



Stephen Hockman KC

CALLED: 1970 | SILK: 1990

Clerks@spirebarristers.co.uk

King's Counsel (Door Tenant)

Summary

Stephen Hockman KC has specialised in all forms of regulatory law for approximately the last 30 years. He is a leader of exceptionally high standing who has a broad environmental, health and safety and planning practice encompassing judicial review, inquiries, arbitration, civil claims and criminal prosecution and defence work.

Stephen has a varied client base, including corporates and individuals, regulator and (alleged) polluter, and he is equally at home undertaking effective cross-examination as in sustained legal submission at any level of tribunal. His particular strength lies in the breadth and varied nature of his practice. He is able to draw on his extensive experience in his specialist areas of regulatory and health & safety law, civil and commercial law, and planning and environmental law to provide a unique service in complex and high profile litigation.

Stephen is recognised as one of the leading practitioners in the fields of Health and Safety Law and Energy and Natural Resources. His practice also encompasses in particular environmental law including making and resisting public law challenges to environmental decisions, appearing for claimants/defendants in environmental cases in the common law courts, for example nuisance, and prosecuting and defending in major pollution cases.

Stephen's practice incorporates too a significant element of local government work, and he has appeared for and advised local authorities in every part of the country on a regular basis, on issues such as town and country planning and internal governance.

Areas of Practice

INQUESTS

JUDICIAL REVIEW & ADMINISTRATIVE LAW

Appointments and Memberships

Became Queens' Counsel (QC), 1990 (now King's Counsel)
 Head of Chambers at 6 Pump Court, 1997-Present
 Chairman of the Bar, 2006
 Former Deputy High Court Judge
 Master of the Bench of the Middle Temple
 Treasurer of Middle Temple 2015
 Former Visiting Professor of Law at the City University

Former member of the Council of English Nature, (now Natural England), the statutory body charged with nature conservation

Chair of Plea Negotiation Working Group established by the Attorney General, ultimately leading to a new protocol for the conduct of complex fraud litigation in 2009.

Honorary member of the Bar of New Zealand

Member of the Bar of the Republic of Ireland

Memberships

- Former Chairman of the Environmental Law Foundation
- Former Trustee of ClientEarth
- Former Advisory Council Member, Advocates for International Development
- Chairman, International Court for the Environment (ICE) Coalition
- Advisory Board Member of the Department of Climate Law, University of Strathclyde
- Visiting Fellow of the Centre for Progressive Policy (a non-party political think-tank)

Legal Directories

“...highlighted as a “living legend” with a strong focus on regulatory disputes” and “an erudite and exceedingly clever silk.”

Who’s Who UK Legal Bar [2022]

“A true gentleman with profound knowledge of environmental law. He has the enviable ability to simplify and quickly deliver the most technical and complex legal arguments.” “He is a clear and persuasive advocate, but also incisive and strategic and therefore able to summarise the issues for clients to provide the practical advice they need.”

“He provides a sterling service in very difficult circumstances.” “He is everything one hopes for in a barrister – he is incisive, strategic and a clear and persuasive advocate.”

“He is hugely knowledgeable and experienced.”

Chambers UK Bar Guide [2022]

“” A very good technical lawyer and particularly good on appeals. “

“Stephen masters a very substantial amount of material within a very short time and dealt with extremely difficult clients in an exemplary fashion. “

Legal 500 [2022]

“His judgment is superb, and he’s able to persuade his clients to take a sensible and pragmatic approach.”

“He’s a genius, and is supremely confident without an inch of ego or arrogance. He has a really wonderful turn of phrase and is able to quickly get to the point.” “Very experienced, very knowledgeable and excellent on his feet.”

Chambers UK Bar Guide [2021]

“He remains one of the doyens of this area of law and can handle very sensitive cases in a masterly way.”

“He is one of the most experienced health and safety silks around. He is particularly good on technical points of law and appellate work. He has an absolutely huge intellect; very few work harder than he does.”

“His knowledge of the law pertaining to the subject matter was impressive as was the way in which the individuals concerned were handled.”

Legal 500 [2021]

Education

Educated at Eltham College London
Studied Law at Jesus College Cambridge, graduating in 1969
Called to the Bar by the Middle Temple, 1970