



Christopher Walker
Year of Call: 1990



Christopher Walker is a highly regarded specialist barrister in all fields of Personal Injury and related work. For many years he has been consistently recommended for Personal Injury by both the *Legal 500* and *Chambers UK* which refer to his focus on high level catastrophic and fatal accident claims.

Christopher has huge experience in all aspects of personal injury litigation drawn from over 30 years in practice, with a particular emphasis on the most severe spinal cord, brain injury and chronic pain conditions.

He has built a reputation as an engaging advocate with a forensic eye for detail who makes incredibly complicated litigation seem easy. He is often praised by both lay and professional clients for tackling the most difficult cases whilst providing practical and client-friendly advice.

Instructed on behalf of both Claimants and Defendants, Christopher generally acts in high value claims involving the established categories of employer's liability, road traffic accidents and public liability claims. Many of his cases involve awards or settlements running to many millions of pounds. He regularly litigates with and against silks.

His practice encompasses associated clinical and professional negligence claims, health and safety prosecutions, coroner's inquests, and litigation with a focus on some particularly thorny issues of human rights breaches.

Christopher is well known as an intelligent and persuasive negotiator. Skills which are regularly put into practice whether the case gets to joint settlement meeting, mediation, or trial. The latest edition of the *Legal 500* recognises that **"His advocacy is very sharp, and judges respond to his concise arguments and helpful manner."**

Notable cases include:

- *Grenfell Fire* - Personal injury claims of senior fire officers (ongoing);
- *PPP v. RRR* [2017] - Christopher acted as junior counsel (to Stephen Killalea QC) for a 12 year old boy who suffered a significant brain injury in a road traffic accident in 2005, when only 3 months old. The case settled for a lump sum of £6.75 million and a PPO of £120,000 per annum (commencing at the age of 35 years), providing for a fully capitalised value of £16.11 million;
- *W v L* [2021] - Instructed alone on behalf of the Defendant to a claim brought by a 56 year old motorcyclist who had suffered C3 paraplegia following a road traffic accident. An early JSM was convened and settlement agreed for lump sum of £4.17 million with PPOs of £395,000 & reverse indemnities;
- *ABC* [2017] - Christopher represented a 43-year-old motorcyclist who suffered a severe head injury following a road traffic accident. The Claimant's capacity to manage his affairs remained in dispute. The Court approved a capital sum settlement of £2.35 million pounds, to be held in a bespoke trust created for the Claimant;
- *MNO v. MOD* [2018] - Christopher represented a young soldier who suffered a severe brain injury and multiple orthopaedic injuries in an army parachute training jump when his parachute failed to deploy fully.

Following a 82.5/17.5% liability apportionment in the Claimant's favour, the High Court approved a mixed capital/PPO settlement to the fully capitalised value of £4.95 million;

- *Ovu v London Underground*
[2021] EWHC 2733 – duty of care under the Occupiers' Liability Acts of 1957 & 1984;
- *Hawes Harlow DC* [2014] EWHC – Highways Act 1980, nuisance & negligence;
- *Higgs v. Pickles* [2011] PIQR P15 - Application of Ogden tables;
- *Chambers v. Excel Logistics*
[2006] EWCA 1031 - Acceleration periods & approaches to calculation of future loss of earnings' claims.

Recommendations

'An excellent barrister. He is very detail conscious and very thorough in his approach.' - Personal Injury, Legal 500 2024

'A first-rate advocate with the ability to cut through to the heart of the case effortlessly.' - *Personal Injury, Legal 500 2023*

A personal injury specialist who focuses on catastrophic brain and spinal injuries, amputations and fatal accidents. He receives instructions from claimant and defendant solicitors and is praised for his adroit handling of employers' and public liability disputes. He has extensive experience of cases with tricky contributory negligence and mental health elements. His practice covers a range of related areas including clinical and professional negligence, human rights matters, coroner's inquests, and health and safety prosecutions. **"A very good negotiator."** - *Personal Injury (London Bar), Chambers UK Bar 2022.*

A well-respected barrister with a wealth of experience in fatal accident and catastrophic injury claims. He also has expertise in product liability and employers' liability cases. He is regularly instructed by both defendants and claimants. **"Excellent with clients and extremely thorough."** - *Personal Injury (Western Bar), Chambers UK Bar 2022.*

"Quick-thinking and adapts to changing scenarios quickly - tenacious but not aggressive." - *Personal Injury, Legal 500 2022.*

"He has a good eye for detail." "He's very incisive and excellent with clients – he's able to explain difficult issues in terms they can understand." "Chris is really forensic and always well prepared. There's not a page in the bundle he won't have read and know about." "He is very approachable and great with clients." - *Personal Injury, Chambers UK Bar 2021*

"Always takes a practical and pragmatic approach to cases allied with good judgement." "He's excellent in his analysis of the evidence and knows exactly how to coordinate a team of experts to produce the strongest case. He's very engaging and puts clients at their ease with his easy charm and obvious empathy. His advocacy is very sharp, and judges respond to his concise arguments and helpful manner." - *Personal Injury, Legal 500 2021*

"He continues to be hugely impressive in his willingness to take on difficult cases and in his exceptionally legally robust drafting. He is also hugely persuasive in both written and oral advocacy." "He's very thorough and very good on the detail." "He is very bright, thorough and well prepared. He quickly gets to the nub of issues and his advice is clear." "He has a fantastic manner with clients and is a good negotiator." - *Personal Injury, Chambers UK Bar 2020*

"Good client care and an excellent grasp of issues in high value cases." - *Personal Injury, Legal 500 2020*

"A fantastic advocate who is really understated in the way he goes about it." "Very well prepared, confident and insightful with experts and a skilful negotiator."

- *Personal Injury, Chambers UK Bar 2018*

“Known for catastrophic injury and fatal accident claims.” - *Personal Injury, Legal 500 2017*

“He is quick to note the strengths and difficulties in each case and is not frightened to fight the claimant’s corner. He gets to the heart of the issue quickly and provides practical and client-friendly advice.” - *Personal Injury, Chambers UK Bar 2016*

“He is an incredible, technical lawyer who makes incredibly complicated litigation seem easy.” “He gets his way by gentle persuasion and steely determination.” - *Personal Injury, Chambers UK Bar 2016*

“An experienced and intelligent negotiator who is very good on his feet.” “He is clever, collaborative and adept at complex cases.” - *Personal Injury, Legal 500 2015*

“He gets down to the issues and absorbs vast amounts of information very quickly.” “An experienced and high-calibre barrister, who is technically excellent and has superb client skills.” - *Personal Injury, Chambers UK Bar 2015*

“He’s a charmer – if you need someone to face up to testosterone you put Christopher Walker in the room and he’ll calm them down. He’s tenacious without being aggressive.” - *Personal Injury, Chambers UK Bar*

Personal Injury

Christopher undertakes all aspects of personal injury work on behalf of both Claimants and Defendants in high value cases. He has been recognised for his particular specialism in catastrophic injury cases where individuals have suffered life changing injuries.

Noted for his hugely persuasive style in both written and oral advocacy, he is typically engaged in claims involving spinal injury, brain damage, soft tissue & orthopaedic injury leading to amputation, psychiatric damage, and fatal accidents. He is instructed in employers’ liability claims (including industrial disease and stress at work), road traffic accident claims, and public liability claims.

Sample of litigation in 2020/21, recently concluded or ongoing (both Claimant & Defendant):

Road Traffic Accidents

- *Re XAH* – 19 year old male suffered severe brain injury when struck while standing beside car. Lump sum award of £12.5 million approved. Led by Christopher Melton QC;
- *Re H* – 29 year old female pedestrian struck by car suffered C7 tetraplegia, motor complete. Lump sum settlement of £12.5 million. Led by Elizabeth-Anne Gumbel QC;
- *W v L* – 56 year-old motorcyclist suffers C3 incomplete paraplegia following accident. Lump sum of £4.17 million with PPOs of £395,000 & reverse indemnities;
- *W v T* – 48-year-old motorcyclist suffered paraplegia following accident. Contributory negligence in play. Damages of £4.5 million;
- *M v S* – Below knee amputation following accident to 50-year-old motorcyclist. Damages of £2 million;
- *Re P*
 - 28-year-old motorcyclist with significant lower limb injuries. Salvage surgery of little benefit. Through knee amputation anticipated at some point. Damages of £1.58 million;

- *AB v EFG* - Significant brain injury to 55-year-old cyclist knocked off his bike at a roundabout. Was not wearing a cycle helmet. Damages of £1.56 million;
- *P v M* - Significant lower limb injury to 24-year-old motorcyclist. Damages of £958,000;
- *ABC v GHI* - Claimant passenger suffered significant brain damage in car driven into a tree by driver, the latter dying. Both parties intoxicated and alleged to have conspired to buy drugs. Ex turpi causa defence advanced. Led on liability issue by Stephen Grime, QC. Damages of £750,000;
- *H v A* - Significant spinal and other orthopaedic injuries to 28-year-old motorcyclist. Liability apportioned. Loss of career in RAF. Damages of £750,000;
- *M v P*
 - Collision as Defendant motorist drifted across into Claimant's carriageway. Defendant died following subarachnoid haemorrhage. Issue as to whether it was spontaneous, pre collision, or post traumatic. Automatism defence. Claimant suffers significant lower limb injury. Damages £650,000;
- Re *SMRW* – 34 year old female killed in rta. Damages £650,000;
- *C v F*
 - Female pedestrian, at outset of acting career, suffered serious orthopaedic injury and facial scarring. Atypical career progression analysis. Damages of £320,000.

Accident at work

- *Grenfell Fire* - Personal injury claims of senior fire officers (ongoing);
- *P v MJL* - Labourer on construction site lost control of petrol-powered saw. Trans humeral amputation followed. Liability disputed. Settled for £3 million;
- *VW v Royal Mail* - Brain injury following accident at work. Short life expectation. Damages of £757,000;
- *E v S* – 62 year old struck by falling acrow prop, suffering brain injury the extent of which was disputed. Fundamental dishonesty alleged. Settlement approved of £400,000 following 25% reduction for contributory negligence;
- Re: *MM* - Suicide resulting from stress at work. Liability disputed. Damages of £250,000;
- *M v Boots* - Electrocution injury leading to vestibular disturbance. Fundamental dishonesty alleged. To be listed for trial.

Public liability

- *GG v CC* - 68-year-old with advanced Parkinson's disease fell from parapet wall outside property, suffering spinal injury. Liability disputed. When discharged from hospital, C was paraplegic. Short life expectation. Damages of £425,000.

Reported cases include:

- *Ovu v London Underground Ltd* [2021] EWHC 2733 – Claimant alighted from night tube and walked into a non-public area of the station. Fell from external staircase to his death - duty of care under the Occupiers'

Liability Acts of 1957 & 1984;

- *Higgs v. Pickles* [2011] PIQR P15 - Application of Ogden tables;
- *Johnson v. Chesterfield & Derbyshire Royal Hospital NHS Trust* [22.05.09, High Court] - Interim payments;
- *White v. Lidl UK* [2005] EWHC 871 - On definition of a "secondary victim";
- *Carruthers v. MP Fireworks* [2007] Lawtel AC0112670 - Control of expert evidence;
- *Chambers v. Excel Logistics*
[2006] EWCA 1031 - Acceleration periods & approaches to calculation of future loss of earnings' claim.

Human Rights

Alongside Christopher's personal injury practice he has gained a depth of experience of litigation with a focus on some particularly thorny civil liberties issues and human rights breaches. Examples of his work include:

- Fatal accident and severe personal claims pursued by Tanzanian nationals following shooting and other incidents in an open-pit gold mine by local security/police officers;
- A personal injury claim made on behalf of a middle-aged female following the acquisition of a profound hypoglycaemic brain injury while detained in police custody;
- *Watson Woodhouse (a firm) v. The Chief Constable of Cleveland Police* - Settlement of £550,000 following admitted false imprisonment of a leading criminal defence solicitor and an unlawful search of his premises and those of his firm;
- Settlement of fatal accident claims arising from death of a detainee in police custody from a drugs' overdose.

Coroners & Inquests

Christopher has extensive experience of representing interested parties in jury and coroner only inquest hearings. He is often instructed to appear in workplace health & safety inquests where employees have suffered a fatal fall or otherwise injured whilst operating machinery. Sample of inquests with juries:

- *Re: Bernard Ovu* (2017) – Mr Ovu died as he fell down an emergency exit staircase at Canning Town tube station. Consideration of issues relating to lone working staff and action to be taken by LUL when members of the public access non-public areas;
- *Re: Adam Withers* (2016) – death of detained patient diagnosed with acute and transient psychosis who climbed onto conservatory roof of Epsom Hospital and thence onto industrial chimney from which he fell. Consideration of hospital's failure to assess absconding risks of vulnerable and psychiatric patients. Subsequent prosecution of hospital;
- *Re: Shaun Maslin* (2014) – death of Mr Maslin, a sub-contractor, in an explosion while pressure testing a gas main near Staines. Subsequent Regulation 28 report advising as to need for national minimum requirements for operatives within the gas industry for pressure testing.

Education

MA in Law (Cambridge)

Licence Speciale en Droit Européen (Université Libre de Bruxelles)

Harmsworth Scholar, Middle Temple

Memberships and Associations

Personal Injury Bar Association

Personal Interests

Fluent French speaker; Classical musician; Burnley FC