



Kat Shields
Year of Call: 2016

To view Kat's profile, click [here](#).

What drew you to the bar?

Growing up I had an almost-romantic notion about becoming a lawyer, which was partly driven by watching far too much Boston Legal in my teenage years. I was also very interested in politics, and how best to represent and advocate for people.

I did a law degree, but I knew I didn't want to become a solicitor. I wasn't confident that I would make a good barrister when I graduated. I trained as an English teacher. While teaching I saw first-hand the impact that becoming embroiled in criminal or family proceedings can have on children, families and the wider community. I became convinced that I could make a bigger difference to people's lives if I could help them during those proceedings. So I changed my career to do it.

Thank you for listening to Kat's podcast, if you would like to discuss any of the issues raised in further detail please contact Eleanor De on ede@7br.co.uk

What do you enjoy most about being a member of 7BR?

I love how friendly and collegiate 7BR is. We really are a close-knit set, even though so many of us practise all over the country. There is always someone who can help you with a tricky question, point you towards a useful resource, or just talk to you about your day. I am very lucky to have such supportive colleagues.

My second-favourite thing about Chambers is our beautiful, newly-refurbished building, which I have greatly missed during lockdown!

Do you think your lockdown experience will change the way you work going forward?

Absolutely. Although criminal courts in particular had tentatively embraced some video hearings before lockdown, I think there will be a permanent shift towards dealing with more straightforward hearings remotely. This probably means less time on trains for me. Lockdown also forced me to go paperless – I really hope that I can keep this up as a permanent environmentally-friendly change!