



## Practice

**John Beckley is "excellent with vulnerable clients" and "a very good trial barrister" who is praised for his pragmatism and efficiency. Chambers UK 2012**

John is predominantly a housing practitioner, although he has extensive experience of community care, social security and asylum support. A focus of his housing work is representing tenants who are accused of nuisance and anti-social behaviour, including tenants with mental health and drug problems. He is regularly instructed by the Official Solicitor. He also represents tenants where injunctions, closure orders and ASBOs are sought. He has a great deal of experience in section 204 homelessness appeals and homelessness judicial review proceedings.

John has an expanding prison law practice. He regularly represents prisoners at adjudications, parole board hearings and in associated judicial review proceedings.

He has represented travellers in High Court injunction and committal proceedings.

John is committed to acting for tenants, travellers, homeless people and prisoners. His background as an advice worker means he has a practical and determined approach to conducting his cases.

## Background

Prior to joining Garden Court, John supervised the welfare benefits franchise at Tower Hamlets Law Centre. He was a member of the Tower Hamlets Community Legal Service steering group, chaired the Tower Hamlets Advice Providers' Forum and provided training for local community advocacy organisations. John has also worked for the Disability Law Service and the Landmark, an organisation for people living with HIV/Aids. He is therefore very experienced at working with people from varied backgrounds and in dealing sensitively with people who are facing stressful situations.

John has been an active trade union member; he was a shop steward in Unison and the T&G as well as a member of the Lesbian and Gay Advisory Committee in the CWU.

John was shortlisted for the Young Legal Aid Lawyer of the Year in 2008.

In December 2010, John was part of a delegation of lawyers sent by Advocats Sans Frontieres to report on housing rights in the Sheikh Jarrah area of East Jerusalem.

## Notable Cases

**Hall and Others v Mayor of London** [2010] EWCA Civ 817 16 July 2010

The defendants took possession of Parliament Square Gardens in London to establish a Democracy Village peace camp. The ownership of the Square is vested in the Crown and it is managed by the Mayor on behalf of the Greater London Authority. The Mayor sought a possession order. The defendants claimed that he had no right to seek possession because a possession order could only be granted to a claimant with better legal title than the persons in actual occupation. The Court of Appeal upheld a possession order made by the judge. The statutory scheme

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2003

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**Education**  
BA (Hons) Philosophy,  
Politics and Economics,  
Graduate Diploma in Law

**Practice Areas:**  
John Beckley is a member of the following Practice Areas:  
- Community Care  
- Gypsy & Traveller Rights  
- Housing  
- Planning &  
Environmental Law  
- Prison Law  
- Property Law  
- Public & Administrative Law

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made by the Greater London Authority Act 1999 gave the Mayor the right to seek possession.

**Newport City Council v Charles** [2008] EWCA Civ 1541 A successor tenant failing to tell the local authority of his mother's death did not create a proprietary estoppel on which the authority could rely to defeat the time limit contained in Ground 16 of Schedule 2 of the Housing Act 1985.

**Birmingham City Council v Paul Walker** [2007] UKHL 22. House of Lords dismissing Birmingham's appeal.

**Birmingham City Council v Walker** [2006] 1 WLR 815 'second' succession to a secure tenancy.

**Christofis v Residential Property Tribunal Service** [2006] EWHC 2875 (Admin) Whether the Panel had failed to take into account a relevant consideration, namely the planning history of the flat or whether they could rely on their own inspection.'

**R(IS)2/2004**. Whether delay by the Secretary of State in seeking to recover an overpayment can preclude a fair trial.

**M (a child) v Chief Adjudication Officer** (1999) 96(44) L.S.G. 41. The meaning of severe mental impairment in DLA Regulations (as caseworker).

## Publications

Chapter on anti-social behaviour law in the Law Society Handbook on Housing Law.

Contributor to "Enforcing Housing Rights: the case of Sheikh Jarrah": a report of the ASF fact-finding mission to Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territory. Available at <http://www.haldane.org/press/index.php> .

## Training

John is an experienced trainer in all aspects of housing law. He has provided training for, among others, Jordan Publishing, the National Association of Citizens' Advice Bureaux, Portsmouth Community Legal Advice Centre, Fisher Meredith LLP and the Inner London Probation Service.

## Professional Memberships

- Chair of the Management Committee of Lambeth Law Centre
- Haldane Society
- Housing Law Practitioners Association
- Association of Prison Lawyers
- Bar Lesbian and Gay Group
- Liberty

Profile updated October 2011.