



## Susan Jones

Call 2011

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Susan Jones is a specialist inquest practitioner who also practices in personal injury, clinical negligence and licensing.

Susan's inquests practice is increasingly focusing on joint emergency service interoperability, including missing persons (land and sea) searches, air accidents, marine accidents and mass fatalities. Recent notable inquests include the inquests into the Plymouth / Keyham shootings and the 12-week inquest into the death of Gaia Pope.

Susan also continues to build on her inquest practice involving complex medical cases including recently appearing in cases concerning missed cancer diagnosis, sepsis, and complex cardiology issues.

## Expertise

### Inquests

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Susan is a busy inquest practitioner who regularly represents HM Coastguard, Police Forces, Care providers, Education Providers, individual police officers/staff, Cruise Ships, Local Authorities and families.

Susan regularly appears in Article 2 and jury inquests and has appeared in lengthy inquests in which the determination of the cause of death are complex and involve the assessment of factual evidence and numerous experts.

Susan has experience of inquests involving:

- Firearms licensing and mass shootings
- Deaths in custody
- Modern Slavery
- Emergency services attendance, including multi agency response
- Search and rescue (land and sea)
- Drowning (swimmers and sinking ships)
- Jet-ski collisions
- Deaths in care homes

- Covid-19, in custody, and the community
- Hospital deaths, including complications in cardiology, urology procedures, elective surgeries, and labour
- Hyponatremia (including from excessive water intake)
- Neonates
- Sudden Infant Deaths
- Anorexia
- Suicides, in the community and voluntary, and involuntary inpatients
- Prescription medication (including opioids, and post-mortem redistribution)
- Prescribing errors
- Canine attack
- Accidents at work, including construction sites and docks
- Road traffic accidents

## Notable Inquests cases

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### Search and Rescue Inquest

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In 2024 Susan represented HM Coastguard in a 5-day inquest into the death of an experienced rower. The inquest considered a multi-agency rescue attempt for a rower who became trapped in a weir, that became a water search when the rower was swept over the weir. The Coastguard tasked Coastguard rescue teams, a helicopter, the RNLI lifeboat and the RNLI hovercraft. Fire and Rescue Services, and police were also involved in the search. Having heard evidence on behalf of HM Coastguard the Coroner's concerns regarding communication were allayed.

### Inquest considering a Farming/Construction Accident

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In 2024, in a jury inquest Susan represented a company that installed milking parlour equipment, in an inquest considering the death of the company's director who was found at the bottom of an unprotected stairwell. Other interested persons included the milking parlour manufacturer, the farm partnership, building contractors, the NHS Trust who provide treatment and the HSE.

### Triple Stabbing Inquest

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In 2024 Susan acted as sole counsel for the family of two individuals who were unlawfully killed in a knife attack in their home, by an individual with an established history of treatment resistant paranoid schizophrenia who then turned the knife on himself. The perpetrator had been discharged from a mental health unit on 8 March 2022 and the stabbings took place on 19 April 2022. The inquest considered the perpetrator's mental health diagnosis and treatment, discharge from the mental health unit and the level of supervision provided in the community.

### [Inquests into Keyham/Plymouth mass shooting](#)

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In the 2023 inquests into Keyham/Plymouth mass shooting Susan was sole counsel representing the

Firearms Licensing Supervisor. The inquests took place over 6 weeks and heard from over 60 witnesses. 11 interested persons were involved, 3 of whom were represented by silks and juniors. The inquest considered firearms licensing systems and culture within the police firearms unit, the shotgun licence application and a further review, the applicable legal framework for shotgun licences at the time including Home Office Guidance and the British Medical Associations response to that Guidance. These inquests received national media attention.

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#### 2 week jury inquest involving death by ligature

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In 2023 Susan represent a Police Civilian Call Handler in a 2-week jury inquest, involving death by ligature, which examined the grading of a missing person call, interpretation of that call grading by Susan's client following a shift change, and the appropriateness of Susan's client communicating by email with another police force in the context of a search for a missing person.

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#### [Inquest into the death of Gaia Pope](#)

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In 2022 Susan, acted as sole counsel, representing HM Coastguard in the inquest into the death of Gaia Pope. In November 2017, 19-year-old Gaia was reported missing. The 12-week jury inquest into her death, involved counsel to the inquest, 15 interested persons and over 70 witnesses. The inquest explored mental health and epilepsy management, recent pre-death contact with the police, ambulance service and social services and an 11-day multi-agency search following Gaia going missing. The inquest heard expert evidence in pathology, entomology, neurology, psychiatry, and missing person search strategies and also included a jury scene view to where Gaia was found.

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#### Inquest concerning the death of a sex worker who fell from a cliff

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In 2022 Susan represented a police force in an inquest concerning the death of a sex worker who fell from a cliff. In advance of death the deceased disclosed she was a victim of modern slavery. The inquest explored a number of aspects of police involvement, including police interactions within the multi-agency safeguarding response, police offers of sanctuary, police investigation into the alleged offences, police response when attending a safeguarding concern on the day of death and the police force control room's response to a 999 call from the deceased whilst on the cliff edge.

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#### Inquest in to the death of a prison who dies from Covid-19

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In 2021, in a week-long inquest, Susan represented the family of a prisoner, on the shielding list, who died from covid-19.

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#### 5-week Article 2 jury inquest in to the death of a remand prisoner on a prison healthcare unit

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Susan represented a registered mental health nurse in a 5-week Article 2 jury inquest. TD was a remand prisoner on a prison healthcare unit for mental health concerns who unexpectedly died from gastro-

intestinal haemorrhage. The inquests considered complications arising from prescription medication, methods of requesting GP assessment, communication between prison and healthcare staff and the interaction of mental health issues on physical health care.

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#### 12 day Article 2 jury inquest in to the death of a mental health patient

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In a 12-day, Article 2, jury inquest Susan represented a police force following the deceased having been recently discharged from a mental health ward and on the day of death telephoning mental health services reporting an intention to drive or jump into the Thames, following which mental health services called the Police call centre. In addition to considering the appropriateness of mental health care this inquest explored communication between mental health services and police, police call grading, application of the police national decision-making model, communication between the police call handling centre and force control room and police conduct at the riverside.

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#### 8 day jury inquest in to the death of a novice jet skier

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In an 8-day jury inquest Susan represented a novice jet skier involved in a fatal collision resulting in the death of an experienced jet skier. The inquest involved complex factual and expert evidence, including expert evidence regarding water collision reconstruction and medical causation. The Coroner requested submissions on the appropriateness of leaving unlawful killing to the jury.

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## Personal Injury

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Susan accepts instructions in a wide range of personal injury matters and acts for Claimants and Defendants.

Susan has experience of personal injury claims concerning occupier's liability, the Highway Act, food poisoning, accidents at work, road traffic accidents, sporting accidents and fatal injuries arising in a wide range of circumstances.

Susan successfully represented a Claimant in a 5-witness public liability and quantum trial following which the Defendant appealed to the High Court on grounds of procedure and findings of fact. Susan advised on the appeal, drafted a skeleton argument, and made oral submission before Mrs Justice Lambert. The Defendant's appeal was dismissed in its entirety.

Susan represented a Claimant at trial where the Claimant alleged, he burnt his hand while working for the Defendant when required to set fire to sawdust on the Defendants premises. The matter was defended on the basis that the Defendant never employed the Claimant (there was no contract of employment, no evidence of payments and the Claimant did not have a UK work permit) and in any event that the incident did not occur on his premises (there being no accident book entry, or any other record and the incident described was not something tolerated by the Defendant). Following a full day trial, the judge found for the Claimant and heard submissions on quantum for burn injuries.



## Clinical Negligence

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Susan has experience advising Claimants and Defendants in Clinical Negligence matters.

Susan draws on her experience gained appearing at inquests, including questioning of clinicians and experts in wide range of fields, to assess clinical negligence and fatal accident claims. Susan has advised Claimants and Defendants in deaths of adults and children arising from alleged clinical failures.

Susan has experience drafting pleadings in clinical negligence claims, appearing in directions hearings and representing at approval of fatal accident claims involving child or protected claimants.

## Public Law

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Susan has experience of appearing before a variety of public law and regulatory forums.

Susan is experienced appearing in taxi licensing appeals, including representing Local Authorities in cases where drivers have been tried and acquitted of serious sexual offences.

Susan has experience of matters involving the Traffic Commission. Susan provides advice in relation to prospects of appeal of appeal of Traffic Commissioner decisions and has appeared in the Upper Tribunal (Administrative Appeals Chamber).

Susan has undertaken a secondment at the British Horseracing Authority, and has advised and represented the Football Association at safeguarding appeals.

## Awards

### Chambers and Partners

- Leading Junior 2024
- Leading Junior 2023
- Leading Junior 2022
- Leading Junior 2021

### Legal 500

- Leading Junior 2024
- Leading Junior 2023
- Leading Junior 2022

Leading Junior 2021



## Education

Queen's University Belfast (LLB: First, Top in Year)  
City University Law School (Bar Professional Training Course: Outstanding)

## Memberships

Personal Injury Bar Association (PIBA)  
Association of Regulatory & Disciplinary Lawyers (ARDL)  
Health and Safety Lawyers Association (HSLA)  
Western Circuit  
Bar Council (Western Circuit Representative)

## Recommendations

'Susan is fearless when representing clients in complex and sensitive matters against counsel more senior than herself.' (Legal 500 2024)

'She is insanely hard-working and dedicated, and she has meticulous attention to detail.' (Chambers UK 2024)

'Susan prepares clients well, and her oral submission was incredibly impressive.' (Chambers UK 2024)

'Hardworking, focused and displays a maturity of approach beyond her year of call' (Legal 500 2021)

'She is phenomenal: the technicality and the expertise that she shows in inquests is incredible.' (Chambers UK 2021)