paul’s excellent analytical skills and attention to detail set him apart.”

Samantha Clark, Irwin Mitchell

Cases

Paul is regularly instructed on a range of high value claims relating to both personal injury and clinical negligence. Over the last 3 years, he has finalised more than £50 million of claims. His highest recorded settlement is circa £10 million. Subject to the particular circumstances of any given case, Paul's cases generally have a value of over £200,000.

Illustrative recent cases include:

Acting for the claimant in a successful high value maritime personal injury claim - involving complex evidence and negotiations with a range of maritime experts. Due to Covid-19 restrictions, the mediation was conducted remotely.

Successfully mediated a high value personal injury claim with eight parties from around the UK and the Isle of Man participating remotely.

Acting for the first British man to be fitted with a bionic 'Michelangelo hand' following a serious industrial accident.

Establishing breach of duty and achieving a seven figure settlement for a Hang Glider who crashed to the ground whilst under training.

Securing a seven figure settlement for a scaffolding worker in a case in which liability was fiercely contested.

Acting in a complex child brain injury case - with issues including pre-existing behavioural difficulties and securing a favourable outcome in a partial liability claim through a collaborative albeit challenging relationship with the defendant.

Acting for the claimant in a complex medical negligence claim relating to myositis ossificans - after a week-long trial on causation a successful outcome was achieved.

Roadgang operative struck whilst engaged on the highway leading to severe brain injury and orthopaedic injuries. Liability split, required innovative approach to Periodic Payments and their relationship with statutory funding.

Drowning leading to hypoxia - issue over claimant being in a low state of awareness as opposed to a persistent vegetative state - applicability of domiciliary over residential care - successful outcome valued at £6.5 million on lump sum basis.

Education

- MA (Cantab). Downing College, Cambridge
- Called to the Bar July 1982: Middle Temple
- Harmsworth Scholar

Beyond the Bar

Paul is a classic car enthusiast, holds an International Rally Drivers Licence and both a Heavy Goods Vehicle licence and PSV licence. He also enjoys hill walking and skiing, notwithstanding his knee replacement operation! He is the former Chair of a national children's charity 'Dreams Come True'.