

CHRISTOPHER KATKOWSKI KC | MANCHESTER, LEEDS & BIRMINGHAM

Year of call: 1982

Clerked by: Gary Smith Mark Ronson

AREAS OF EXPERTISE:



Planning

Profile

Chris Katkowski KC specialises in planning work in the main either preparing for and appearing at planning inquiries or acting in judicial reviews of planning decisions. The majority of his clients are from the private and corporate sectors together with a number of local planning authorities. Prior to taking silk Chris was a member of what is now the "A" Panel of Treasury Counsel as a result of which he has appeared in many court cases and continues to do so.

Chris is consistently recognised in UK legal directories and in Planning magazine's annual survey of planning lawyers as one of the foremost leaders in planning work in the country.

Chris has topped Planning magazine's annual survey as the No. 1 planning KC a record 12 times. More than anyone else in the history of the survey. The 2022 survey describes Chris as: "undoubtedly the planning advocate with the most authority" listing him as the highest rated practitioner for commercial work.

Chris' eye-catching successes have changed the face of London.

In his book "The Shard" Howard Watson reports that the late "Irvine Sellar said..."I'm a genius at picking geniuses:... the best QC in Christopher Katkowski." "As a tough and critical man with extraordinarily high expectations of others, Sellar rarely hands out compliments, but his view of Christopher Katkowski remains undimmed by time: he describes the KC's closing as "poetry". During the lengthy inquiry the Queen's Counsel himself was the pivotal figure in carrying the arguments in favour of the scheme. The transcripts reveal Katkowski's point-by-point dismantling of the counter-arguments and several masterstrokes." In his book "Leading from the Front" Gerald Ronson describes Chris as "a brilliant QC" having won the inquiry for the Heron Tower in the City. Chris' caseload is diverse. As Planning Magazine says "he has seen it all [and] done it all".

He has appeared at hundreds of planning inquiries and court cases. A good deal of his work involves advising clients how to avoid planning applications ending up at planning inquiries or being challenged in court.

Chris was appointed by the DCLG as an advisor to the Local Plans Expert Group in 2016 and by MHCLG as an advisor to the Rosewell Review in 2018; he was a keynote speaker at the Planning Inspectorate's Annual Training Event in 2018. Chris was the planning lawyer appointed by the Government to the Task Force which drew up the proposals for sweeping changes to the planning system set out in the Planning for the Future White Paper published by the Government in August 2020. Chris was a member of the working group who advised DEFRA on HRA reforms in 2021 / 2022. Chris is down to earth and approachable and enjoys team working. He must be the only planning KC to have been awarded a gold disc (by MTV to celebrate the successful planning appeal for a new studio). His cases have appeared in episodes of the Archers and Judge John Deed.

Year of Call: 1982

Year of Silk: 1999

Areas of Expertise

Planning

Memberships

PEBA

ALBA

Qualifications

Chris graduated from Cambridge with a BA (Law) in 1978, an LLB (First Class) in 1979 and MA in 1982. He is a Bencher of Gray's Inn.

Recommendations

Chambers UK 2023

"Nationally he is the number one planning lawyer". "The best planning silk in the business". "Christopher's advocacy is top-drawer, cutting through the ephemera to focus on the key matters". "He has good judgment and is an effective advocate and a novel case-maker."

Legal 500 2023

"highly regarded and recommended."

