

Robert Williams



called: 2008
education: LLB, University College London

clerk: Jason Savage

Rob's practice covers all areas of chambers' work, with a particular emphasis on:

- Public law (including local government law)
- Planning and Environment
- Housing
- Property (including Landlord and Tenant)

In March 2012 Rob was appointed to the Attorney General's 'C' Panel. As a result he regularly appears in the Administrative Court on behalf of Government departments. He has also appeared in the higher courts on behalf of claimants.

Planning Magazine has twice ranked Rob as one of the top planning barristers under the age of 35.

Recent examples of his work include:

- ***Leeds Group Plc v (1) Leeds City Council; (2) Secretary of State for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, (3) Jones [2012] 1 WLR 1561*** – A judicial review in which the appellant (unsuccessfully) argued that to apply the definition of a Town and Village Green brought in by the CROW Act 2000 to use of land prior to that enactment would be contrary to the presumption against retrospective legislation and breach their Protocol 1, Article 1 ECHR rights. Rob appeared for the

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interested party, making both written and oral submissions to the Court of Appeal.

- ***Abubakar v Entry Clearance Officer [2012] EWCA Civ 377*** – The Court of Appeal clarified the proper approach for assessing whether an applicant for entry clearance would be 'adequately maintained' for the purposes of the immigration rules. Rob appeared (as sole counsel) for the Appellant.
- ***R (on the application of Garner) v Elmbridge Borough Council [2011] Env LR 10*** – Rob appeared, as junior to James Findlay QC, in a leading case on the granting of Protective Cost Orders in judicial review challenges to planning permissions.
- **Hillgrove Paddocks Planning Inquiry (2012)** – representing the Local Planning Authority (South Downs National Park Authority) in a three-day planning inquiry. The central issue was whether there was an essential need for a rural worker to live on his farm. The Inspector accepted the Authority's submissions that the NPPF had not altered the substantive test to be applied.
- **Pond Farm Planning Inquiries (2011-2013)** - appearing for the Local Planning Authority (Chichester District Council) in a series of multi-day planning inquiries relating to the refusal of retrospective planning permission for numerous gypsy sites.
- **Whitstable Bay Estate CPO (2013)** - Rob is currently advising Canterbury City Council in relation to their proposed compulsory purchase of the Whitstable Bay Estate (part of a wider SSSI and RAMSAR site). The Council's proposals are being pursued in partnership with the RSPB and Natural England.
- ***Asghar v London Borough of Barnet v Minoan Investments Limited (2013; judgment pending)*** – Rob appeared for the London Borough of Barnet in a three-day trial in which the local authority (the mesne tenant) was defending a claim of damages from the tenant for an alleged breach of lease covenants, as well as making an additional (Part 20) claim against the freeholder for breach of covenants in the headlease.

Rob read law at University College London, graduating in 2006 with a first class degree (ranked 1st in his year). He was awarded the Lord Denning scholarship by Lincoln's Inn for the BVC and was called to the Bar in 2008. He joined chambers in October 2009 following successful completion of his 12-month pupillage.

Local Authority Governance and Services

Robert regularly acts for and advises local authorities on a wide variety of matters. In addition to his housing and planning law practice, his experience includes:

- Advising a local authority in respect of a potential judicial review challenge of DEFRA's designation of the South Downs National Park
- Advising on the merits of common law claims against local authorities, including claims of misfeasance in public office and negligence
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- Advising on the merits of public law claims brought against local authorities

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- Making applications under the Mental Health Act 1983
- Advising local authorities on the application of Public Interest Immunity to social security records

Advising a local authority on the advertisement requirements within the GDPO 1995

Associations

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- Member of the Constitutional and Administrative Law Bar Association
- Member of the Social Housing Law Association
- Member of the Planning and Environment Bar Association