

Vivienne Sedgley

Year of Call: 2011

Practice Summary

"A remarkable junior whose star is in the ascendant", Vivienne practices in all areas of public law.

She is ranked in the Legal 500 and Chambers and Partners as a leading junior for administrative and public, election, local government, and planning law. She was shortlisted for Public Law Junior of the Year in 2024.

The directories describe her as *"exceptional"* and *"outstanding"*; a *"persuasive advocate"* who is *"calm under pressure"*, *"straightforward"*, *"very conscientious"* and *"produces work at lightning speed"*. She is also *"very nice to work with"* with *"excellent client relation skills"*.

She is an author of Supperstone, Goudie and Walker: Judicial Review and editor of Parker's Law and Conduct of Elections.

She is on the Attorney-General's B panel of counsel and is also panel counsel to the Equalities and Human Rights Commission.

Vivienne often acts in cases which raise complex, technical and novel issues. She has advocated at all levels including the Supreme Court. Much of her work is confidential.

Administrative and Public Law

Vivienne is well versed in the workings of public bodies, having extensive in-house experience (e.g. local authorities, government departments and the House of Commons) and knowledge of associated issues concerning access to information.

She writes for one of the leading legal commentaries: *Supperstone, Goudie and Walker: Judicial Review* and is currently panel counsel to the Equalities and Human Rights Commission (2024-2028).

She acts for claimants, defendants and interested parties. She has experience of judicial review in a wide range of contexts. Her work includes matters as varied as:

- Defence and armed forces
- Green energy schemes
- Commercial disputes concerning public authorities (including concurrent civil and judicial review claims)
- Education
- Procurement
- State aid/subsidy controls
- Public health (including extensive advice during the Covid-19 pandemic)
- Food safety
- Challenges to tribunals
- Consultation disputes
- Freedom of information and data protection
- Education, including action against governing bodies, property acquisitions and disposals, exclusions, special educational needs
- NHS bodies
- Community care, mental capacity and mental health
- Public Inquiries
- Public sector equality duty and equality impact assessments
- Advising Parliamentary Committees and MPs
- Advising on the drafting of legislation

She is often called upon to provide swift advice in urgent matters and did so frequently during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Her recent cases include:

- Darwall v Dartmoor National Park Authority [2025] UKSC 20: the legality of camping on Dartmoor (acted for the successful authority)
- R (Luton Landlords & Lettings Agents Ltd) v Luton BC [2026] EWCA Civ 35: Standing in judicial review.

Samra v Sandwell MBC [2026] UKUT 83: compulsory purchase and valuation.

Independent Inquiry relating to Afghanistan: allegations of unlawful conduct by special forces

R (Waverley BC) v Elstead Parish Council and others [2024] EWHC 833 (Admin): neighbourhood planning referendum.

R (Newham LBC) v HMRC [2024] EWHC 2321 (Admin): community infrastructure levy.

M v Authority: interim relief in judicial review concerning age assessment and accommodation

F v Lord Chancellor: Legal aid decision-making

A v Cabinet Office: Covid-19 secondary legislation

G v Ofgem: Non-Domestic Renewable Heat Incentives

B v DWP: Social security assessments and the Equality Act 2010

R (TV Harrison CIC) v Leeds City Council [2022] EWHC 130 (Admin): assets of community value.

R (Derbyshire CC) v Barnsley, Doncaster, Rotherham and Sheffield Combined Authority [2016] EWHC 3355: consultations, combined authorities.

Elections

Vivienne is an election law specialist. She is the editor of one of the leading election law commentaries: *Parker's Law and Conduct of Elections* (formerly assistant editor to Richard Price OBE KC 2017-2024).

Her cases are often confidential, concerning matters which are highly sensitive and concern well known politicians. She covers all aspects of election work. Examples are:

R (Waverley BC) v Elstead Parish Council and others [2024] EWHC 833 (Admin): concerning the countermanding of a neighbourhood planning referendum.

R (Democracy Newham Limited) v London Borough of Newham [2021] EWHC 150 (Admin): the effects of Covid-19 legislation on a referendum.

Election petitions

Electoral registration challenges

Countermanding elections (acting for both successful claimants and successful defendants).

Donations to well-known parties and politicians

Applications for relief from election offences

Injunctions against political parties

Political party disciplinary proceedings (including the largest disciplinary investigation ever undertaken by a major party, and proceedings against prominent politicians)

Access to the full electoral register

Disqualifications from office

Terms of office

Third party campaigning

Validity of votes

Referendums, including on local government and council tax

Advising a major political party on general election campaign expenditure

Local Government

Vivienne’s cases are often urgent and politically sensitive, and she is well versed in the pressures involved. She prides herself on providing swift, clear and well-reasoned advice. She acts for both claimants and defendants.

Her work includes matters as varied as heraldry, flag-flying and cemeteries. She is often called upon to advise on decision-making reports and claims for judicial or statutory review. Her cases have included advising and acting in challenges to:

Cemeteries, churchyards and rights of burial

Code of conduct investigations

Council tax reduction schemes

Public health and covid-19 restrictions

Education, including action against governing bodies, property acquisitions and disposals, exclusions, special educational needs

Community care, mental capacity and mental health

Highways

Development agreements

Strategic housing issues and the right to buy

Food safety

Procurement

Joint working, including with NHS bodies

State aid/subsidy controls

Licensing challenges

Cemeteries, churchyards and burial rights

Planning, including local plans, section 106 agreements and enforcement

Licensing of private hire vehicles and hackney carriages

Local government executive and non-executive decision-making

Challenges to tribunals

Combined authorities

Consultation disputes

Public sector equality duty and equality impact assessments

She often provides urgent and out of hours advice, and advised extensively on emergency powers and decision-making during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Her cases include:

R (Luton Landlords & Lettings Agents Ltd) v Luton BC [2026] EWCA Civ 35: Standing in judicial review; additional and selective licensing areas.

Samra v Sandwell MBC [2026] UKUT 83: compulsory purchase and valuation.

Darwall v Dartmoor National Park Authority [2025] UKSC 20: the legality of camping on Dartmoor (acted for the successful authority).

R (Waverley BC) v Elstead Parish Council and others [2024] EWHC 833 (Admin): neighbourhood planning referendum.

R (Newham LBC) v HMRC [2024] EWHC 2321 (Admin): community infrastructure levy.

Re strategic re-development by a local authority: controversial and long-running London regeneration scheme and withdrawal from a development agreement.

Re X and a local authority: liability following serious misconduct by a councillor.

A v A local authority: highway powers and liability for flooding.

R (TV Harrison CIC) v Leeds City Council [2022] EWHC 130 (Admin): assets of community value.

R (Derbyshire CC) v Barnsley, Doncaster, Rotherham and Sheffield Combined Authority [2016] EWHC 3355: consultations, combined authorities.

Planning & Environment

Vivienne sits on the Planning and Environment Law Bar Association (PEBA) Committee and spoke at the 2026 PEBA conference. She acts and advises in a variety of planning and environmental matters, and has a reputation for quickly getting to grips with the most esoteric and complex legal issues. Her expertise includes the following areas:

Compulsory purchase

Vivienne has dealt with high profile, complex and controversial acquisition issues, such as:

- Controversial ‘regeneration’ projects in London, involving a variety of issues including the enforceability of s.106 agreements and development agreements, and challenges to equality impact assessments.
- Compensation issues, including negative valuations, partially developed sites, and complex proceedings in the Upper-Tribunal with multiple experts.
- Right to light compensation.

Utilities and energy

- Inquiry concerning a controversial 49.9MW solar farm over a 130-hectare site in the Green Belt.
- Examination of a nationally significant infrastructure project valued at £55 million and one of the largest capacity proposed solar parks in the UK.
- Placement and movement of electronic communications apparatus.
- Water utility rights and responsibilities.
- Powers and responsibilities following the opening of a sink hole in a residential area.

Enforcement

- Section 106 obligations.
- Criminal prosecutions in the Magistrates and Crown Courts.
- Injunctions.
- Pre-action correspondence.
- Enforcement against statutory undertakers.
- Pre-conditions for the commencement of planning permission.
- Public sector equality duty and controversial ‘gentrification’ schemes.

Public open spaces

Darwall v Dartmoor National Park [2025] UKSC 20: Public rights over a common, including environmental protections (acted for the successful authority).

Appropriation and disposal of land.

Parks and recreation spaces.

Highways

The redevelopment of a large and high-profile public realm.

Highways Act 1980 rights and responsibilities, including the provision of amenities and drainage powers.

Traffic regulation orders.

Private and public rights and duties concerning drainage.

Compensation disputes.

Notable cases

Darwall v Dartmoor National Park Authority [2025] UKSC 20: public rights over a common, including environmental protections (acted for the successful authority).

Samra v Sandwell MBC [2026] UKUT 83: compulsory purchase and valuation.

R (Waverley BC) v Elstead Parish Council and others [2024] EWHC 833 (Admin): neighbourhood planning referendum.

R (Newham LBC) v HMRC [2024] EWHC 2321 (Admin): community infrastructure levy.

R (TV Harrison CIC) v Leeds City Council) [2022] EWHC 130 (Admin): assets of community value.

A local authority v K: prosecution for a long-standing breach of an enforcement notice on commercial premises.

Re an authority: £multi-million regeneration project in Central London.

P v A local authority: challenge to a local plan.

A £multi-million scheme for residential units and a football club.

The Examination in Public of the London Plan.

Commentary

Vivienne spoke at the PEBA Annual Conference 2026 and regularly delivers talks or writes articles on planning issues.

Professional Discipline & Regulatory

Vivienne is adept at dealing with all stages of professional disciplinary and regulatory proceedings, including challenges by way of judicial review. She acts for both regulators and registrants. She has previously acted as clerk to the Bar Tribunals and Adjudication Service (which deals with the regulation of barristers).

She has considerable experience of tribunal proceedings at first instance, including hearings lasting several weeks, more than one hundred charges, cross-examination of multiple experts, high-profile cases involving associated criminal investigations, safeguarding investigations and/or media coverage, and sensitive cases, involving vulnerable witnesses, relationships between professionals and clients, and the deaths of patients.

Memberships

- Administrative Law Bar Association
- Planning & Environment Law Bar Association
- South Eastern Circuit

Education

- The Honourable Society of Middle Temple, Certificate of Honour (awarded for outstanding achievement on the Bar Professional Training Course)
- The University of Cambridge, MA (Hons) Philosophy
- The College of Law, LL.B.

Publications

- Contributor to ‘Supperstone, Goudie and Walker: Judicial Review’ (since 2017) (LexisNexis)
- Editor, ‘Parker’s Law and Conduct of Elections’ (previously Assistant Editor, 2017-2024) (LexisNexis)

Areas of Expertise

- Administrative Public Law
- Elections
- Local Government
- Planning Environment
- Professional Discipline And Regulatory
- Investigations And Resolutions