



James Rankin

Year of call: 1983



Practice Profile

With well over twenty years experience in licensing and regulatory work he is ranked by Chambers Directory as a starred junior. These are his recent entries in Chambers Guide to the Legal profession:

"A tenacious yet charming advocate; part of the crème de la crème of the licensing world"

"James Rankin earned plaudits from clients and was acknowledged as being tremendously clued up"

"He has an excellent legal mind and is heavily endorsed for his liquor licensing work. His style is complemented by a meticulous, commercial approach to the law"

"He is always a fighter for our cause"

Solicitors "value his rare depth of knowledge of the specialist area".

The Legal 500 describes him as: "an excellent practitioner"

He appears up and down the country on behalf of applicants and objectors. He also represents the police and local authorities on reviews of licences, and on appeals from local authority decisions. His practice also covers Betting and Gaming, and firearms regulation. He advises on lotteries and competitions. He has been involved in many of the leading licensing cases involving judicial review of decisions by local authorities and magistrates. His clients are high profile and varied. They include the major operators such as Wetherspoons, Whitbreds and Greene King, together with the smaller operators such as The Mean Fiddler Group. He has represented Aspinall's Casino, Ladbrokes, Corals, Peter Stringfellow, The Mayor of London, The Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police, The Chief Constables of Northamptonshire, Dorset, Devon and Cornwall, Kenwood House, and Garsington House.

Cases of Note

- Represented The Mayor of London on his fight to rid Trafalgar Square of pigeons
- Obtained the first fully-nude table dancing licence within Westminster for Peter Stringfellow
- Appeared on behalf of The Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police on his application to revoke James Hewitt's shotgun and firearms certificates
- Represented the Hippodrome in its resistance to a police challenge to its licence
- Represented Home House on its successful appeal against Westminster City Council's restrictive policy on hours
- Represented the Astoria and fended off a police application to revoke its licence
- Represented the Chief Constable of Dorset in his objection to the licence of Regent Inns' Walkabout premises in Bournemouth

Judicial Review

He has had more than twenty cases heard by the High Court. These include

- *R (Bushell and others) v Newcastle City Justices (House of Lords)* Licensing Law and Human Rights; special removal of an old on licence; the relevance of planning to licensing applications; abuse of process; collateral actions; the circumstances in which an appeal to the House of Lords may be permitted to continue, even though a statute has been repealed
- *Westminster City Council v Fleury*: can the Court of Appeal entertain an appeal against a decision of the Administrative Court on a case stated?
- *R (Brogan) v Metropolitan Police*: were the procedures for granting extensions to licences Human Rights compliant?
- *R OTA Thompsett v Croydon Crown Court*: justices' policy held to be Wednesbury unreasonable
- *R v Derby Justices ex parte Black*: which should be heard first: revocation proceedings or criminal offences?

- *R v Inner London Crown Court ex parte Sitki*: the leading case on legality of conditions on a licence

Publications

He lectures for Paterson's, IBC and CLT on a wide range of topics relating to licensing and regulation. Recent examples include:

- "Cumulative Impact policies; variations; the relationship between the licensing and planning regimes" (December 2006); Paterson's Licensing Law Conference
- "Firearms Licensing" (November 2005) CLT Conference
- " Test purchases" (November 2005) IBC Conference
- " Enforcement" (May 2005) CLT conference

Qualifications and Appointments

- Buckingham University LLB (hons)