



Sian Reeves

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Sian practices principally in administrative and public law, human rights law, immigration, inquests and inquiries and national security law. Sian has been on the Attorney General's Civil Panel of Counsel (London) since March 2015. Sian was appointed to the A Panel in September 2023, having previously been appointed to the B Panel (September 2018 to September 2023) and C Panel (March 2015 to September 2018).

In July 2023, Sian was appointed as an Assistant Coroner for South London.

Alongside her public law practice, Sian maintains a civil law practice, with a particular focus on costs and personal injury law. Sian has considerable experience of civil claims with a public law element, including private law damages claim arising from criminal prosecutions, prisons, immigration detention, and deaths in custody.

In December 2018 Sian was admitted to the State Bar of California, and is licensed to practice law in California as an attorney.

Expertise

Public Law

Sian has a diverse administrative and public law practice which encompasses human rights law, immigration, judicial review, national security law and prison law. Sian acts for a wide range of Government departments and executive agencies.

Sian has acted in the some of the most high-profile, significant and complex cases in the fields of administrative and public law, human rights law and immigration law.

Sian regularly advises on and acts in domestic cases involving the interpretation of international law, including the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings. Sian specialises in cases involving human trafficking, and has acted and advised in a wide range of judicial review and private law damages claims within this area.

Sian acts in a range of national security cases. She has been involved in case before the High Court, the _____



Special Immigration Appeals Commission (SIAC), and the Investigatory Powers Tribunal (IPT). Sian has Developed Vetting Clearance.

Notable Public Law cases

Acting as junior counsel for the Secretary of State for the Home Department (SSHD) in the litigation challenging the relocation of asylum seekers to Rwanda under the Migration and Economic Development Partnership. Sian has represented the SSHD since the pre-action stage and has appeared in the Divisional Court (R (AAA) v SSHD [2022] EWHC 3230 (Admin)), Court of Appeal (R (AAA) v SSHD [2023] EWCA 745; [2023] WLR 3103) and Supreme Court (R (AAA) v SSHD [2023] UKSC 42) during this litigation

Representing various Government departments in cases concerning the Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy (ARAP). Sian was sole counsel in one of the lead cases, R (LND1 & Ors) v SSHD & Anor [2023] EWHC 1795 (Admin), which is currently before the Court of Appeal.

Acting for the SSHD in respect of proposed claims for judicial review challenging the accommodation of asylum seekers in the former barracks at Wethersfield.

Acting for the SSHD in claims for judicial review concerning the interaction between the local authority's obligations under the Care Act 2014 and the obligations of the SSHD under s. 95 of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 in relation to the provision of accommodation to asylum seekers with eligible care and support needs: R (SB & Anor) v London Borough of Newham [2023] EWHC 2701 (Admin) and R (TMX) v London Borough of Croydon.

Acting for the SSHD in claims for judicial review brought by potential victims of human trafficking challenging decisions to apply the public order disqualification under s. 62 of the Nationality and Borders Act 2022. A substantive hearing has been listed in the lead cases in February 2024.

Representing the SSHD in a claim for judicial review concerning recommendations made by Wendy Williams in the Windrush Lessons Learned Review.

Representing the Commissioner for the British Indian Ocean Territory (BIOT) in claims for judicial review concerning the availability of legal aid in BIOT for migrants challenging their removal on international protection/non-refoulement grounds. These claims were heard by the Supreme Court of BIOT: VT, CT & Ors



v Commissioner for the BIOT (BIOT SC/No.3/2023).

Representing the Commissioner for the BIOT in claims for judicial review challenging the Commissioner's decisions to refuse international protection claims brought by asylum seekers in BIOT and to remove them to Sri Lanka.

Acting for the Secretary of State for Justice in a claim for judicial review challenging a decision to decline to hold a statutory public inquiry into historic physical and sexual abuse at Medomsley Detention Centre

Acting for the Secretary of State for Defence in a claim for judicial review brought by PETA concerning the ceremonial caps of the Foot Guards (which are made using real bearskin). Permission to apply for judicial review was refused.

Inquests

Sian has significant experience of representing a wide range of interested persons at Pre-Inquest Reviews and Inquests (both with and without a jury), including those where Article 2 ECHR is engaged. Sian also has experience of advising in respect of claims for judicial review concerning inquest outcomes.

In July 2023, Sian was appointed as an Assistant Coroner for South London.

Sian's inquest experience includes deaths in prison custody, military deaths, deaths on the London Underground, and deaths arising out of road traffic accidents and at work.

Sian was instructed as junior counsel (led by Keith Morton QC and Fiona Canby) on behalf of Transport for London in the Inquest into the London Bombings of 7 July 2005.

Notable Inquests cases

Representing the British Red Cross in the inquest concerning the deaths in the terror attack at Forbury Gardens in Reading on 20 June 2020

Representing the Probation Service in a two-week inquest into the death of a transgender woman with a gender identity disorder and which involved multiple state agencies (police, different mental health services and the Probation Service).



Representing the Civil Aviation Authority in the inquest concerning the deaths of three British victims on board the Ethiopian Airlines Flight 302 which crashed shortly after take off on 10 March 2019, killing all passengers and crew on board.

Representing the Ministry of Justice in an ongoing inquest concerning the death of a woman who was brutally killed whilst she was lone-working as a receptionist at Travelodge. The person who killed her had been released from prison 6 weeks prior and had engaged with multiple different agencies (police, healthcare and local council) due to his mental health, potential homelessness and level of risk

A three-week Article 2 jury inquest into the death of an off-bailer who swallowed acid at court shortly after receiving a sentence of imprisonment. Sian acted for HMPPS and HMCTS

Representing a university at an inquest into the death of a student. The Coroner reached a conclusion of suicide. Whilst the family were concerned that the death was caused by the university's release of exam results, the Coroner did not find that this caused or contributed to the death

Representing National Highways at inquests into deaths on the strategic road networks, including two deaths involving aquaplaning in wet weather conditions.

An Article 2 inquest concerning the death of a 5-year-old boy in hospital in 1978 following elective muscle transfer surgery. The original inquest was quashed by the High Court in 2018. Sian acted for the Department for Health and Social Care

Representing Transport for London in an inquest into the death of a passenger who fell into a gap between the tube and platform at a London Underground station.

Multiple Article 2 jury inquests arising out of deaths in custody

An inquest into the death of man who went into cardiac arrest whilst being monitored by an ambulance _____

crew. When they tried to defibrillate him, the defibrillator did not work. Sian acted for the family

Inquiries

Sian has experience of acting for core participants in public inquiries. During 2019 and 2020 Sian represented two core participants before the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse ('IICSA'). Sian represented the Home Office in IICSA's investigation into Child Sexual Exploitation by Organised Networks. Sian also represented the Cabinet Office in IICSA's investigation into institutional responses to allegations of child sexual abuse involving the late Lord Janner of Braunstone QC.

Sian previously acted for the Department for Health and Social Care in the UK Covid-19 inquiry.

Costs & Litigation Funding

Sian's costs practice covers a wide range of both public and private law cases.

She has experience of acting for both paying and receiving parties at first instance and on appeal in the High Court, the SCCO, the County Court, the First Tier-Tribunal (Tax Chamber), the Upper Tribunal (IAC) and the Court of Appeal. Sian also regularly acts in an advisory capacity across a broad spectrum of areas of costs law. Sian's clients range from individuals on a direct access basis to Government Departments and executive agencies.

Sian's recent experience includes: detailed assessments (including those involving E-Bills); challenges to provisional assessments; misconduct issues; assessments of solicitor and client costs under the Solicitors Act 1974; assessments of costs payable by legally aided parties; recoverability of costs in cases involving allegations of professional misconduct by lawyers; costs budgets and costs case management hearings; wasted costs orders; and non-party costs orders against directors.

Notable Costs & Litigation Funding cases

Nwankwo & Anor v Secretary of State for the Home Department [2018] EWCA Civ 5

The Court of Appeal considered the correct test that should be applied by the Upper Tribunal when considering an application for permission to appeal to the Court of Appeal against a costs order made in an application for judicial review. Sian acted for the SSHD.

Douglas v Ministry of Justice & Anor [2018] EWHC B2 (Costs)

Which concerned the extent of recovery of inquest costs in a civil claim where liability was admitted before the inquest. Sian acted for the MOJ.

Technetix Limited v HMRC [2015] UKFTT 0369 (TC)



Which considered whether the appellant should be permitted to make an application for costs out of time, and the correct principles to be applied to such an application. Sian acted for HMRC.

Finglands Coachways Ltd v O'Hare [2014] EWHC 1513 (QB)

Cranston J held that under the pre-2013 CPR a costs judge was entitled to consider if individual items of costs claimed were proportionate and necessary for the conduct of litigation, even if the costs of the litigation overall appeared proportionate. Sian acted for the successful respondent.

Finglands Coachways Ltd v O'Hare [2014] EWHC 1513 (QB)

Cranston J held that under the pre-2013 CPR a costs judge was entitled to consider if individual items of costs claimed were proportionate and necessary for the conduct of litigation, even if the costs of the litigation overall appeared proportionate. Sian acted for the successful respondent.

Personal Injury

Sian has practised in personal injury since her pupillage. Her personal injury practice now predominantly focuses on multi-track claims. Sian has particular experience in cases involving assaults and sexual abuse. Sian acts for both claimants and defendants.

Notable Personal Injury cases

Acting for a defendant (led by Dominic Adamson QC) in a multi-million pound personal injury claim arising out of a gas explosion.

Acting for a claimant (led by Rodney Dixon QC) in a claim for damages for sexual assault and false imprisonment that were committed overseas. The claim involves issues of jurisdiction and applicable law.

Acting for the Ministry of Justice, at trial and in an advisory/drafting capacity, in multiple cases involving prisoner-on-prisoner assaults, and alleged assaults arising out of control and restraint incidents. Sian's recent experience includes alleged assaults on children within Young Offender Institutes and Secure Training Centres.



Acting for a government department in a claim for damages for sexual assault allegedly committed by a temporary employee employed by a third party. The case involves difficult issues of vicarious liability.

Multiple cases brought under the Fatal Accidents Act 1976 and/or the Law Reform (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1934, particularly arising out of deaths in custody and fatal road traffic accidents.

Shittu v The Home Office [2017] EWCA Civ 1748

Sian acted for the Home Office, led by Cathy McGahey QC.

International Law

Sian has a developing public international law practice, which complements her domestic public law practice.

Notable International Law cases

Drafting legal submissions to the Crown Prosecution Service on universal jurisdiction under s. 134 of the Criminal Justice Act 1988 in respect of sexual offences that took place abroad.

Drafting requests to the Foreign, Commonwealth, and Development Office to designate individuals for sanctions under the Global Human Rights Sanctions Regulations 2020.

Drafting applications for permission to serve out of the jurisdiction in civil claims with an international law element.

Advising on issues of jurisdiction and applicable law.

Appointments

- Attorney General's Civil Panel of Counsel, A Panel (London).



- Assistant Coroner, South London, appointed in July 2023.
- Equality and Human Rights Commission's panel of counsel: England and Wales, B list, appointed in May 2019.
- Admitted to the State Bar of California in December 2018, and licensed to practice law in California as an attorney.

Awards

- Pegasus Scholarship to New Zealand (2012)
- Wilfred Watson BVC Scholarship, Gray's Inn (2005-2006)
- Postgraduate Award Holder, Arts and Humanities Research Board (2004-2005)
- Senior Seton Scholar, Downing College (2004)
- Rebecca Flower Squire Scholarship, University of Cambridge Law Faculty (2002)
- Lovells Law Prize, Downing College (2002)

Education

- BVC (Very Competent), BPP Law School (2006)
- BCL, Brasenose College, University of Oxford (2005)
- MA (Hons) Law (First Class), Downing College, University of Cambridge (2004)

Memberships

- Administrative Law Bar Association (ALBA)
- Personal Injuries Bar Association (PIBA)