

## Sara Beecham

Called: 1999  
sarabeecham@fivepaper.com

"Very experienced, confident and approachable."  
"Technically excellent and a pleasure to deal with."

Chambers & Partners



### Profile

Sara Beecham is a Barrister at Five Paper specialising in Employment Law and Property Law. She is seen as a leading housing junior in The Legal 500 and Chambers and Partners.

Sara is instructed by a number of top ranked Social Housing solicitors and directly by numerous local authorities and private registered providers.

### Description of Practice

Sara Beecham has a particular interest in matters involving Equality Act 2010 and Human Rights Act 1998 challenges. Last year she appeared as junior counsel in the Supreme Court in *Akerman-Livingstone v Aster Communities Limited*, now the leading case on the approach to discrimination defences to possession claims. Sara has a wealth of experience in anti-social behaviour proceedings (possession and injunctions) and matters involving security of tenure, succession, tenancy fraud and disrepair.

Sara also has considerable experience in employment law acting for local authorities and private clients in both the tribunal and before the Employment Appeal Tribunal on matters including unfair and wrongful dismissal, all strands of discrimination and victimisation, TUPE and redundancy.

### Directory Quotes



*"Highly experienced in human rights and discrimination-related cases."*  
**The Legal 500 UK 2017**

*"A very strong advocate."*  
**The Legal 500 UK 2015**

*"Fantastic and has a real eye for detail. She's good at stripping back the case and looking at purely the facts." "Cuts through the haze and very quickly sees if you've overlooked something."*

**Chambers & Partners 2018**

*"Very experienced, confident and approachable." "Technically excellent and a pleasure to deal with."*

**Chambers & Partners 2017**

*"She is an excellent advocate who takes a common-sense approach to matters and is willing to go the extra mile." "She's very strong across all areas of housing law."*

**Chambers & Partners 2016**

## Appointments

Sara Beecham was appointed a Deputy District Judge in 2010.

## Qualifications

- St Edmund Hall, Oxford University: BA Hons Modern History and English
- College of Law: CPE/Inns of Court School of Law: BVC
- Middle Temple Astbury Scholar

## Important Cases

### **Haringey LBC v O'Brien UKEAT/0004/16/LA**

Employment: Abuse of process

Sara Beecham successfully argued on behalf of the local authority employer that numerous Equality Act 2010 claims by a former teacher upheld by an Employment Tribunal should be struck out as an abuse of process because they should have been advanced in earlier proceedings brought by the Claimant. The Employment Appeal Tribunal also accepted the local authority's appeal that the Employment Tribunal had misapplied the tests for s15 discrimination and s26 harassment under the Equality Act 2010 and that the Employment Tribunal had erred in its approach to time limits.

### **Akerman-Livingstone v Aster Communities Limited [2015] UKSC 2015**

Housing: discrimination defences

Sara acted as junior counsel in the Supreme Court (and Court of Appeal) for the social landlord concerning (i) the availability of summary disposal in a possession claim where unlawful discrimination is alleged and (ii) the correct approach to the issue of proportionality in an Equality Act possession defence.

### **Robert Sage T/A Prestige Nuring Care Limited v O'Connell and others [2014] IRLR 428**

Employment: Transfer of Undertakings

A hope and wish that a contract would be short term did not prevent a service provision change within Regulation 3 of the TUPE Regulations 2006. Further, the question of whether a person was assigned to the organised grouping of employees transferring under Regulation 4, was to be answered by asking where that person would be required to work immediately before the transfer and the Tribunal erred in treating the contractual place of work as determinative.

**Allied Healthcare v George UKEAT/0169/08/ZT**

Employment: Race discrimination and Victimisation.

A Tribunal had erred in considering an allegation of victimisation which was not properly before it.

**Webb v Wandsworth LBC [2008] EWCA Civ 1643**

Housing: nuisance possession proceedings.

Relevance of acquittals and/or discontinued criminal prosecutions to judge's assessment of reasonableness of ordering possession.

**Professional Memberships**

Sara is a member of the Social Housing Law Association ([www.shla.org.uk](http://www.shla.org.uk)) and the Employment Law Bar Association ([elba.org.uk](http://elba.org.uk)).