

Paul Burns

Call 1998



Clerks' Details

Neil Wright
0151 242 8814

Sarah Rotherham
0151 242 8887

Appointments

- Registered Pupil Supervisor (2008)
- Independent Counsel to Police Misconduct Hearings (2010-2015)
- Non-Executive Director [NHS] (2010-2017)
- Senior Independent Director [NHS] (2012-2017)
- Non-Executive Director at First Ark (Group Board) (2015-2017)
- Junior Counsel to the Crown – Regional Panel A (2015)
- Legally Qualified Chair of Police Misconduct Hearings (2016)
- Chair of the LMH Group (2017)
- Legally Qualified Chair and Legal Assessor to the Medical Practitioners Tribunal Service (2017)
- Vice-Chair of Torus 62 Limited (2019)
- Recorder (2019)

Memberships

- Lincoln's Inn
- Northern Circuit
- The Social Housing Law Association
- Northern Administrative Law Association
- National Association of Legally Qualified Chairs
- Member of the Chartered Institute of Housing

Overview

Paul is independently acclaimed as a leader in his fields of practice [Legal 500 2022 and Chambers UK 2022] and is a favourite with clients. He is Head of Local Government & Social Housing at Exchange Chambers.

Paul sits as a Recorder (civil) and Legally Qualified Chair at the Medical Practitioners' Tribunal Service and in the Police Misconduct jurisdiction.

Paul advises and represents clients throughout the country and has particular expertise in the following areas of practice:

- Personal injury (RTA, OL, EL and PL cases) for Claimants and Defendants
- All aspects of housing law and housing management
- Residential landlord and tenant law and its interface with human rights law
- Community safety & anti-social behaviour (including injunctions and possession actions)
- Mental Capacity Act 2005 and Equality Act 2010 issues
- Judicial review and public law challenges
- Human Rights, data breach and privacy
- Disciplinary and regulatory matters concerning police officers and medical professionals
- Governance (including drafting and advising upon policies and procedures)

Paul provides continuing professional development training for private client firms, local authorities, private registered providers and the police.

Recommendations

Ranked leading junior for local government law and leading junior for social housing law, “Paul is the housing sector’s trusted counsel whose advice is clear and helpful even in the most complicated of cases. He produces result after result ... An accomplished barrister who is head of the local government and social housing department at Exchange Chambers ... He routinely handles high-stakes litigation. He is well versed in a variety of issues relating to public law, housing law and human rights. He is regularly instructed in anti-social behaviour matters ... acts in a wide range of housing management and anti-social behaviour cases... and routinely handles matters concerning the Mental Capacity Act 2005 and Equality Act 2010. He advises a range of landlords, local authorities and registered providers

[Chambers UK 2022]

Ranked leading junior in the North for social housing law and leading junior in the North for property and construction law, Paul “has an encyclopaedic knowledge of social housing law and practice. Paul is without doubt, a leader in the field and a go-to for complex cases. Extremely well-prepared and thorough. Clear, logical and intelligent. A helpful and persuasive advocate with an excellent knowledge of law and procedure. A daunting but sensible and friendly opponent. Unfailingly polite, even in cross examination”

[Legal 500 2022]

Ranked leading junior in the North for local government law and leading junior in the North for social housing law, Paul is “an accomplished barrister ... he advises a range of landlords, local authorities and registered providers” and “routinely handles high-stakes litigation on behalf of local authorities. He is well versed in a variety of issues relating to public law, housing law and human rights ... He is able to provide cost and time effective solutions based on a solid foundation of legal knowledge. He is extremely good to work with and quickly grasps the key elements of the case, giving clear and practical advice. He also has a very down-to-earth and friendly approach, puts clients at ease and explains things at an appropriate level.”

[Chambers UK 2021]

Ranked leading junior in the North for social housing law and leading junior in the North for property and construction law, Paul is “simply outstanding”. He has “extensive knowledge and experience ... gives succinct and practical advice, and will give a clear steer to the client based on the client’s needs. It’s not just about what the law says with Paul but how that can be applied to achieve the desired outcome. A problem solver par excellence ... Paul is a brilliant barrister, who has a way of making complicated concepts digestible. Paul is likeable and pleasant. He is approachable, accommodating, induces confidence and goes the extra mile always.”

[The Legal 500 2021]

Ranked leading junior in the North for local government law and leading junior in the North for social housing law “His knowledge is second to none and nothing is too much for Paul. He never misses anything and his attention to detail is outstanding. He is excellent on his feet and he explains complicated legal issues in plain English and develops an excellent rapport with clients and witnesses. An exceptionally knowledgeable barrister who is always approachable, helpful and friendly ... he is a very pragmatic adviser”

[Chambers UK 2020]

Ranked leading junior for property law, Paul is “Professional, extremely knowledgeable and excellent on his

feet”

[The Legal 500 2020]

Ranked leading junior in the North for local government law and leading junior in the North for social housing law, Paul “advises a range of landlords, local authorities and registered providers.... He routinely handles high-stakes litigation and is well versed in a variety of issues relating to public law, housing law and human rights. He is regularly instructed in antisocial behaviour matters ... His knowledge of housing law is incredible and he is excellent on his feet. He is personable and goes above and beyond what is required ... He has an exceptional knowledge of law and procedure. He is helpful and approachable at all times, able to provide comprehensive advice very quickly and has an excellent manner with clients”

[Chambers UK 2019]

Ranked leading junior in the North for property law, Paul is “very personable and excellent on his feet”

[The Legal 500 2018/19]

Ranked leading junior in the North for local government law and leading junior in the North for social housing law, Paul “is steeped in the sector and is the go-to person ... An exceptional barrister who is the first port of call for all forms of legal advice. He is approachable, knowledgeable and dependable ... He routinely handles high-stakes litigation for public bodies, local authorities and registered providers ... His specialist practice includes housing management, anti-social behaviour cases, the Mental Capacity Act 2005 and the Equality Act 2010 ... He is well versed in a variety of issues relating to public law, housing law and human rights ... is exceptionally thorough, very detailed and approachable ... and gives clear, concise advice.”

[Chambers UK 2018]

Ranked leading property junior in the North, Paul is “a key name for social housing cases” and is noted for his “first-class grasp of the law.”

[The Legal 500 2017]

Ranked leading junior in the North for local government law and leading junior in the North for social housing law, Paul is “a fine local government and social housing specialist who routinely handles high-stakes litigation for a range of prominent public sector clients. He is well versed in a variety of issues relating to public law, regulatory law and human rights ... Paul is excellent to work alongside and is a client favourite. His knowledge is exceptional and he is extremely approachable and accommodating. Head of the local government and social housing department since 2010 his specialist practice includes housing management and antisocial behaviour cases. He routinely handles matters concerning the Mental Capacity Act 2005 and Equality Act 2010 ... He is always on hand to provide advice when required, nothing is ever too much trouble or ever too much for him, we’ve not come across anyone comparable in terms of knowledge and expertise. He is thorough, doesn’t patronise clients, provides great advice on risk and guides clients of all degrees of knowledge through the legal process effectively”

[Chambers UK 2017]

Ranked leading property junior in the North Paul is described as “An outstanding court performer and all-round practitioner”

[The Legal 500 2016]

Ranked leading junior in the North for local government law and leading junior in the North for social housing

law, Paul is “Widely regarded as a leading authority in social housing law, he is regularly instructed in high profile and test cases for both social landlords and local authorities. His work covers all aspects of housing law as well as civil law remedies, public law and policy issues ... He is frequently instructed by local authorities to advise on residential landlord and tenant law and measures to combat anti-social behaviour. He is particularly experienced in housing disputes and associated health and safety matters. His case preparation is exceptional and he is 100% committed to his clients. He is absolutely brilliant, of national quality and always ahead of the game in terms of new aspects of the law”

[Chambers UK 2016]

Ranked leading property junior in the North: “particularly strong in social housing, including cases with mental health and human rights issues”

[The Legal 500 2015]

“Paul Burns leads Chambers’ local government and social housing practice and is instructed on a wide range of work including human rights and public law challenges and mental health issues”.... “He has an impressive reputation for social housing work. He doesn’t exclude anyone from the legal process and explains every step ... he is absolutely excellent on all areas ...”

[Chambers UK 2015]

Ranked leading property junior in the North: “respected by judges, instructing solicitors and their clients”

[The Legal 500 2014]

“Marries an impressive record for local government work with strength in social housing matters. He gets results and is the go to Counsel. He is very strong in court and has the judge on side immediately. Sources highlight his ability to explain things clearly to lay clients who appreciate his straightforward and pragmatic approach. A true expert in housing law and a safe pair of hands – he’s a real leader in the field – the perfect barrister for local authorities”

[Chambers UK 2014]

“A leading social housing practitioner respected by judges, instructing solicitors and their clients.”

[The Legal 500 2013]

“Paul Burns has a strong reputation amongst peers for his work in the local government context as it relates to housing. He acts for developers, authorities and individual claimants ... He is very good on his feet and appears to have the ear of all judges that he appears in front of. He is especially rated for his work in antisocial behaviour and is always prepared to give realistic and robust advice”

[Chambers UK 2013]

“Housing law expert Paul Burns has a tremendous reputation with the judges in the local courts”

[The Legal 500 2012]

“An undisputed leader in social housing absolutely brilliant and a man with a high success rate ... a pleasure to work with ... sources note his ability to endear himself to both clients and instructing solicitors ... he is singled out in particular for his expertise in social housing and the interface of that with human rights law”

[Chambers UK 2012]

“Paul Burns is considered the best housing Counsel on the Northern Circuit”

[The Legal 500 2011]

“He has an enviable reputation for his expert knowledge on anti-social behaviour litigation. He advises on the full range of housing matters and is noted for his thorough preparation and personable nature ... he is extremely highly regarded in the region for his local government work and is particularly commended for his expertise in housing law and stock transfers”

[Chambers UK 2011]

“He is an excellent advocate who always has the ear of the Judge. His advice is always frank and realistic. He inspires great confidence in clients, who invariably go back to him time and time again”

[Chambers UK 2010]

Barrister of the Year 2009-2010

[Biennial Liverpool Law Society Legal Awards]

“Paul Burns has carved out a niche for himself as an expert on housing management, stock transfers and anti-social behaviour orders. Paul is recognised for his incredible level of expertise.... You know you’ll get the best representation out there when you instruct him and you know he’ll always do a damn good job for you”

[Chambers UK 2009]

In 2008 Paul was the only barrister in the north west of England to be listed as one of the top 10 UK “Future Stars of the Bar”

[The Times]

In 2007 Paul became the only barrister to date to be awarded a Chief Constable’s Commendation by Merseyside Police. The Commendation was awarded for “commitment, professionalism, dedication and motivation” following Paul’s role as Counsel in high-profile litigation concerning serious gang related activity in Merseyside.

Education

- LLB (Hons) University of Liverpool (1997)
- Hardwicke Scholar - The Honourable Society of Lincoln’s Inn (1997)
- Sir Thomas More Scholar - The Honourable Society of Lincoln’s Inn (1997)
- Bar Vocational Course, Inns of Court School of Law (1998) PGDipLaw (London: 1998)
- Exchange Chambers (1998-date)
- Head of Local Government & Social Housing Department: Exchange Chambers (2010-date)

Beyond the Bar

Paul was a Non-Executive Director at Southport and Ormskirk Hospital NHS Trust between June 2010 and April 2017. He was Chair of the Trust's Remuneration & Nominations Committee between January 2013 and December 2016 and was the Senior Independent Director between April 2012 and April 2017. Paul was a Non-Executive Director on the First Ark Limited Group Board between September 2015 and March 2017. In April 2017 Paul was appointed Chair of The LMH Group. In January 2019 Paul was appointed Vice-Chair of Torus 62 Limited and Chair of its Remuneration & Nominations Committee.