

Chambers

UK Bar

2022

Leading barristers and sets in the UK

Inquests & Public Inquiries

INQUESTS & PUBLIC INQUIRIES: An Introduction

Contributed by Nicholas Griffin QC, Thomas Coke-Smyth and Ruth Broadbent of QEB Hollis Whiteman

Inquests and inquiries continue to involve some of the most troubling but interesting work at the Bar. Whilst these proceedings were inevitably affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, coroners and inquiry panels adapted and continued with their work where possible. The response to the pandemic will also be considered at a major new inquiry, demonstrating that the practice area remains key to understanding the most grave and important issues of our time.

Overview of 2020–21

Inquests

Whilst 2020 saw the largest number of registered deaths in England and Wales since 1995, it also saw a decrease in the number of deaths actually reported to coroners (the lowest since 1995). The 2020 Coroners' statistics document suggests this is *"likely a function of the numbers of registered deaths caused by Covid-19 infection, the majority of which will have been of natural cause"*.

However coroners' statistics revealed that deaths in state detention had increased by 18% in 2020. This reflects an increase in deaths in custody and of those detained under the Mental Health Act 1983. It will inevitably mean an increase in inquests where Article 2 of the ECHR is engaged.

Whilst the COVID measures curtailed the ability to hear inquests, particularly those with a jury, coroners' courts moved quickly to adapt to remote working. The Chief Coroner issued Guidance on recovery from the Covid-19 Pandemic, which noted the need to take steps to deal with outstanding cases and help the system to recover as quickly as possible. Inquests continued to be held with the positive assistance of interested persons and their lawyers, either on the papers, remotely by video, or using special venues. The Fishmongers' Hall Inquests are a good example of substantial proceedings continuing notwithstanding the restrictions. They did so at the socially distanced Guildhall in the City of London.

A glance at some of the most significant inquests of 2020-2021 demonstrate the capacity of this form of inquiry to consider socially important issues. Ella Adoo-Kissi-Debrah, a nine year old girl who died following an asthma attack, became the first person in the UK to have air pollution listed as a cause of death. Inquests into the deaths of the Streatham terrorist, Sudesh Amman, as well as the Fishmongers' Hall Inquests, saw a continued scrutiny of the state and its ability to protect its citizens from terrorist attack. Following the death of Anthony Slack, 85, after he became infected with coronavirus at his care home, the senior coroner for Greater Manchester South issued a prevention of future death report to a number of public authorities including the Care Quality Commission, NHS England and Public Health England.

Finally, we continue to see the conversion of inquests to statutory public inquiries. The ongoing Manchester Arena Inquiry and Public Inquiry into the death of Jermaine Baker started as inquests. And Baroness Heather Hallett, appointed as coroner at the inquest into the Novichok poisonings in Salisbury, will request that it should be converted too. These conversions under the Coroners and Justice Act 2009 are sometimes requested where sensitive material forms part of the evidence and it is felt that the framework under the Inquiries Act 2005 provides a better regime in which to consider it.

Public inquiries

As at July 2021, there were 12 ongoing and announced statutory inquiries in the UK and the list is likely to grow. They include the Grenfell

Tower Inquiry, the Undercover Policing Inquiry and the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse. In Scotland, the Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry continues as do the Independent Neurology Inquiry, the Urology Services Inquiry and the Muckamore Abbey Hospital Inquiry in Northern Ireland.

These inquiries are often substantial and long-lasting. The Grenfell Inquiry is approaching 650 core participants, from individual bereaved, survivors and residents through to commercial organisations, trade unions and public bodies, represented in most cases by a legal team including some of this field's best known barristers. The Inquiry's costs have already exceeded £117m and that does not take into account the legal and other fees of those who are not funded by it. Delay remains a problem. The secretive nature of information the Undercover Policing Inquiry has to contend with has led to a great deal of legal argument and the slow and painstaking process of reviewing and redacting documents. The Edinburgh Tram Inquiry started in September 2017, with closing submissions in May 2018 but it is still to report.

COVID-19 adversely affected inquiries just as it did inquests. Inquiries were initially interrupted but were generally able to adapt and continue online or with hybrid proceedings, permitting certain personnel into the hearing location and requiring others to attend via Zoom or similar. This worked well and allowed proceedings to continue but arguably came at a price. Some of those most closely affected by the issues being considered were understandably unhappy that they were unable to be in the room whilst key witnesses gave evidence.

Just as we have seen inquests convert to inquiries, we have also seen non-statutory inquiries convert to statutory inquiries under the Inquiries Act 2005. The Post Office Horizon IT Inquiry was converted in this way after the Court of Appeal quashed 39 convictions in cases brought by the Post Office. Consequently, it will proceed on the more formal statutory basis, with new powers such as compelling evidence.

Looking ahead

September 2021 saw the government announce its response to the Coroner Service Inquiry. The government said that it would take forward legislation removing the means test for bereaved families applying for legal aid through the exceptional case funding scheme. For those representing families this will be seen as a step in the right direction in making obtaining legal aid more straight forward.

Early 2022 has been provisionally identified for the resumption of the inquest into the deaths of 11 people at the Shoreham Airshow crash. This is subject to the outcome of an application on behalf of the Coroner to be granted access to protected material arising from the concluded criminal proceedings.

In June 2021 it was announced by the Presiding Coroner of Northern Ireland, Mr Justice McFarland, that a number of delayed legacy inquests arising from the Troubles would now be re-listed. Further legacy inquests are anticipated to include that into the deaths of five shot dead by the British army at Springhill in West Belfast in July 1972.

The public inquiry remains a favoured model of investigation into matters of public importance and concern across the UK, notwithstanding inquiries' often lengthy duration and cost. The number of major inquiries underway or announced continues to grow, including now the COVID-19 inquiry (or, strictly speaking, inquiries, as the different UK jurisdictions may each host their own inquiry). The Prime Minister announced a statutory public inquiry in May 2021 and said

Inquests & Public Inquiries	
Leading Juniors	
Star individuals	
Hill Matthew	1 Crown Office Row
Band 1	
Hewitt Alison	5 Essex Court *
Le Fevre Sarah	3 Raymond Buildings A
Murphy Fiona	Doughty Street Chambers
Whitelaw Francesca	5 Essex Court *
Wolfe Georgina	5 Essex Court *
Band 2	
Ballard Briony	Serjeants' Inn Chambers
Berry James	Serjeants' Inn Chambers
Brander Ruth	Doughty Street Chambers
Bunting Jude	Doughty Street Chambers
Canby Fiona	Temple Garden Chambers *
Dixey Jonathan	5 Essex Court *
Gerry Alison	Doughty Street Chambers
McNeill Nikita	2 Hare Court *
Naqshbandi Saba	3 Raymond Buildings A *
Nicholls Jesse	Matrix Chambers
Rawat Bilal	5 Essex Court *
Sjovoll Kirsten	Matrix Chambers
Stoate Tom	Doughty Street Chambers
Tampakopoulos Alexandra	2 Hare Court *
White Cecily	Serjeants' Inn Chambers
Band 3	
Armstrong Nicholas	Matrix Chambers
Baumber Kevin	3 Raymond Buildings *
Beattie Kate	Doughty Street Chambers
Blake Julian	11KBW (ORL) D *
Branston Barnabas	5 Essex Court *
Clarke Amy	5 Essex Court *
Coke-Smyth Thomas	QEB Hollis Whiteman
Collier Beatrice	5 Essex Court *
Cumberland Melanie	6KBW College Hill (ORL) D
Dayle Philip	No5 Barristers' Chambers (ORL) D
Desai Raj	Matrix Chambers
Green Tim	Henderson Chambers A *
Hayward Cicely	5 Essex Court *
Heaven Kirsten	Garden Court Chambers
Henderson Alasdair	1 Crown Office Row
Holdcroft Matthew	Serjeants' Inn Chambers
Jacobs Sam	Doughty Street Chambers
Jarratt Alice	Crown Office Chambers
Livingston Paul	Outer Temple Chambers (ORL) D
Mannion Amy	1 Crown Office Row
Maragh Thalia	Garden Court Chambers
Matthewson Scott	42 Bedford Row (ORL) D *
Mertens Paul	Pump Court Chambers (ORL) D *
Morris Una	Garden Court Chambers
Moss Aaron	5 Essex Court *
Murphy Jack	Crown Office Chambers
Odogwu Ifeanyi	Matrix Chambers
Palmer Claire	5 Essex Court *
Patrick Angela	Doughty Street Chambers
Pleeth Edward	Serjeants' Inn Chambers
Price Emma	5 Essex Court *
Robottom James	Matrix Chambers
Sadd Patrick	Outer Temple Chambers (ORL) D
Simcock Sarah	Serjeants' Inn Chambers
Spencer Paul	Serjeants' Inn Chambers
Watson Claire	Serjeants' Inn Chambers
Up-and-coming individuals	
Duffy Liam	Serjeants' Inn Chambers
Hollos Reka	3 Raymond Buildings *
Jones Samantha	39 Essex Chambers (ORL) D
Mathieson Jamie	Serjeants' Inn Chambers
Milligan Scarlett	Temple Garden Chambers *
O'Byrne Katherine	Doughty Street Chambers

* Indicates individual with profile. [A](#) Direct access.

[D](#) (ORL) = Other Ranked Lawyer.

Recent work: Continued to act as junior counsel to the Infected Blood Inquiry, including defending against judicial review applications.

Alasdair Henderson Alasdair Henderson possesses a breadth of inquests and inquiries expertise. He has been instructed as counsel to a number of prominent public inquiries, and has notable experience in inquests arising from deaths in prisons or mental health institutions. **Strengths:** "He's easy to work with, he works hard, and the work produced is spot on." "He's able to cut through complex issues and boil them down to the essential points. He has a very reassuring manner." **Recent work:** Acted as junior counsel to the Manchester Arena Inquiry.

Amy Mannion Amy Mannion is a sought-after barrister for major public inquiries involving the police. She also handles judicial review challenges to the decisions of inquiry chairs. She has additional experience advising clients on a range of matters arising in inquests including redaction of documents and preparatory hearing. **Strengths:** "She is a great performer in the inquests and inquiries space." "Her submissions are clear, persuasive and extremely well delivered." **Recent work:** Continued to act as first junior counsel to the Metropolitan Police in the Undercover Policing Inquiry.

Doughty Street Chambers

See profile on p.1014

THE SET

Doughty Street Chambers is regarded by clients as "a leader in the inquests and inquiries field, with barristers that are in a class of their own." Members of the set have substantial experience in extremely high-profile matters, typically representing victims and bereaved family members, or acting as counsel to the inquiry. The chambers draws strength from the barristers' expertise across a range of areas including mental health, and police and prison law. Recent work includes instructions in the Independent Inquiry in Child Sexual Abuse, the inquest into the death of Molly Russell and the Undercover Policing Inquiry.

Client service: "They are always very reliable. Grace Walton in particular is really helpful around counsel availability." "They have a very good case management system, and from our side it feels a very efficient and smooth process." Sian Wilkins is the senior civil practice manager.

SILKS

Caoilfhionn Gallagher QC Caoilfhionn Gallagher QC frequently appears for bereaved families in significant inquests that are often at the centre of broader social justice campaigns. She is particularly proficient in proceedings which scrutinise the adequacy of police investigations. Her significant public law expertise means she is a strong choice to appear in judicial reviews concerning coronial decisions and the scope of inquests, particularly in issues such as anonymity orders. She has experience of providing counsel to clients on issues relating to the protection of children. **Strengths:** "She is an exceptionally good advocate for families at inquests and inquiries, as well as across civil liberties. A pre-eminent barrister." "Her written work is superb, her commitment is outstanding and she's always one step ahead." **Recent work:** Continued to act on behalf of the family of Stephen Dymond at the inquest into his death by suicide following his appearance on the Jeremy Kyle Show. The case resulted in a parliamentary inquiry into the aftercare of reality TV guests.

Henrietta Hill QC Henrietta Hill QC appears on behalf of bereaved families and other participants in high-profile inquests and inquiries scrutinising the actions and omissions of the state. She is also experienced in leading investigations as counsel to inquiries and inquests, as well as offering expert advice to clients who are seeking to obtain an inquest. **Strengths:** "Whenever any significant inquest comes up you know she will be at the heart of it." "She's able to master lots of different briefs and carries the weight of experience with her." **Recent work:** Continued to act as deputy counsel in the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse. Undertook a supervisory role across the entire inquiry, in addition to conducting four of its investigations.

Maya Sikand QC Maya Sikand QC excels in the representation of bereaved families in complex Article 2 inquests, particularly those involving examination of policing or prisons. She has further experience acting in high-profile inquiries including the Undercover Policing Inquiry. **Strengths:** "She really cares about her clients, which shines through. She is dedicated to her cases and brilliant with clients." "She is a very fair and even-handed advocate who takes good points." **Recent work:** Acted in the Undercover Policing Inquiry on behalf of Peter Francis, a former undercover officer and whistle-blower regarding the activities of the Special Demonstration Squad.

Adam Straw QC Adam Straw QC has a strong track record of being instructed in major inquests and inquiries, typically on behalf of bereaved families. He also frequently appears in public law proceedings and human rights litigation arising out of inquests and public inquiries. He receives considerable praise for his legal knowledge and admirable work ethic. **Strengths:** "He puts in a phenomenal amount of work and is a vital member of legal teams. He is willing to push boundaries and cares about the outcome for clients." "He provides great work in both written and oral arguments." **Recent work:** Continued to act for the family of Dawn Sturgess at the inquest into her death, after she ingested Novichok following the attempted assassination of the Skripals.

JUNIORS

Fiona Murphy Fiona Murphy brings to the Bar her years of experience as a solicitor handling inquests and actions against the police. She predominantly advocates on behalf of bereaved families in a wide range of matters, with a particular emphasis on inquests touching on police conduct. **Strengths:** "She is a distinguished practitioner with a passionate commitment to her clients." "She is definitely a go-to barrister in terms of technical knowledge. She has worked on some of our most complex cases." **Recent work:** Acted for the family of Jermaine Baker in the inquiry into his fatal shooting by the Metropolitan Police in December 2015.

Ruth Brander Ruth Brander handles matters for a range of clients, including core participants in high-profile inquiries, as well as bereaved family members. She is experienced in investigations involving prison custody deaths or police failings. **Strengths:** "You have to be absolutely on your game with her; as an opponent she makes sure you have to be your best." "She is a bright and very able barrister. She is technically wonderful and can really make a difference in a case." **Recent work:** Continued to represent a group of approximately 200 non-state core participants in the Undercover Policing Inquiry.

Jude Bunting Jude Bunting has wide-reaching experience which includes inquests arising from deaths

in prison, deaths in police custody and proceedings arising from the Troubles in Northern Ireland, as well as investigations scrutinising the actions of the police. His deep expertise in public and administrative law means he is also well placed to advise on judicial reviews concerning coronial decisions. **Strengths:** "He's a real standout for me. He has a very good way about him and a great approach as an advocate for families." "A hard-working, impressive speaker and a passionate advocate. A really impressive barrister." **Recent work:** Instructed by the BBC as interested party in the Brook House Inquiry, set up to investigate the decisions, actions and circumstances surrounding the mistreatment of detainees at the immigration detention centre.

Alison Gerry Alison Gerry brings her deep expertise in human rights law to bear on her inquests practice. She typically acts in Article 2 proceedings which involve deaths in prison, police custody and mental health institutions. She also has experience representing core participants in public inquiries. **Strengths:** "She is a really thorough barrister, really good with complex medical and expert issues, and manages to simplify the unsimplifiable in a persuasive way." "She finds the weak point and goes for it – an incredibly impressive opponent."

Tom Stoate Tom Stoate is praised as a barrister who brings a high level of skill and sensitivity to his representation of bereaved families at death in custody and mental health-related inquests, as well as those arising from acts of terrorism. **Strengths:** "Tom is an absolute pleasure to work with. He's fantastic with clients, quickly grasps the issues in a case and is always one step ahead of the opponent." "He is an exceptional advocate who is very good on strategy and a real delight to work with." **Recent work:** Acted for the family of Liridon Saliuka in an inquest concerning his self-inflicted death in HMP Belmarsh.

Kate Beattie Kate Beattie is well versed in inquests involving clinical negligence and mental health treatment. She is also experienced in public inquiries and capable of handling damages claims arising out of clinical negligence inquests. She has attracted attention for her instructions as counsel to the inquest or inquiry. **Strengths:** "She is a very hard-working barrister who is extremely bright and great with clients. Particularly skilled at cases requiring medical knowledge or analysis."

Sam Jacobs Sam Jacobs is a popular barrister with considerable experience acting in inquests and public inquiries such as the IICSA and the Undercover Policing Inquiry. He is particularly well equipped to represent families in inquests concerning prisons and police custody, or mental health services. **Strengths:** "He's brilliant, thoroughly prepared and attentive. Clients also adore him." "He's hard-working, completely unflappable and commands the ear of the court." **Recent work:** Acted for the family of Paul Chin at a two-week inquest into his death in a care home.

Angela Patrick Angela Patrick has notable expertise in public law which she draws upon to represent participants in complex inquiries and inquests. **Strengths:** "She is very sensitive, clever and practical in everything she does. She is extremely good at reading the room and makes a good impression on coroners and other counsel." "She's an efficient barrister." **Recent work:** Acted for The Times, BBC and ITN in the Fishmongers' Hall inquests, in resisting anonymity applications and applications for special measures by the family of Usman Khan.

Katherine O'Byrne Katherine O'Byrne is well

regarded in the market as a result of her involvement in high-profile public inquiries. She has notable experience appearing as counsel to the inquiry in sensitive matters examining abuse of vulnerable individuals by state agents. **Strengths:** "She's extremely hard-working, very bright and knows her way around inquiries." "She is an excellent barrister and a great team player with hugely impressive knowledge." **Recent work:** Acted as junior counsel to the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse.

5 Essex Court

See profile on p.1018

THE SET

5 Essex Court has an extremely strong bench of seasoned experts who are consistently involved in the highest-profile inquests and public inquiries. The barristers serve a broad client base including NHS trusts, local authorities and government departments, and coroners or inquiry chairs. Members have an especially strong following among police forces. Recent work has included key roles in the Birmingham pub bombings inquest, the Fishmongers' Hall inquest and the Grenfell Tower Inquiry.

Client service: "Mark Waller and Dan Waple are incredibly helpful and do their best to accommodate, including finding alternative counsel where needed." "The clerking team provides an exceptional service."

SILKS

Jason Beer QC (see p.788) Jason Beer QC is a true trailblazer in the field of public inquiries: having penned the seminal text on the subject he continues to pick up a plethora of key instructions in many of the most prominent inquiries undertaken, acting as counsel to the inquiry or for the police or central government departments. **Strengths:** "He's very good on the law, charms the court and cuts to the key points." "He's very good with witnesses and clients – they trust him absolutely." **Recent work:** Continued to represent the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government in the Grenfell Tower Inquiry.

Fiona Barton QC (see p.786) Fiona Barton QC brings her significant expertise in police law to her representation of forces and officers in sensitive inquests and public inquiries. She also represents other state agents and is especially well versed in matters involving the criminal justice system. **Strengths:** "She's a brilliant inquests and inquiries practitioner." **Recent work:** Continued to act on behalf of the Chief Constable of Greater Manchester Police in the Manchester Arena Inquiry.

Samantha Leek QC (see p.878) Samantha Leek QC is a strong choice to represent coroners and state agents in sensitive inquests. She has particular expertise in inquests arising out of police shootings and deaths in prison. She also represents institutions as central core participants in high-profile public inquiries. **Strengths:** "She's thoroughly hard-working, really bright and has an informative and confident manner." "She is extremely competent, unafraid and will pick up everything that's important in a case." **Recent work:** Continued to act for the Home Secretary in the London Bridge terror attack inquests. The 2017 attack resulted in eight deaths and left 48 injured, including members of the public and police officers.

Alan Payne QC (see p.910) Alan Payne QC has a strong profile in this field, having represented the Home Office and various police clients in numerous inquests, in addition to high-profile matters such as the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse.

Strengths: "He's a client-friendly barrister and has a good grasp of the issues." "He's very well prepared and able." **Recent work:** Acted for the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs and the Department of Health and Social Care at the inquest into the death of Ella Adoo-Kissi-Debrah, the first in which air pollution was noted as a cause of death.

Anne Studd QC (see p.938) Anne Studd QC is an experienced barrister offering considerable expertise in matters involving the police. She is regularly instructed in inquests and high-profile public inquiries involving police investigations and operations. She also handles some of the most controversial healthcare-related inquests. **Strengths:** "She has an incisive ability to deal with large amounts of documents and handle complex and intense matters. She is also good with clients." "She is supremely impressive and authoritative." **Recent work:** Acted as lead counsel to the Mayor of London in the Grenfell Tower Inquiry.

JUNIORS

Alison Hewitt (see p.854) Alison Hewitt has a wide-ranging inquests and public inquiries practice. She is instructed by coroners and interested parties in matters involving police law, professional discipline and clinical and mental health. She also serves as the Senior Coroner for the City of London and routinely represents coroners in public law challenges. **Strengths:** "She's a stellar performer and an unflappable, conscientious and calm choice of barrister." "Her assurance and calmness can be vital in dealing with challenging cases." **Recent work:** Acted as counsel to the Article 2 inquest touching the death of Spencer Ashworth, who was fatally shot by armed police after he apparently threatened to shoot other drivers with a hand gun on the motorway.

Francesca Whitelaw (see p.957) Francesca Whitelaw is a leading barrister who is frequently instructed by government and the police to represent their interests in inquests which attract the attention of the national press, and which relate to serious acts of terrorism or scrutinise the actions of police officers and other public agents. **Strengths:** "She can look through a huge amount of detail and see the core issues. She is also likeable and professional with lay and professional clients." **Recent work:** Acted as junior counsel to the inquest into the death of Dawn Sturgess.

Georgina Wolfe (see p.962) Georgina Wolfe is instructed in a broad range of public inquiries and inquests. Recent mandates include cases concerning police conduct, clinical negligence and prison deaths. She predominantly acts for state agents, including police forces, NHS trusts and government departments. **Strengths:** "She is a staggeringly hard-working barrister who has an absolutely meticulous attention to detail and incredible knowledge of inquest law." "A friendly advocate at the same time as being tough and strategic." **Recent work:** Acted as sole counsel to the Labour Party in the inquest into the death of Carl Sargeant.

Jonathan Dixey (see p.824) Jonathan Dixey is routinely instructed by government departments, police forces and other public bodies in inquests and public inquiries. He also acts for coroners and individual police officers or medical professionals. **Strengths:** "I've always found him well prepared. He excels in representing clients with tricky positions and is courteous as an opponent." "He's very hard-working and a good team player." **Recent work:** Continued to represent the Home Office in the Grenfell Tower Inquiry.

Provided counsel on the production of witness statements from senior civil servants.

Bilal Rawat (see p.918) Bilal Rawat is instructed in a wide array of inquests and public inquiries. He is particularly well regarded for his handling of matters involving death in prison or police custody, as well as clinical negligence issues. He is particularly notable for his considerable expertise in acting as counsel to the inquiry. **Strengths:** "He's an extremely impressive inquests and inquiries barrister." "He's doing silk's work and doing it really impressively."

Recent work: Continued to act as junior counsel to the Grenfell Tower Inquiry. Led the team responsible for obtaining and adducing evidence from survivors of the fire and relatives of those who died.

Barnabas Branston (see p.797) Barnabas Branston has significant experience of inquests involving police conduct and deaths in custody. He is typically instructed on behalf of police forces and prison operators. **Strengths:** "He has a calm authority to him." "Commands respect from the panel and has a pragmatic approach to complex cases." **Recent work:** Acted for West Midlands Police at an inquest into the fatal shooting of Trevor Smith by a police firearms officer in the course of an operation whose purpose was to recover a firearm.

Amy Clarke (see p.810) Amy Clarke attracts instructions from various police forces in major inquests and public inquiries. She has notable expertise in areas including the use of force by the police and the care of people with mental health problems. **Strengths:** "She's very good with witnesses, calming and putting them at ease. She's also a barrister who is very easily accessible." "She has fantastic attention to detail and is a real grafter." **Recent work:** Acted for Gamcare UK in the Article 2 inquest into the death of Jack Ritchie, which examined the regulatory regime within the gambling industry as well as the treatment and support available for those suffering from gambling addiction.

Beatrice Collier (see p.812) Beatrice Collier is a barrister known for providing strong representation at inquests, particularly in matters scrutinising the actions or inaction of the police. She has additional expertise in mental healthcare, and is frequently instructed at inquests by NHS bodies as well as police forces. **Strengths:** "She is quite often instructed without a silk and she is very impressive." "She is always fighting her client's corner." **Recent work:** Represented Dorset Police in the inquest into the death of 19 year old Gaia Pope, who had been reported by her family to the police as missing.

Cicely Hayward (see p.852) Cicely Hayward is a highly able barrister frequently sought out to act on behalf of police forces, government departments and local authorities, as well as families and coroners. She is instructed in both public inquiries and high-profile inquests, with issues typically including the handling of police investigations or other operations. **Strengths:** "She has excellent analytical skills, is extremely personable and gives straightforward and clear advice." **Recent work:** Instructed as counsel to the inquests into the murders committed by Stephen Port. The inquests considered the original police investigations into the deaths, which had concluded that the deaths were non-suspicious.

Aaron Moss (see p.899) Aaron Moss impresses fellow barristers with his advocacy and in-depth knowledge of inquests and public inquiries involving the police, terrorism and national security. He is regularly instructed by coroners as junior counsel to some of the more high-profile and sensitive inquests,

and also acts for police forces and individual officers.

Strengths: "He wears his cleverness in a really light way. He masters very complex issues very quickly and his work quality is outstanding." "He's wise beyond his years and can stay on top of a large volume of material." **Recent work:** Continued to act as sole junior counsel for the Recorder of London (formerly the Chief Coroner of England and Wales) in the Fishmongers' Hall inquest, touching the deaths of Saskia Jones and Jack Merritt in the 2019 London Bridge terror attack.

Claire Palmer (see p.908) Claire Palmer is a barrister routinely called upon by government departments and police forces to represent them in inquests and public inquiries. She is particularly adept at providing counsel on matters that involve national security elements and police custody issues. **Strengths:** "She's a very talented and very effective advocate." "She's smart and tenacious. A really strong junior." **Recent work:** Continued to represent over 100 former undercover officers of the Metropolitan Police in the Undercover Policing Inquiry.

Emma Price (see p.915) Emma Price has a busy inquests and inquiries practice which sees her regularly act for central government, police forces, NHS trusts and local authorities. **Strengths:** "She is an extremely diligent and hard-working barrister." "Emma has outstanding analytical ability and is always well prepared." **Recent work:** Acted for the Department of Health and Social Care in the Infected Blood Inquiry.

Serjeants' Inn Chambers

See profile on p.1101

THE SET

Serjeants' Inn Chambers is recognised for having "a broad range of experts in all areas of medically-related law." Its barristers have extensive experience handling inquests as well as high-profile public inquiries. Members are frequently instructed by the police, the NHS and other public bodies. Recent work includes involvement in the inquests into the Guildford pub bombings and the Shoreham Airshow crash.

Client service: "They have always sorted us out, whatever time of day and the sort of case it is. Lee Johnson is always great in finding replacements where necessary." "They are incredibly helpful and go the extra mile to assist. Tom O'Connor has been a huge help on many occasions."

SILKS

John Beggs QC John Beggs QC is a standout silk who typically acts for police forces facing considerable scrutiny in inquests which attract major publicity, and as core participants in public inquiries. He habitually advises on the adequacy of police investigations, as well as deaths resulting from actions or omissions made by the police. He is also adept in the representation of the bereaved in matters not involving the police. **Strengths:** "His knowledge, approach and accessibility are all second to none." **Recent work:** Acted for the Chief Constable of Bedfordshire Police at the inquest into the death of Leon Briggs.

Bridget Dolan QC Bridget Dolan QC is a highly regarded advocate who regularly appears in complex inquests, including proceedings invoking Article 2 of the ECHR. In addition to her experience representing bereaved families and state agents, she frequently serves as counsel to the inquest. She is recognised as an authority on coronial law and is becoming a go-to choice to defend coroners' decisions in judicial review proceedings. **Strengths:** "She is tenacious

and does a fantastic job for her clients. She is all over the details and doesn't miss anything." "She is an excellent orator and has an unparalleled ability to perceive novel solutions to difficult circumstances."

Recent work: Continued to act as counsel to the Senior Coroner for West Sussex in the Shoreham Airshow inquest.

Gerard Boyle QC Gerard Boyle QC has considerable experience of handling high-profile inquests and public inquiries. He is routinely called upon by police forces and health services, including NHS trusts.

Strengths: "Fights for his clients but is also a very calm presence." **Recent work:** Continued to represent the National Police Chiefs Council in the Undercover Policing Inquiry.

Debra Powell QC Debra Powell QC is a popular barrister for inquests concerning clinical negligence. She habitually represents bereaved families, healthcare professionals, NHS trusts and other state agents. She also has experience in Article 2 inquests involving police and prison deaths. Her broad practice sees her regularly appearing in public inquiries. **Strengths:** "A formidable advocate." "She is easy to work with and very responsive to questions and queries." **Recent work:** Continued to represent the Welsh Blood Service in the Infected Blood Inquiry.

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Briony Ballard Briony Ballard predominantly acts in inquests, including Article 2 proceedings, which involve alleged or proven clinical negligence. She routinely receives instructions from healthcare professionals, NHS trusts and bereaved families. She is also adept in proceedings involving police or prison deaths, and has significant experience of inquests involving issues of mental health. She draws strength from her experience as an assistant coroner. **Strengths:** "She is incredibly intelligent but doesn't hide things in legal jargon. A very impressive barrister." "She is fantastic in complex multi-organisation cases."

James Berry James Berry is favoured by a number of police forces and NHS trusts for advice and representation in major public inquiries and Article 2 inquests. **Strengths:** "He's a very smooth, very skilled barrister." "Delightful to work with."

Cecily White Cecily White is a barrister with notable experience acting in sensitive jury inquests and public inquiries. She represents NHS trusts and police forces as well as families and professionals. **Strengths:** "She is incredibly intelligent, holds her own in court and doesn't let anyone get away with anything." "She has an encyclopedic knowledge of the law and great judgement." **Recent work:** Acted for the Metropolitan Police at the inquest touching the death of Sabina Rizvi, who was murdered outside Bexleyheath Police Station in 2013. The inquest scrutinised the force's investigations into known risks associated with her murderer.

Matthew Holdcroft Matthew Holdcroft is admired as a thoroughly modern barrister who can be relied upon to find the right tone in the most sensitive cases. He is a firm favourite of police forces and additionally represents the NHS in high-profile inquests and public inquiries. **Strengths:** "He is very approachable and very grounded in his approach." "He always looks at the bigger picture and comes up with practical solutions. He's also very good with clients."

Edward Pleeth Edward Pleeth has a strong track record acting for government, police or NHS clients in a broad range of high-profile inquests and public inquiries. **Strengths:** "He has a commanding

presence in court and is well liked by clients and solicitors." "He is a very clever barrister and delivers impressive submissions." **Recent work:** Instructed by the UK government in the reopened inquests arising out of the 1974 bombing of two pubs in Guildford.

Sarah Simcock Sarah Simcock has a busy inquest practice and is a popular choice of barrister with police forces, NHS clients or private companies. **Strengths:** "Brilliant with witnesses and so on top of the facts and the law." **Recent work:** Acted for the National Police Air Service in an Article 2 inquest into the death of Gaia Pope-Sutherland, who went missing on the coast of Dorset.

Paul Spencer Paul Spencer is well known for his handling of complex inquests arising out of health and social care. He receives instructions from NHS trusts, care homes, psychiatric hospitals, regulatory bodies, doctors and others. He is also capable of handling parallel disciplinary actions. **Strengths:** "He's a very user-friendly barrister who is approachable and hard-working." "He's very clear, thorough and good at understanding things from a client's point of view."

Recent work: Acted for the University of East Anglia in an inquest concerning the death of student Theo Brennan Hulme.

Claire Watson Claire Watson is well versed in Article 2 inquests, typically involving complex and sensitive issues such as mental health and the adequacy of medical care. Her clients include NHS trusts, bereaved families and police forces. **Strengths:** "Any time I've seen her on her feet she has been excellent. I've also been really impressed with her written work." "She is on the ball in terms of which points to take and which not to take." **Recent work:** Acted for a mental health trust and an acute NHS trust at the inquest into the death of Melissa Lee, who suffered from emotionally unstable personality disorder and died following an overdose aged 26.

Liam Duffy Liam Duffy has a notable practice in Article 2 inquests, in which he tends to be instructed by medical interveners in relation to deaths in various forms of state detention. **Strengths:** "He's sharp and clear in his advice, especially in complex matters." "He is always super prepared, he handles clients really well and he is a very persuasive barrister in court." **Recent work:** Acted for the Central and North West London NHS at the inquest touching the death of Oscar Okwurime, an Article 2 jury inquest arising from his death in Harmondsworth immigration detention centre.

Jamie Mathieson Jamie Mathieson acts for families and medical practitioners in complex inquests, specialising in deaths in medical contexts, particularly involving deprivation of liberty. **Strengths:** "He is extremely hard-working and approachable." "He can hold his own against people well above his call. He's a really impressive barrister." **Recent work:** Acted for the family of Jean Duffy at the inquest into her death after a fatal fall in a care home shortly after she had been administered newly prescribed sedative medication.

Temple Garden Chambers

See profile on p.112

THE SET

Temple Garden Chambers is sought out to provide counsel to the inquiry, or to represent public authorities, private entities or family members in high-profile inquests and inquiries. The barristers have been involved in multiple strands of the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse, as well as taking notable roles in the Grenfell Tower Inquiry, the

Infected Blood Inquiry and the Undercover Policing Inquiry. They have represented interested parties in inquests including those relating to the 2017 London Bridge attacks and the Shoreham Airshow disaster. Members are noted for being "very user-friendly and approachable at all levels."

Client service: "They are an excellent clerking team who are always on the front foot and quick to respond." "Very approachable, helpful and happy to go the extra mile." Dean Norton is the senior clerk. Alongside clerking duties, the management team coordinates the production of newsletters and webinars covering legal topics or wider issues such as the effect of the pandemic on legal practice.

SILKS

Cathryn McGahey QC Cathryn McGahey QC is instructed as counsel to public inquiries and also demonstrates great aptitude when appearing on behalf of core participants. She is a skilled representative of state agents in inquests and has a particular focus on proceedings involving deaths in custody. She has developed a specialism in cases concerning child protection. **Strengths:** "A calm, sensible counsel with a very good court style. She is extremely popular with government departments." "She's very approachable, flexible in how she deals with cases, and clients really like her." **Recent work:** Continued to act on behalf of the Home Secretary in the Grenfell Tower Inquiry.

Keith Morton QC (see p.899) Keith Morton QC is a superb choice for inquests involving health and safety law, particularly in the context of aviation accidents. He represents regulators, businesses, local authorities, individuals and bereaved families. **Strengths:** "His input is valuable not only in terms of his knowledge and experience but also his ability to advise clients carefully and calmly." "He is very approachable and particularly good at judging the right tone for inquests." **Recent work:** Continued to represent the Civil Aviation Authority in the Shoreham Airshow disaster inquest.

Andrew O'Connor QC Andrew O'Connor QC is incredibly knowledgeable about inquests and public inquiries. He typically acts on behalf of state agents and other interested parties in inquests of national and international significance. He is well versed in matters involving questions of national security, and is adept at advising coroners when serving as counsel to the inquiry. **Strengths:** "He has an encyclopedic knowledge, and he is calm and collected under pressure and pleasant to work with." "He's a brilliant advocate and has a strategic mind." **Recent work:** Instructed as leading counsel to the inquest examining the 2018 death of Dawn Sturgess from Novichok poisoning.

Dominic Adamson QC Dominic Adamson QC has significant experience in inquests and public inquiries relating to health and safety matters. He frequently acts on behalf of bereaved families, independent businesses or local authorities in such cases. **Strengths:** "Tactically he is spot on and brilliant, and he has a really good manner with clients." "He's very good at explaining complex things in a clear and concise way and he gets to grips with complex matters really well." **Recent work:** Acted for a care home at the inquest into the death of Frederick Sheath. The investigation concerned alleged failings in the process of assessing the service user and the dissemination of information by the Local Authority.

David Barr QC David Barr QC receives instructions in a wide range of inquests and public inquiries, fre-

quently acting as counsel to the inquiry. **Strengths:** "His ability to steer a very big ship in inquests is impressive." "He's a deep thinker about cases and his view is respected."

Nicholas Moss QC (see p.899) Nicholas Moss QC is an exceptional barrister who is regarded as one of the best advocates of his generation. He is much sought after to act as lead counsel on behalf of state agents in complex Article 2 inquests and public inquiries. He is particularly strong in inquests arising out of military and prison deaths, and adept in matters involving issues of national security. **Strengths:** "His attention to detail is second to none, and he ensures we have all the information and evidence ready." "He is a devastating cross-examiner and has phenomenal witness-handling skills." **Recent work:** Continued to represent the Department of Health and Social Care and its former ministers and civil servants in the Infected Blood Inquiry.

JUNIORS

Fiona Canby (see p.803) Fiona Canby brings an impressive background in health and safety law to her work for interested parties and core participants in major inquiries. **Strengths:** "She is really good with clients, and her knowledge in relation to inquests is second to none." "She is an extremely hard-working barrister who is approachable and acutely sensitive to the needs of her clients." **Recent work:** Continued to act for Rydon, the main contractor on the refurbishment of Grenfell Tower, in the Grenfell Tower Inquiry.

Scarlett Milligan (see p.894) Scarlett Milligan has a growing presence in the inquests and inquiries sphere, where she acts for a wide range of clients. Among other prominent matters she is notable for having been instructed as counsel to the Grenfell Tower Inquiry. **Strengths:** "She is an empathetic barrister who communicates clearly with clients and deals with all the issues in inquests in a way that is understood clearly." **Recent work:** Acted as junior counsel to the Grenfell Tower Inquiry.

Band 2

Garden Court Chambers

See profile on p.1041

THE SET

Renowned for its sensitive but robust representation of bereaved families, Garden Court Chambers has retained a strong reputation in the inquests and public inquiries space. The barristers have notable experience representing the bereaved in matters examining the actions or inactions of the police and other public authorities. They have recently acted in high-profile cases such as the Birmingham pub bombings inquest and the Ballymurphy inquest.

Client service: "The clerking team are well organised and they regularly check in to see how they can improve or where they can provide additional training. They also respond very quickly to queries." The director of clerking is Colin Cook.

SILKS

Leslie Thomas QC Leslie Thomas QC has a strong track record of representing bereaved families in highly contentious inquests and major public inquiries, including Article 2 proceedings. He has particular expertise in inquests that concern police conduct, such as deaths by police restraint or police shootings. He also advises on related human rights

and public law issues. **Strengths:** “He is just outstanding. He’s exceptional when it comes to juries and is amazing with families.” “An entrancing advocate in court. Really impressive.” **Recent work:** Acted for the mother of Kevin Clarke at the inquest into his death by restraint in police custody.

Brenda Campbell QC Brenda Campbell QC is qualified to appear in inquests across England, Wales and Northern Ireland. She typically acts for bereaved families in matters involving police conduct and alleged state collusion. She has been particularly active handling legacy inquests arising out of the Northern Ireland Troubles. **Strengths:** “Brenda Campbell QC goes above and beyond.” **Recent work:** Continued to act on behalf of the family members of Hugh Mullan and Francis Quinn in the Ballymurphy inquest. This inquest investigated the deaths of ten individuals who were shot by British armed forces in Belfast in 1971.

JUNIORS

Kirsten Heaven Kirsten Heaven has extensive experience in inquests. She possesses expertise in various key areas, including deaths in prison, and inquests where the investigative duties of the police are placed under scrutiny. **Strengths:** “She is highly intelligent, cuts straight to the core issues and is a formidable and fearless advocate, as well as being a pleasure to work with.” **Recent work:** Continued to represent parties at the inquests into the deaths of 11 people who died when a vintage fighter jet crashed at Shoreham Airshow in 2015.

Thalia Maragh Thalia Maragh is a committed and analytically gifted barrister who has a notable focus on representing the bereaved in Article 2 inquests, public inquiries and related public law challenges. **Strengths:** “An excellent lawyer who pushes boundaries and has great client care skills.” “Very committed and hard-working; she’s a real champion for her clients.” **Recent work:** Represented a group of bereaved family members at the Grenfell Tower Inquiry.

Una Morris Una Morris is a go-to barrister for families and core participants in sensitive inquests and inquiries. She brings a wealth of expertise spanning civil liberties and police law, offering adept handling of matters concerning the police, prisons and immigration authorities. **Strengths:** “She is a calm and extremely effective advocate. She is committed to her clients, passionate and always selects the good points to focus on.” **Recent work:** Acted for a number of non-police, non-state core participants in the Undercover Policing Inquiry.

3 Raymond Buildings

See profile on p.1095

THE SET

3 Raymond Buildings offers considerable expertise in handling inquests as a result of its longstanding practice in this area. The set draws strength from its criminal and regulatory experience. Recently members have been involved in the London Bridge inquests and the Grenfell Tower Inquiry. The barristers act on behalf of police officers, and fire services and other state agents. The set has copious knowledge of matters such as emergency service failings and criminal and terrorist activities.

Client service: “The clerking team is excellent.” Eddie Holland is the senior clerk.

SILKS

Hugh Davies QC Hugh Davies QC is a strong choice

to represent individual police officers facing considerable scrutiny in inquests and public inquiries, often involving parallel professional discipline proceedings. He is especially experienced in inquests involving police shootings. **Strengths:** “He’s a very effective operator.” **Recent work:** Represented West Yorkshire Police in the Undercover Policing Inquiry.

Patrick Gibbs QC (see p.839) Patrick Gibbs QC has a strong track record of being instructed in the highest-profile inquests and inquiries, particularly where police conduct is under scrutiny. He is well suited to handling inquests which might result in criminal liability or disciplinary action. He routinely appears on behalf of all participants, including state agents and bereaved families. **Strengths:** “He’s incredibly experienced in the area and is also wonderful with clients. He gives the very best service they could hope for.” “He has come from the criminal Bar and applied those techniques subtly in the inquests context. He has taught me a lot about making brief submissions.” **Recent work:** Represented the British Transport Police and all its officer witnesses in the Manchester Arena Inquiry.

Richard Horwell QC (see p.858) Richard Horwell QC predominantly represents police forces in sensitive and politically charged public inquiries. He offers guidance on related developments in counter-terrorism policing. He is also instructed by other state agents, including NHS trusts and educational institutions. **Strengths:** “He has massive gravitas and incredible judgement. He’s very good at dealing with very high-profile and sensitive matters.” “A very sophisticated and assured advocate.” **Recent work:** Continued to act on behalf of the Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police at the inquests following the terror attacks on London Bridge and at Borough Market in 2017.

Matthew Butt QC (see p.801) Matthew Butt QC is a respected barrister with a wide-ranging inquests and inquiries practice. He demonstrates notable strengths in proceedings concerning police conduct, clinical negligence and education. He specialises particularly in the representation of Silver Commanders in inquests relating to police firearms use. His capabilities also include advising on parallel disciplinary and criminal investigations. **Strengths:** “He’s a very focused questioner and handles the inquest style very well.” “He acts for the police in very difficult and complex cases.” **Recent work:** Acted on behalf of the Metropolitan Police Commissioner at the inquest into the attacks on London Bridge in 2019.

Hugo Keith QC (see p.870) Hugo Keith QC frequently represents individuals, state agents and other participants in sensitive public inquiries and inquests, usually under considerable media attention. His broad expertise includes sensitive police law, terrorism and national security issues. As a renowned criminal silk, he is a particularly popular choice for inquests that involve parallel criminal proceedings. **Strengths:** “He carries an enormous degree of authority before the courts. He is also super bright, hard-working and a pleasure to work with.” “A sublime advocate.” **Recent work:** Continued to represent the Metropolitan Police at the inquests following the terror attack at Westminster Bridge in 2017.

Stephen Walsh QC (see p.952) Stephen Walsh QC is recognised in the market for his track record of handling difficult briefs in high-profile inquests and public inquiries. He is routinely instructed by a broad range of core participants, including professional associations, fire brigades and private companies. Walsh’s expertise includes health and safety legis-

lation, and the handling of inquiries into major disasters. **Strengths:** “He has a lovely demeanour with clients and helps manage them through tricky processes as well as providing robust assistance.” “He is very approachable and easy to get in touch with.” **Recent work:** Continued to represent the London Fire Brigade in the Grenfell Tower Inquiry.

Clair Dobbin QC (see p.825) Clair Dobbin QC is consistently involved in the most high-profile inquests and inquiries. She chiefly counsels state agents, including police forces and government departments, and also has experience serving as counsel to the inquiry. Her practice has a particular emphasis on inquests relating to prison and police custody deaths. **Strengths:** “She works phenomenally hard, has a very good grasp of inquests and has a very nice manner with clients.” “She is a super bright, really persuasive and fantastic advocate.” **Recent work:** Continued to act as counsel to the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse. Conducted the investigations into Lambeth Children’s Homes and Rochdale.

JUNIORS

Sarah Le Fevre Sarah Le Fevre represents clients at all stages of the coronial process and in public law challenges arising from the conduct of inquest proceedings. Her expertise encompasses cases concerning health and safety law, the police and hospital-related deaths. She has also made a number of notable appearances in public inquiries. **Strengths:** “Her advocacy and delivery in court is amazing.” “She is a classy performer and a barrister who delivers good and consistent-quality work.” **Recent work:** Continued to act on behalf of the London Fire Commissioner in the Grenfell Tower Inquiry.

Saba Naqshbandi (see p.901) Saba Naqshbandi represents police forces in proceedings arising out of criminal investigations and deaths in custody. She is also instructed by businesses, hospitals, fire authorities and other parties involved in inquests. **Strengths:** “She is absolutely meticulous, really good in court and brilliant on paper.” “She is a very measured, focused and fair barrister.” **Recent work:** Continued to act as sole counsel to the London Fire Commissioner at the inquests into deaths during the terror attack at London Bridge in 2017.

Kevin Baumber (see p.787) Kevin Baumber is a police specialist barrister who brings considerable expertise to inquest work owing to his role as assistant coroner for Hertfordshire. He focuses his practice in particular on Article 2 inquests arising from deaths in police custody or otherwise involving the police. **Recent work:** Acted as sole counsel to Staffordshire Police’s Prevent officers in the Fishmongers’ Hall inquest.

Reka Hollos (see p.857) Reka Hollos is an impressive junior barrister particularly sought after to represent the police and other state actors in a broad array of inquests and public inquiries. **Strengths:** “She is highly responsive, fun to work with and produces very clear drafting.” “I have to constantly check myself to remind myself of her call. She really does become indispensable.” **Recent work:** Represented the British Transport Police in the Manchester Arena Inquiry.

Band 3

Crown Office Chambers

See profile on p.1009

THE SET

Crown Office Chambers possesses a robust practice in public inquiries and inquests, with members generally acting for companies or public bodies. Barristers from the set have a strong track record in a wide range of matters, including inquests arising from deaths in custody, on construction sites, at care homes and as a result of fires and explosions. Renowned for its health and safety expertise, the set boasts considerable expertise in corresponding criminal regulatory and civil proceedings arising from inquests.

Client service: "Toby Sparrow is really responsive and puts us in touch with the right people for a case." "The clerks are very responsive; they understand their clients' requirements and are able to suggest barristers who are the right fit for the client." Andy Flanagan is senior managing clerk.

SILKS

Simon Antrobus QC (see p.779) Simon Antrobus QC is a renowned health and safety specialist who has significant experience handling very high-profile inquests and public inquiries. He typically acts on behalf of commercial clients in inquests and in any related health and safety prosecutions. **Strengths:** "He's a first-rate advocate who is also superb with clients. He knows the law inside out and is strategically very astute." "He's very good at putting clients at ease and helping them through a case." **Recent work:** Continued to act for Max Fordham LLP, a mechanical and engineering consultancy, as one of the core participants in the Grenfell Tower Inquiry.

Dominic Kay QC Dominic Kay QC draws strength from his health and safety practice to represent clients in high-profile inquests. He also has experience representing core participants in public inquiries. **Strengths:** "He is superb with clients and is a first-rate advocate. He knows the law inside and out and is strategically very astute." **Recent work:** Acted on behalf of Forgiving Earth at the inquest into the death of Mark Milsome, a cameraman who died on a film set during a stunt.

James Maxwell-Scott QC James Maxwell-Scott QC is instructed in a diverse range of inquests and public inquiries, regularly appearing as counsel to the inquiry. He has particular experience appearing in inquiries involving a health and safety aspect. **Strengths:** "An understated but very good advocate." "He is utterly brilliant in all the ways you need in serving his clients' interests." **Recent work:** Continued to represent the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea in the Grenfell Tower Inquiry.

JUNIORS

Alice Jarratt Alice Jarratt has strong experience representing private entities in inquests, a practice which is informed by her knowledge of health and safety law. She has additionally attracted a key instruction in the Grenfell Tower Inquiry. **Strengths:** "A very passionate, eloquent barrister and good on her feet." **Recent work:** Continued to act as sole counsel to the Kensington and Chelsea Tenant Management Organisation in the Grenfell Tower Inquiry.

Jack Murphy Jack Murphy is a strong choice of barrister for healthcare providers, construction companies, public bodies and families in complex inquests and public inquiries. **Strengths:** "He's meticulous in his approach and has a lovely manner about him with clients and the courts." "He is on top of the detail, he gets the issues and he works extremely hard." **Recent work:** Acted for the custodial contractor GEOAmev at the inquest of a woman who died after

being restrained by its staff in court.

2 Hare Court

See profile on p.1051

THE SET

2 Hare Court has a noted specialism in inquests and has been involved in public inquiries including the IICSA, Manchester Arena and Grenfell Tower. The set's barristers typically act for corporate entities in such matters, although they are also instructed by government, the NHS, or as counsel to the inquiry. Members offer considerable experience acting in a wide range of inquests, including those into deaths in workplace, care and medical settings.

Client service: "The clerks are very professional and courteous." Julian Campbell is the director of clerking.

SILKS

Jonathan Laidlaw QC (see p.874) Jonathan Laidlaw QC is an experienced criminal and regulatory silk who is frequently instructed in significant inquests and public inquiries. He has considerable experience of inquests involving health and safety. He regularly advises businesses, regulators and inquiry chairs. **Strengths:** "He is a class act in dealing with very, very tricky cases." "He excels in his advocacy." **Recent work:** Continued to act for Harley Facades as a core participant in the Grenfell Tower Inquiry. The client was responsible for providing the cladding used in the renovation of the tower.

JUNIORS

Nikita McNeill (see p.891) Nikita McNeill is a barrister gaining prominence for her involvement in high-profile inquests and public inquiries, particularly as counsel to the inquiry. She is also adept in related criminal and disciplinary actions. **Strengths:** "She is an exceptionally good advocate. She has encyclopedic knowledge of inquests law and inquiries, with really good judgement." **Recent work:** Continued to represent Kevin Lamb of Bespoke Designs in the Grenfell Tower Inquiry. Mr Lamb was responsible for designing the cladding used on the tower.

Alexandra Tampakopoulos (see p.941) Alexandra Tampakopoulos is a highly sought-after barrister for complex inquests and inquiries. She is noted for her expertise in health and safety inquests and parallel prosecutions. She represents all interested parties, including bereaved families, businesses, individuals and state agents. **Strengths:** "She is a very impressive junior." **Recent work:** Continued to represent Showsec in the Manchester Arena Inquiry. Showsec was the venue security provider at the arena on the night of the bombing.

Henderson Chambers

See profile on p.1054

THE SET

Henderson Chambers is noted for its impressive depth and breadth of expertise in inquests and inquiries, in which it tends to act for corporate clients, as well as public bodies. Members boast considerable prowess in product liability and health and safety. They are well placed to act for clients in matters involving rail and transport safety, and construction workplace deaths. Several of the barristers have been instructed in the Grenfell Tower and other notable public inquiries.

Client service: "They are very responsive and you know you will get a very good service from them. They do their best to accommodate requests and

pick things up at short notice." James Housden is chambers director and Daniel Kemp is senior practice manager.

SILKS

Oliver Campbell QC (see p.803) Oliver Campbell QC has a strong track record of appearing in high-profile jury inquests, with particular expertise in cases involving work-related deaths. He is also well regarded for his handling of complex health and safety matters. **Strengths:** "A dogged advocate with great judgement." **Recent work:** Acted on behalf of US medical device manufacturer Abbott at the inquest into the death of Andrew Cook, allegedly caused by an allergic reaction to the polymer coating of a catheter during a cardiac operation.

Andrew Kinnier QC (see p.872) Andrew Kinnier QC has a strong inquests practice concentrating on deaths in the workplace, bolstered by his deep knowledge of health and safety law. He is notable for his past involvement in high-profile rail safety investigations, and has more recently assumed a central role in the Grenfell Tower Inquiry. **Strengths:** "He gets through witnesses very quickly, he's very efficient in his approach and he stands his ground." "He is bright, able and fearless." **Recent work:** Acted as counsel to the Grenfell Tower Inquiry.

Prashant Popat QC (see p.913) Prashant Popat QC is an experienced silk frequently involved in high-profile inquests and public inquiries. He is experienced in inquests arising across a wide range of industries such as transport, construction, mining and agriculture. **Strengths:** "He thinks deeply about cases and has a nice manner as an advocate." **Recent work:** Continued to represent Studio E architects at the Grenfell Tower Inquiry.

Toby Riley-Smith QC (see p.921) Toby Riley-Smith QC represents organisations from the retail, cosmetics and manufacturing sectors at inquests. He is particularly adept at acting on behalf of clients in inquests relating to health and safety incidents. He has additional experience representing health-care providers in Article 2 inquests. **Strengths:** "He is a real details person and completely on top of everything. He is also great at assisting everyone in finding a sensible way forward." **Recent work:** Acted on behalf of the Care Inspectorate Wales in the Brithdir inquests, arising from a 2006 investigation by Gwent Police into a number of deaths of elderly people in care homes.

Geraint Webb QC (see p.954) Geraint Webb QC is an experienced practitioner with a strong track record of acting for medical device, pharmaceutical and automotive manufacturers at inquests. **Recent work:** Acted in the Grenfell Tower Inquiry on behalf of Kingspan, an insulation manufacturer and core participant in the inquiry.

JUNIORS

Tim Green (see p.844) Tim Green has a strong track record of acting for clients in the manufacturing and construction sectors, with considerable expertise in health and safety and product liability matters. He leverages this expertise in sensitive inquests, particularly those arising from deaths in the workplace. **Strengths:** "I have been very impressed with his ability to combine an extensive depth of technical knowledge with a real focus on the client. He has a strategic yet sensitive approach which is so critical in inquests, and strives to ensure clients receive the best representation." **Recent work:** Acted for Network Rail at the inquest of two sisters, one of whom

took her own life by crossing a railway line. The inquest considered the adequacy of communication between mental healthcare staff and rail signallers in cases of patients going AWOL.

Matrix Chambers

See profile on p.1070

THE SET

Matrix Chambers is a strong choice to represent the bereaved at inquests, and non-state core participants in public inquiries. The set's standing in public and human rights law makes it a go-to chambers for Article 2 inquests or related judicial reviews. Recent highlights include acting for more than 200 survivors and bereaved families in the Grenfell Tower Inquiry; three members have also been involved in the Infected Blood Inquiry.

Client service: "The clerks are extremely helpful in matching barristers to the right case in terms of both availability and expertise." Alison Scanes is senior practice manager for Team M.

SILKS

Danny Friedman QC (see p.837) Danny Friedman QC brings his considerable expertise in human rights law to bear in public inquiries and inquests, including proceedings where Article 2 is engaged. He is often instructed in judicial reviews arising in the course of inquests. **Strengths:** "He is massively creative and pushes boundaries. He is also really engaged with clients, passionate and super collaborative." "He advocates with passion and persuasion, and you never come out of a hearing thinking you weren't heard." **Recent work:** Continued to act on behalf of a large number of survivors and bereaved families in the Grenfell Tower Inquiry.

Phillippa Kaufmann QC Phillippa Kaufmann QC draws on her revered claimant-side public law practice in representing victims and families in inquests and inquiries. She is well known for bringing challenges to controversial decisions as to procedure, anonymity and the scope of the investigation. **Strengths:** "She's a very strong, passionate and really impressive advocate." "One of the most effective at the Bar, she is doing important cases and is hugely respected." **Recent work:** Continued to represent 200 non-police core participants in the Undercover Policing Inquiry.

JUNIORS

Jesse Nicholls Jesse Nicholls is extremely well regarded for his detailed knowledge of inquest procedure and his experience acting in key public inquiries. He frequently represents bereaved families in high-profile inquests, including Article 2 proceedings. He has additional experience acting as counsel to the inquiry. He is particularly capable in inquests scrutinising police conduct and other actions of the state, and is also routinely instructed by families and NGOs in judicial reviews arising from inquests. **Strengths:** "He is really effective, committed and provides quick turnaround with his work." "He's good at identifying clients' needs and picking out appropriate routes of legal recourse." **Recent work:** Continued to act as counsel to the Manchester Arena Inquiry.

Kirsten Sjøvoll Kirsten Sjøvoll offers capability in a wide range of Article 2 inquests, including those involving clinical negligence or police conduct. She typically acts on behalf of bereaved families. **Strengths:** "Her advocacy is great. She is very calm, measured and persuasive." "She is enormously busy

in inquests work and has an absolute mastery of all the detail."

Nicholas Armstrong Nicholas Armstrong is a leading public law barrister with a reputation for his expert handling of complex inquests and inquiries, primarily on behalf of bereaved families. His practice features a notable focus on deaths occurring in immigration detention. **Strengths:** "In ten years I have never seen a more effective questioning. He is effective, never aggressive and displays skill in court." "He's an imaginative, very hard-working and creative barrister." **Recent work:** Acted as leading counsel for a core participant as well as Gatwick Detainees Welfare Group in the Brook House Inquiry, arising from abuse at the detention centre brought to national attention by Panorama.

Raj Desai Raj Desai is well versed in Article 2 inquests investigating deaths involving public authorities, including the police and prison staff. He is routinely called upon by bereaved family members. Mr Desai has additional experience of large-scale public inquiries. **Strengths:** "He's very thorough, knows the law very well and provides very strong written work." "He is organised, passionate and gets on incredibly well with solicitors." **Recent work:** Acted for the former partner of Aston McLean-Williams at the Article 2 inquest into his death after being run down and trapped under an armed response vehicle.

Ifeanyi Odogwu Ifeanyi Odogwu specialises in representing family members at inquests into deaths following police custody and restraint, or police shootings. He has an impressive track record of appearances in Article 2 jury inquests, and has also brought several judicial review challenges to coroners' decisions. **Strengths:** "He is a calm and smooth barrister in court and makes his points fairly and robustly." "He's extremely able, sharp and very collegiate." **Recent work:** Acted as junior counsel for the family at the inquest of Kevin Clarke, a black man who died after being restrained by police.

James Robottom James Robottom has a broad inquests practice which includes matters relating to clinical failings and mental health, prison deaths, and health and safety law. He typically represents bereaved families in inquests and related civil proceedings. **Strengths:** "He's an excellent advocate with excellent client care and empathy." "He is forensic and inquisitive, and gets to the point while remaining polite and straightforward." **Recent work:** Represented the family of Daryl Brimfield at a jury inquest into his death by suicide after being remanded to HMP High Down in August 2019.

QEB Hollis Whiteman

See profile on p.1089

THE SET

QEB Hollis Whiteman has an impressive breadth of expertise in the field of public inquiries and inquests. Members act for public bodies, private companies and the bereaved. The set has strengths advising on medical, policing and military matters, in which members draw from their professional disciplinary, criminal and health and safety experience. Recent highlights include instructions in the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse, the Manchester Arena Inquiry and the Steven Dymon inquest.

Client service: "The clerks are professional and helpful. Faye Stimpson is proactive and communicates well." "The clerking team is great. They are easy to get hold of and efficient." Chris Emmings is the senior clerk.

SILKS

Nicholas Griffin QC Nicholas Griffin QC is regularly involved in significant public inquiries on behalf of participants or as counsel to the inquiry. He has also appeared as an expert witness in such matters. His inquiries practice extends beyond England and includes significant instructions in Jersey and Northern Ireland. **Strengths:** "He is a really excellent advocate who is able to manage a lot of competing interests with subtlety." "He instils confidence in clients. He is friendly and pragmatic." **Recent work:** Acted for the University of Cambridge in the Fish-mongers' Hall Inquests.

Tom Kark QC Tom Kark QC appears in a wide array of public inquiries and inquests, including matters relating to healthcare, health and safety, and police conduct. His criminal law background means he is well suited to jury inquests. **Strengths:** "His great skill is his ability to have difficult conversations. He is fantastic to work with."

Anne Whyte QC Anne Whyte QC is notable for her skilful representation of police forces at inquests and inquiries investigating police shootings, restraint techniques or the adequacy of criminal investigations. **Strengths:** "She is approachable, responsive, hard-working and practical in her problem solving. She is also considered and calm in her approach and able to efficiently analyse large amounts of information." "She is very thorough, personable, communicative and easy to work with."

JUNIORS

Thomas Coke-Smyth Thomas Coke-Smyth has an active inquests practice, in which he frequently acts for bereaved families. His inquests work often involves complex medical evidence. **Strengths:** "He managed to get the coroner to look at things more widely than expected and really instilled a lot of confidence in the family." **Recent work:** Acted for the mother of two year old James Manning at the inquest into his death as a result of choking at Butlin's in 2018.

Other Ranked Lawyers

Brian Altman QC (see p.778) (2 Bedford Row) Brian Altman QC is a stalwart of the criminal Bar who has attracted significant attention and commendation for his work at the helm of the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse. **Strengths:** "He is a force of nature. He is extremely driven and hard-working." "He brings all the forensic ability of one of the great criminal practitioners into the inquest arena." **Recent work:** Continued to act as lead counsel in the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse.

Julian Blake (see p.794) (11KBW) Julian Blake is a go-to barrister for a wide array of public authorities in high-profile inquests and inquiries. **Strengths:** "He has a really interesting combination of exceptional intellect as well as brilliant client skills." **Recent work:** Acted for the London Borough of Lewisham at the inquest into the death of Ella Adoo-Kissi-Debrah.

Melanie Cumberland (6KBW College Hill) Melanie Cumberland appears in significant public inquiries and inquests involving national security and international relations. She typically acts for the UK government and various state agents. She is also adept at handling public law cases arising out of inquests and inquiries. **Strengths:** "Everything she writes is brilliant. It's precise, concise, effective and a pleasure to read." "She's a strong criminal crossover practitioner."

Philip Dayle (No5 Barristers' Chambers) Philip Dayle is instructed by victims and bereaved families in major public inquiries, and in bringing judicial review challenges to their scope. He also acts for a variety of interested parties in inquests involving prisons, health and safety breaches and other matters. **Strengths:** "He has an impressive ability to grasp complex and detailed issues while never losing sight of the bigger picture. He is an excellent communicator, both orally and in writing." "He is just brilliant. He's very accessible and great with his clients."

Recent work: Acted in the Infected Blood Inquiry on behalf of individuals affected by contaminated blood products in the 1970s and 1980s.

Kate Grange QC (39 Essex Chambers) Kate Grange QC is an impressive performer with a practice spanning public and construction law. In recent years she has brought her considerable expertise to bear as counsel to the Grenfell Tower Inquiry. **Strengths:** "She has an encyclopedic knowledge of the issues and she is fantastic to work with." "She is hard-working and extremely thorough in her approach."

Recent work: Instructed as leading counsel to the Grenfell Tower Inquiry.

Eleanor Grey QC (39 Essex Chambers) Eleanor Grey QC has notable experience representing government departments and other public sector establishments in major public inquiries, such as the Infected Blood Inquiry and the IICSA. She is particularly knowledgeable about anything involving healthcare or education. **Strengths:** "She is incredibly measured and composed. She comes across with enormous authority." "A charming, effective and persuasive advocate." **Recent work:** Continued to act as lead counsel to the Department of Health and Social Care in the Infected Blood Inquiry.

Jonathan Hall QC (6KBW College Hill) Jonathan Hall QC is known for representing police forces, intelligence services and the MoD in high-profile and controversial inquests and public inquiries. He combines his inquest, inquiry and public law practice with his appointment as Independent Reviewer of Terrorism Legislation, and is a particularly strong choice for matters with a national security or covert policing focus. **Strengths:** "He is an experienced advocate in representing the Met Police. He is very controlled, careful and persuasive." "He's great with clients and his juniors."

Jonathan Hough QC (see p.858) (4 New Square) Jonathan Hough QC is widely commended for his

phenomenally deep knowledge of coronial law. He offers expert advice to coroners on all aspects of inquests and is regularly called upon to handle the most high-profile cases. He is also a strong choice to defend coronial decisions in judicial review.

Strengths: "He is a very good tactician and very good in defending his clients' interests." "A real star who is very diplomatic but forceful when needed."

Samantha Jones (39 Essex Chambers) Samantha Jones has a growing reputation in the inquests and inquiries field, owing to her key role in the Grenfell Tower Inquiry. Her inquests practice has focused on cases concerning the provision of social or mental healthcare services. **Strengths:** "She is incredibly thorough, personable and very good at encouraging the team and keeping everyone on top of their work." "She is an exceptionally hard-working barrister and never misses any detail." **Recent work:** Instructed as one of the lead junior counsel to the Grenfell Tower Inquiry.

Paul Livingston (Outer Temple Chambers) Paul Livingston is frequently sought out to act as counsel to public inquiries. Previous instructions have seen him centrally involved in multiple strands of the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse. **Strengths:** "He's off the scale in terms of hard work and attention to detail." "He is incredibly bright and helpful." **Recent work:** Acted as counsel to the Brook House Inquiry.

Michael Mansfield QC (Nexus Chambers) Michael Mansfield QC is renowned for his long history of appearing in high-profile inquests and public inquiries on behalf of bereaved families. He has a particular expertise in Article 2 proceedings scrutinising police conduct.

Scott Matthewson (see p.887) (42 Bedford Row) Scott Matthewson focuses predominantly on representing private contractors in inquests arising from deaths in prisons. He has considerable expertise in Article 2 jury inquests, and those involving clinical negligence and health and safety violations. **Strengths:** "He is a really charming and effective advocate." "He's extremely thorough, astute and doesn't miss anything." **Recent work:** Continued to act as counsel to the inquests into the seven deaths which occurred as a result of the Croydon tram derailment in 2016.

Paul Mertens (see p.893) (Pump Court Chambers) Paul Mertens leads the inquests and inquiries team at Pump Court Chambers, and has considerable experi-

ence in high-profile public inquiries. He is a member of the Attorney General's B Panel. **Strengths:** "He's very analytically sharp, diligent and organised in his work."

Richard Millett QC (Essex Court Chambers) Richard Millett QC is a leading commercial silk who has garnered widespread acclaim for his work as lead counsel to the Grenfell Tower Inquiry. **Strengths:** "He's super professional, very detailed and has a methodical mind. His detail recall is incredible."

Rory Phillips QC (3 Verulam Buildings) Rory Phillips QC has extensive experience of large public inquiries and investigations. His expertise includes representing core participants, and serving as counsel to public inquiries and parliamentary commissions. **Strengths:** "He's bright, on top of everything, and it's hard to fault him in any way." "He is very well respected, and clients appreciate the advice he provides." **Recent work:** Continued to represent the Ecclesiastical Insurance Office as a core participant in three of the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse's investigations concerning the Church of England.

Jenni Richards QC (39 Essex Chambers) Jenni Richards QC is deeply experienced in all forms of investigation into death, wrongdoing or clinical error involving the NHS or other health or social care providers. Her strong command of this area of law, coupled with her public law and human rights expertise, has been recognised in her appointment as lead counsel to the Infected Blood Inquiry. **Strengths:** "She can be incredibly compassionate but also ruthless in getting witnesses to discuss facts they don't want to." "Her work on the Infected Blood Inquiry is absolutely awe-inspiring." **Recent work:** Continued to act as lead counsel to the Infected Blood Inquiry.

Patrick Sadd (Outer Temple Chambers) Patrick Sadd is regularly instructed as counsel to major public inquiries and investigations. He is also sought after to represent bereaved families in sensitive inquests into deaths in hospitals and care homes. **Strengths:** "He has an encyclopedic knowledge of child law and is very good at working with traumatised witnesses in giving evidence." "He is a very thorough and well-prepared advocate." **Recent work:** Acted for the parents of Harley Tickle, a three year old boy, at the inquest into his death following discharge from A&E without being clinically assessed.

The Regions

Inquests & Public Inquiries
Leading Sets
Band 1
Deans Court Chambers *
Garden Court North Chambers
Lincoln House Chambers *
Band 2
New Park Court Chambers
Parklane Plowden *
30 Park Place *
Park Square Barristers *
Leading Silks
Band 1
Blackwell Kate <i>Lincoln House Chambers</i>
Greaney Paul <i>New Park Court Chambers</i>
Weatherby Pete <i>Garden Court North Chambers</i>
Band 2
Browne Louis <i>Exchange Chambers (ORL) ◇ *</i>
Williams Lloyd <i>30 Park Place</i>
New Silks
Cartwright Sophie <i>Deans Court Chambers</i>
* Indicates set / individual with profile.
▫ Direct access.
◇ (ORL) = Other Ranked Lawyer.
Alphabetical order within each band. Band 1 is highest.

Band 1

Deans Court Chambers

THE SET

Manchester-based Deans Court Chambers possesses a long track record in handling complex and sensitive inquests. The set's barristers are sought after throughout the North West by commercial entities, notably in the care sector, and by local authorities, central government, healthcare practitioners or the police. In addition, Sophie Cartwright QC is instructed as counsel to the coroner or chair in many of the most prominent inquests and public inquiries taking place in the region.

Client service: "Deans Court offer a broad service and excellent clerking." "Peter Kelly is a fantastic clerk. He is very proactive, helpful and easy to get hold of." Matthew Gibbons is senior clerk.

SILKS

Sophie Cartwright QC Sophie Cartwright QC is revered for her superb knowledge of coronial law, leading to her frequent appointment as counsel to the inquiry in high-profile inquests or public inquiries. **Strengths:** "She is incredibly good at investigating and will squirrel away until she identifies the key points to be raised." "She is well prepared and has a very calm manner."

JUNIORS

Virginia Hayton Virginia Hayton is instructed by local authorities across the North West. She has strong knowledge of health and safety matters, and has acted in numerous inquests involving issues of social care or policing. **Strengths:** "She commands a great deal of respect; she has great attention to detail and focuses on the most important points." "She brings a world of experience." **Recent work:** Acted for Dr Adam in the inquest into the death of Jacqueline Maguire.

Elizabeth Dudley-Jones Elizabeth Dudley-Jones is a highly sought-after barrister for representation

Inquests & Public Inquiries
Leading Juniors
Band 1
Hayton Virginia <i>Deans Court Chambers</i>
Morris Anna <i>Garden Court North Chambers</i>
Stone Kate <i>Garden Court North Chambers</i>
Welch Austin <i>Lincoln House Chambers *</i>
Band 2
Benyounes Leila <i>Parklane Plowden</i>
Borrett Richard <i>Kings Chambers (ORL) ◇ *</i>
Connolly Simon <i>Park Square Barristers *</i>
Copnall Richard <i>Parklane Plowden</i>
Dudley-Jones Elizabeth <i>Deans Court Chambers</i>
Gent Tom <i>Deans Court Chambers</i>
Ghahhary Leila <i>Lincoln House Chambers</i>
Grimshaw Richard <i>No5 Barristers' Chambers (ORL) ◇ *</i>
Harris Lorraine <i>Park Square Barristers</i>
Howells Christian <i>30 Park Place</i>
Jones Susan <i>3PB Barristers (ORL) ◇ *</i>
Leeper Tom <i>St John's Chambers (ORL) ◇ ▫</i>
Mercer Kirsten <i>Park Square Barristers *</i>
Midgley Anna <i>Albion Chambers (ORL) ◇</i>
Mullarkey Ian <i>KBW (ORL) ◇</i>
Nash Laura <i>St John's Buildings (ORL) ◇</i>
Nolan Georgina <i>Parklane Plowden</i>
Pojur David <i>St John's Buildings (ORL) ◇</i>
Samuel Ana <i>Complete Counsel (ORL) ◇</i>
Smith Peter <i>Deans Court Chambers</i>
Thorogood Bernard <i>No5 Barristers' Chambers (ORL) ◇</i>
Wilson Kate <i>Park Square Barristers *</i>
Wolstenholme Janine <i>Park Square Barristers *</i>
Zeb Emma <i>Gatehouse Chambers (ORL) ◇ ▫</i>
Up-and-coming individuals
Gowman Nia <i>30 Park Place</i>

in sensitive inquests. She acts on behalf of police forces and local authorities as well as healthcare providers. She is well versed in Article 2 inquests involving allegations of medical negligence, and those concerning deaths in custody. **Strengths:** "She is meticulous, always in the detail, but also very approachable, friendly and really good at putting witnesses at ease." **Recent work:** Represented Inter-serve, a private company operating probation services for criminals on licence, at the Article 2 inquest concerning the death of Lee Hall.

Tom Gent Tom Gent acts for individuals, companies and care providers as well as local authorities in a range of inquests. He is particularly well equipped to handle matters with a regulatory crime and health and safety law crossover. **Strengths:** "I think he is a silk without the title of silk. The standard of work he produces is exceptional; he will find novel ways of dealing with evidence that even leading counsel haven't identified." **Recent work:** Acted for the Methodist Homes Association at the inquest of an elderly care home resident.

Peter Smith Peter Smith draws strength from his health and safety practice to represent business clients, including employers and care providers, at related inquests. **Strengths:** "He's very good from a technical point of view and is willing and able to assist at any time." "He is a hugely experienced barrister, who is always thoroughly prepared and very responsive as well."

Garden Court North Chambers

THE SET

Garden Court North Chambers excels in the rep-

resentation of bereaved families and survivors before public inquiries and Article 2 inquests. Barristers from the set provide expert handling of a wide range of matters, including deaths arising from policing and prisons, or immigration detention. The set has also had counsel appear in most of the major public inquiries undertaken in recent years, including the Grenfell Tower and Manchester Arena inquiries.

Client service: Anmarie Nightingale leads the clerking team.

SILKS

Pete Weatherby QC Pete Weatherby QC has consistently represented survivors and the bereaved in investigations scrutinising the circumstances of the very gravest of tragedies. In recent years he has undertaken major instructions in the 2014-16 Hillsborough inquests and the Grenfell Tower Inquiry, among other matters. **Strengths:** "He's the best advocate for families. He has a fair and measured style but is very effective and asks all the hard questions." **Recent work:** Represented 80 bereaved and survivors in the Grenfell Tower Inquiry.

JUNIORS

Anna Morris Anna Morris has considerable experience of representing bereaved families in both inquests and public inquiries. She has strong expertise in Article 2 inquests, and has notably acted in a number of matters examining historic miscarriages of justice. **Strengths:** "She is a brilliant advocate in court. She is a very empathetic barrister and families love her." "She is very detailed and thorough in her approach." **Recent work:** Acted on behalf of the family of Anne Hamilton at the fresh inquest into the 1974 Guildford Pub Bombing.

Kate Stone Kate Stone is a strong choice of barrister for the representation of bereaved families in Article 2 inquests involving the police, prisons or other elements of the criminal justice system. She is also knowledgeable about relevant mental health issues. **Strengths:** "She is very measured and balanced and does a really effective job in difficult circumstances."

Lincoln House Chambers

THE SET

Lincoln House Chambers offers an impressive depth of expertise in the field of inquiries and inquests. Several of its members have appeared in the Manchester Arena and Infected Blood inquiries as well as the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse, among other matters of major importance. The barristers are frequently sought out to provide expert representation to a wide range of interested persons, spanning government departments, professional bodies, healthcare sector clients and police forces, and to act as counsel to the inquest or inquiry.

Client service: "Ty Price is always quick to respond and very helpful." "I have dealt with a variety of clerks at Lincoln House and they all are highly responsive in any dealings I have had with them." David Wright is director of clerking.

SILKS

Kate Blackwell QC Kate Blackwell QC is renowned for her experience in high-profile public inquiries, whether as counsel to the inquiry or acting for core participants. She possesses strong expertise in matters relating to failures in the provision of med-

ical care, and counts the NHS among her clients. **Strengths:** “She is very good at zoning in on the important things in time- and paper-intensive matters. She is also excellent with clients and instils confidence.”

JUNIORS

Austin Welch (see p.955) Austin Welch offers an excellent capacity to handle difficult instructions in inquests and inquiries. He draws strength from his experience of health and safety law, and advises a list of clients comprising bereaved families, police forces, businesses and government departments.

Strengths: “He is an absolutely fantastic barrister.” “He’s a superstar of the junior Bar across a range of specialisms. He’s the full package and his work rate is phenomenal.” **Recent work:** Acted as counsel to the Manchester Arena Inquiry, leading a team in respect of strategy, witness questioning, preparation and disclosure management.

Leila Ghahhary Leila Ghahhary is a skilled advocate with excellent experience in this field. She has represented both public authorities and the bereaved in numerous inquests and inquiries, including the fresh Hillsborough inquests. She also appeared on the Gosport Independent Panel. **Strengths:** “Her attention to detail is fantastic and she is very proactive. She is also easy to get hold of: “Offers exceptional support, quickly grasps the key issues and complexities in the case and adopts a methodical and thorough approach.”

Band 2

New Park Court Chambers

THE SET

New Park Court Chambers demonstrates a considerable depth and breadth of expertise in the inquests and inquiries field. Members have acted in several recent high-profile matters, including the Grenfell Tower Inquiry and Manchester Arena Inquiry. The set is equipped to handle a wide range of complex inquests such as those involving the police and medical practitioners, in which members draw on their coronial, criminal and professional disciplinary experience. Paul Greaney QC tends to be instructed as counsel to the inquest or inquiry; other barristers from the set act for core participants or interested persons including care providers and the bereaved.

Client service: Kirsten Frankland is chambers manager and Teresa Pugh is the practice director.

SILKS

Paul Greaney QC Paul Greaney QC remains a prominent presence in the inquests and inquiries sphere, and tends to be instructed by coroners or the government to lead major investigations as counsel to the inquiry. His areas of particular expertise include police conduct and operations, and compliance with health and safety law. **Strengths:** “Without a shadow of a doubt he is the best advocate I’ve worked alongside. He can deal with any witness you put in front of him and get the best evidence from them.” “He is a strong performer in high-profile national cases.” **Recent work:** Continued to act as lead counsel to the Manchester Arena Inquiry.

Parklane Plowden

See profile on p.982

THE SET

Parklane Plowden is trusted by bereaved families,

corporate bodies and government departments to represent them in inquests. Members are particularly well equipped to handle inquests arising from deaths in custody, care homes, NHS hospitals and other institutions. Their work regularly touches on complex medical issues, and the barristers are notably experienced in sensitive matters concerning self-inflicted deaths.

Client service: Michael Stubbs leads a team of clerks who, in the words of an instructing solicitor, “are always happy to help and bend over backwards to make things easier for you.”

JUNIORS

Leila Benyounes Leila Benyounes leads the inquest group in chambers and specialises in inquests and clinical negligence. As a member of the Attorney General’s A Panel, she is frequently sought after to handle Article 2 jury inquests, particularly those arising from hospital deaths or involving sensitive mental health issues. **Strengths:** “She is extremely well organised, extremely thorough and will explore every area of a case.” “She is responsive, attentive and a fantastic communicator.”

Richard Copnall Richard Copnall draws strength to his inquests practice through his experience of handling clinical negligence cases. He has a varied practice but is particularly adept at handling inquests that involve allegations of medical negligence, typically representing bereaved family members. **Strengths:** “He’s a very good advocate and is able to calmly and ably explain things in a sensitive manner.” “He is well prepared and his ability to deal with a lot of evidence is impressive.”

Georgina Nolan Georgina Nolan has a wealth of experience acting for and advising families, public bodies and commercial organisations in Article 2 inquests, particularly those involving deaths in custody, or involving allegations of medical negligence. **Strengths:** “She has an amazing client manner in stressful and traumatic circumstances.” “She is a very respected barrister whose work is very impressive.”

30 Park Place

See profile on p.977

THE SET

30 Park Place is a leading set at the Welsh Bar and is highlighted for its impressive capabilities in a wide range of sensitive inquests and high-profile public inquiries. The chambers’ barristers have received instructions in many of the major recent inquiries, such as acting on behalf of hundreds of victims across Wales and Northern Ireland in the Infected Blood Inquiry. The set boasts further strengths in all manner of inquests such as those concerning the police, healthcare providers and care homes. Lloyd Williams QC and Christian Howells were centrally involved in the inquest touching the death of Emiliano Sala, who was killed in a plane crash en route to Wales, shortly after signing with Cardiff City FC.

Client service: “Phillip Griffiths is very friendly on the phone and happy to help.” “Phillip is always approachable and quick.”

SILKS

Lloyd Williams QC Lloyd Williams QC tends to represent the bereaved at inquests involving the police, or in matters investigating health and safety failures. He has also attracted an important instruction in the Infected Blood Inquiry. **Strengths:** “He is

very helpful, his advice is always very clear and his advocacy is very good.” **Recent work:** Continued to represent 300 core participants in the Infected Blood Inquiry. These were victims who were infected with HIV and hepatitis C through NHS blood transfusions.

JUNIORS

Christian Howells Christian Howells appears in high-profile public inquiries and Article 2 inquests involving the NHS, prisons and other public services. He acts for both bereaved families and state agents, and has been instructed to represent over 300 core participants in the Infected Blood Inquiry.

Strengths: “He is a helpful barrister who provides clear answers.” “His work ethic and insight are really impressive.” **Recent work:** Instructed on behalf of Cardiff City Football Club in the inquest of Emiliano Sala.

Nia Gowman Nia Gowman has an active inquests practice, with particular expertise acting for health-care sector clients in Article 2 inquests. Her cases frequently involve mental health considerations.

Strengths: “She is a brilliant barrister. She is quietly confident, which makes her a pleasant advocate to be in court with as well.”

Park Square Barristers

See profile on p.983

THE SET

Park Square Barristers is a go-to set for interested persons in inquests, including government departments, police forces, healthcare organisations, local authorities and education bodies. Members additionally act for bereaved families. The set boasts an impressive bench of barristers skilled in the inquests field, with several government panel members and assistant coroners among its roster.

Client service: Richard Sadler is senior managing clerk and Madeleine Gray is senior regulatory clerk.

JUNIORS

Simon Connolly (see p.814) Simon Connolly developed a substantial practice in the area since transferring to the Bar in 2019, and is regularly sought out to act in Article 2 inquests. He is instructed by public and private bodies, with recent work for care providers and the police. **Strengths:** “He’s a very good operator and an effective advocate.” “He is a very personable barrister and clients really like him.”

Lorraine Harris Lorraine Harris is a strong choice of barrister for clients in complex inquests, owing in part to her experience as an Assistant Coroner for Kingston Upon Hull, East Riding of Yorkshire and South Yorkshire East. She is in demand among a variety of public sector clients, recently focusing on local authorities, the NHS and the police. **Strengths:** “She explains issues very well for clients and I will definitely instruct her again.” “She is deals with matters very well and professionally.”

Kirsten Mercer (see p.893) Kirsten Mercer is a barrister highly sought after by government departments to provide counsel in relation to inquests, typically involving the management of prison services or probation. **Strengths:** “She has a special touch with clients having their first encounter with the law.” **Recent work:** Acted as counsel to the National Probation Service at the inquest into the death of Robert Stacey, who died following an overdose after discharge from prison to approved premises.

Kate Wilson (see p.961) Kate Wilson has particular strengths in inquests involving complex medical

issues and expert evidence. She is instructed by the Ministry of Justice in Article 2 inquests, as well as acting for families, local authorities and other parties. **Strengths:** “She is a very skilled advocate and great with clients.” “She is a solid performer as an advocate.” **Recent work:** Acted for the family of Andrew Westlake at the inquest into his self-inflicted death after being forced to disembark a Jet2 flight while suffering a mental health crisis.

Janine Wolstenholme (see p.962) Janine Wolstenholme has substantial experience of acting on behalf of government bodies in inquests. She is particularly adept in matters involving deaths in prison, or scrutinising the decisions of the National Probation Service. **Strengths:** “She’s a very solid performer and a strong advocate.” “She is an approachable, helpful and reassuring barrister.” **Recent work:** Acted for the Ministry of Justice at the inquest touching the death of Andrew Jones following a self-inflicted death arising from unlawful segregation.

Other Ranked Lawyers

Richard Borrett (see p.795) (Kings Chambers) Richard Borrett is a go-to barrister for families and other interested parties in a wide range of inquests, with particular expertise in cases involving deaths of service personnel, self-inflicted deaths and medical issues. He is frequently instructed by local authorities, care providers and families, who benefit from his broader clinical negligence strength. **Strengths:** “He is extremely good with witnesses; he picks up gaps and ensures they are fully prepared.” “A strong advocate but a pleasant opponent too.” **Recent work:** Acted as counsel to the inquest concerning the death of a man with dementia in a specialist care home, raising mental capacity and negligence issues.

Louis Browne QC (see p.799) (Exchange Chambers) Louis Browne QC is well regarded in the profession for advising core participants in key public inquiries, and for bringing skill and determination to often difficult briefs. **Strengths:** “He’s a very smooth advocate and is strong on his feet.” “He’s tactical, has great skill with clients and is easy to work with.” **Recent work:** Continued to represent Senior Fire Sector Commander Richard Welch, and the Fire Officers Association, in the Grenfell Tower Inquiry.

Richard Grimshaw (see p.846) (No5 Barristers’ Chambers) Richard Grimshaw is an impressive barrister who has a strong command of Article 2 inquests

involving prisons, or those examining the quality of medical care. **Strengths:** “He’s really pleasant to work with, very friendly and open and also has a very tactile manner in court.” “He is incredibly impressive and has such attention to detail.”

Susan Jones (see p.866) (3PB Barristers) Susan Jones is a talented inquests barrister who is highly skilled in sensitive matters examining deaths occurring in various circumstances, including where there are allegations of medical negligence. Her practice touches on complex issues such as mental health. **Strengths:** “She is very reassuring, lays out exactly how matters will play out and gives the client certainty.” “Her advice is timely and comprehensive and she makes herself readily available.” **Recent work:** Acted for Isle of Wight Adult Social Services at the inquest into the death of Frederick Joe Sheath, a care home resident who was transferred from a failing care home.

Tom Leeper (St John’s Chambers) Tom Leeper is a respected barrister with a distinguished practice that focuses on inquests and clinical negligence matters. He has experience of a broad spectrum of issues including deaths in hospitals and prisons, and in police custody. He is instructed by bereaved family members, local authorities, prison services and healthcare providers, among others. **Strengths:** “His attention to detail is second to none, he just doesn’t miss a trick.” **Recent work:** Acted as counsel to the Coco Bradford inquest, concerning a six-year-old girl taken to hospital with stomach problems who subsequently died.

Anna Midgley (Albion Chambers) Anna Midgley is a strong choice for clients needing representation in sensitive inquests, drawing on her criminal law experience to effectively advocate in a wide range of matters. She is regularly sought after by regulators and public bodies. **Strengths:** “She has a background in crime so is a tidy advocate in inquests.” “She has a very straightforward approach to complex issues and is an easy barrister to work with.”

Ian Mullarkey (KBW) Ian Mullarkey is a strong barrister committed to representing police forces in inquests and related judicial reviews. He is instructed by various forces across the North in matters scrutinising their operations. **Strengths:** “He’s a very good opponent in his questioning and his overall handling of inquests.”

Laura Nash (St John’s Buildings) Laura Nash is a well-regarded barrister and assistant coroner with a broad practice in inquest law. She has notable

strength in police and prison matters and health and safety issues. She represents the bereaved and various individuals whose actions are under scrutiny.

Strengths: “She is able to adapt her advocacy style depending on the situation.” “She is a really good advocate, a great communicator and leaves no stone unturned.” **Recent work:** Acted for a teenage life-guard at an inquest into the death of a two-year-old boy who drowned in the adult pool at David Lloyd Leeds.

David Pojur (St John’s Buildings) David Pojur brings a wealth of expertise to the inquests field owing in part to his appointment as assistant coroner for North Wales. He has considerable capabilities acting for clients in cases involving health and safety fatalities, suicides or deaths in healthcare settings. **Strengths:** “He is very measured, has a lovely manner and cuts to the chase very effectively.” “He is very good with clients and well prepared.” **Recent work:** Acted for Barnsley Local Authority at the Emily Green inquest, concerning the suicide of a 14-year-old girl and examining the wider actions or failings of multiple parties.

Ana Samuel (Complete Counsel) Ana Samuel typically represents NHS trusts or emergency services at inquests. She is notably experienced in judicial reviews concerning coronial decisions, and draws strength from her appointment as Assistant Coroner for Birmingham and Solihull. **Strengths:** “She is a very solid opponent.”

Bernard Thorogood (No5 Barristers’ Chambers) Bernard Thorogood has notable experience in handling complex inquests which involve health and safety issues. He represents interested persons in inquests examining workplace deaths and deaths in public spaces. He is sought after by local authorities, inquiry chairs and professional individuals. **Strengths:** “He is second to none in the way he deals with clients. He communicates well and delivers advice sensitively.” “He is incredibly accessible. You can get hold of him any time of the day and he has all the answers.”

Emma Zeb (Gatehouse Chambers) Emma Zeb is well regarded for her experience in complex inquests. She has significant expertise in Article 2 and jury inquests involving a range of issues including psychiatric care in prisons, and probation. Her clients include healthcare providers, private businesses and government departments. **Strengths:** “She is a very knowledgeable barrister in the field of coronial law. She is excellent with witnesses and a very persuasive advocate.”