



## Hannah Curtain

*"Hannah has meticulous attention to detail, and is able to get into a commanding position regarding the evidence with impressive speed."*

- Legal 500 2022

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Hannah Curtain has a broad common law practice, with a particular focus on Group Actions and product liability; public inquiries and inquests; and employment law. She is ranked as a leading junior in Employment by the Legal 500 and for Inquests & Public Inquiries by Chambers Bar UK.

Hannah is currently acting for the Welsh Government in the UK Covid-19 Inquiry, in relation to the module of the Inquiry that concerns the impact of the pandemic on the adult social care sector in the UK. Hannah has been instructed as one of the lead junior counsel on the Grenfell Tower Inquiry since its inception in 2017, led by Richard Millett KC and Andrew Kinnier KC.

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## Public Inquiries and Inquests

Hannah is an experienced Inquiry counsel and is ranked by Chambers & Partners in this area. Hannah currently represents the Welsh Government in the UK Covid-19 Inquiry into the national response to and the impact of the pandemic, acting as lead junior in relation to Module 6 of the Inquiry, which concerns the impact of the pandemic on the adult social care sector in the UK. She has considerable experience of working closely with technical experts, managing teams of junior counsel – including leading on large-scale disclosure exercises – as well as conducting Inquiry advocacy.

Hannah has been retained as a lead junior counsel to the Grenfell Tower Inquiry since it was established in the summer of 2017, led by Richard Millett KC and Andrew Kinnier KC. Hannah headed a team of juniors working on the modules of the Inquiry concerning the London Fire Brigade's operational response to the fire, fire safety regulation and health and safety in the fire and rescue sector. She examined witnesses in both Phase 1 and Phase 2 of the Grenfell Tower Inquiry hearings.

Hannah has acted for a core participant in the Independent Child Sexual Abuse Inquiry.

Hannah is regularly instructed to represent clients at inquests. She has particular experience of acting for the manufacturers of medical devices and products; care homes; and employers, in relation to workplace deaths.

## Representative Cases

- *The UK Covid-19 Inquiry*  
Acting for the Welsh Government.
- *The Grenfell Tower Inquiry*  
Acting as one of the lead junior counsel to the Inquiry.

## Product Liability

Hannah advises and represents clients in relation to a range product liability matters, and has particular experience of managing complex, multi-party litigation. She acted for Corin Limited, one of the two lead defendant manufacturers in the metal-on-metal hip group litigation, and is currently instructed by one of the manufacturers in the POP/ SUI vaginal mesh products litigation.

### *Instructions Include*

- Advising and representing an industrial vehicles manufacturer in a claim for damage alleged to have been sustained by defective motor component.
- Advising the UK arm of a major global brand of window manufacturers in relation to an alleged design defect in a line of their products.
- Advising in relation to the supply of harmful animal feed.
- Advising and drafting pleadings for a major ceramics manufacturer in a claim for personal injuries said to have been sustained as a result of an allegedly defective bathroom appliance, led by Prashant Popat QC.

## Representative Cases

- *The Corin Metal-on-Metal Hip Litigation*  
Representing the manufacturer of hip implants defending hundreds of claims by consumers in the High Court.

## Group Actions

Hannah has considerable experience of group litigation, particularly in the context of product liability and personal injury claims. She was junior counsel for the Ministry of Defence in the Nuclear Test Veterans group litigation, in which the Supreme Court gave judgment for the MOD in what is now a leading case on the meaning of “knowledge” under section 14 of the Limitation Act 1980; has acted for defendant manufacturers in the metal-on-metal hip group litigation and the vaginal mesh litigation; and acted for the Ministry of Defence

in relation to a group of claims brought by current and former members of the armed services for noise induced hearing loss (NIHL).

Hannah's Group Actions practice is complemented by her Inquiry practice, through both of which she has amassed considerable experience of working closely with experts (particularly medical experts) and leading on large-scale disclosure exercises.

## Representative Cases

- *The Corin Metal-on-Metal Hip Litigation*  
Representing the manufacturer of hip implants defending hundreds of claims by consumers in the High Court.
- *Durrheim & Ors v MOD*  
Appeared for the Ministry of Defence in the High Court interlocutory appeal, on the MOD's application for a Group Litigation Order in claims brought by a number of current and former servicemen for alleged noise induced hearing loss (NIHL). The appeals raised issues of combat immunity and scope of duty (see judgment).
- *Ministry of Defence v AB*  
Part of the counsel team for the MOD, led by Charles Gibson QC, in the Supreme Court appeal in the group action brought by former servicemen who had participated in the testing of thermonuclear devices in the Pacific Ocean in the 1950's, in which limitation was tried as a preliminary issue (see alerter). The claimants alleged a wide range of personal injuries and the appeals raised issues of statutory knowledge and novel arguments of causation.
- *Abdale & Others v Secretary of State for Defence*  
Acted for the MOD, led by Adam Heppinstall, in the 13 conjoined war pensions' appeals in the War Pensions and Armed Forces First Tier Compensation Tribunal, also arising out of the nuclear testing. Hannah also acted for the Ministry of Defence in the veterans' conjoined appeal against that decision in the Upper Tribunal, led by Leigh-Ann Mulcahy QC and Adam Heppinstall (see judgment).
- *Payday Lenders*  
Advised, with William Hibbert, a group of consumers in relation to a prospective group action against a number of prominent payday lenders for alleged breaches of the Consumer Credit Act 1974, the Unfair Terms in Consumer Contracts Regulations 1999, the Consumer Protection from Unfair Trading Practices Regulations 2008, and the Protection from Harassment Act 1997.

## Employment

Hannah has substantial experience of employment law, and is ranked in the Legal 500 in the area. She represents claimants and respondents in all types of cases including unfair dismissal, TUPE, wages claims, and whistleblowing, with a particular focus on discrimination claims. She appears regularly in the Employment Tribunal in complex, multi-day trials, and in the civil courts. She acted for a high-profile members organisation, led by Patrick Green QC, in long-running and multi-party proceedings involving allegations of race discrimination, harassment and victimisation. She is a contributor to Tolley's Employment Law Service, and

author of the Equality Act chapter of Tolley's Health and Safety at Work Service.

Hannah is also experienced in litigation involving competition and restrictive covenants, both in relation to employees and former employees, and between business partners and arising out of the sale of businesses.

Hannah is a qualified FRU representative and is on the panel of reviewers for Advocate (formerly the Bar Pro Bono Unit) for employment cases. She is a member of the Employment Lawyers Association.

#### *Recent Instructions Include*

- Representing a financial institution in a multi-day disability discrimination trial.
- Representing a luxury skincare brand in wide-ranging claim of age discrimination.
- Acting for an employee in relation to alleged breach of restrictive covenants following sale of dental practice.
- Representing a major high street retailer in claims of sex discrimination, victimisation and harassment.
- Representing the claimant in a complex unfair dismissal claim under TUPE.
- Advising and representing a national vehicle retail company in relation to a high-value claim for whistleblowing brought by a senior employee.

## Health & Safety

Hannah has a growing health and safety practice, and has appeared in the magistrate's, Crown and Coroner's Court. She has experience of advising and representing clients in relation to accidents at work, safety issues arising on the rail network and on construction sites, and in relation to inquiries before the Traffic Commissioner.

Hannah is a member of the Health and Safety Lawyers Association.

#### *Instructions Include*

- Acting as junior counsel for British Telecommunications, led by Prashant Popat QC, in a prosecution brought by the HSE arising out of an incident involving serious injury to two BT engineers.
- Assisting Toby Riley-Smith QC in relation to the HSE prosecution of a construction company following the collapse of a roof structure of a school in Telford.
- Assisting Prashant Popat QC in relation to a prosecution brought by the ORR following a fatal accident at a level crossing.
- Representing a construction company at an inquest following the death of a lorry driver on a stretch of motorway where works were being carried out.
- Representing the owners of a motocross track at an inquest following the death of a motorcyclist after a collision on their premises.
- Representing heavy goods vehicles operators in proceedings before the Traffic Commissioner.

## Commercial & Consumer

Hannah has a broad commercial and consumer practice. She regularly advises and represents banks and other financial institutions in relation to claims involving misrepresentation, undue influence, sale of goods and supply of services, civil fraud, and claims under contracts regulated by the Consumer Credit Act 1974.

### *Instructions Include*

- *Jackson v Thompsons Solicitors & ors [2015] EWHC 218 (QB)*: Acting for the claimant, led by Patrick Green QC, in the six-week High Court trial of this economic torts claim involving allegations of unlawful means conspiracy and procuring a breach of contract.
- *Stirling Mortimer Global Property Fund PCC Ltd v ELS & Ors*: Acting for the claimant, led by Patrick Green QC, in a large-scale claim for civil fraud spanning a number of jurisdictions.
- Advising a major lender in relation to claims of alleged mis-selling of financial products in the context of the Financial Conduct Authority's review.
- Advising the Office of Fair Trading in relation to its investigation into the use of unfair terms in gym and health club contracts.
- Acting, with William Hibbert, for the claimant in a claim concerning the meaning of "consumer" under the Unfair Contract Terms Act 1977 ("UCTA") and the Unfair Terms in Consumer Contracts Regulations 1999 ("UTCCR"), in the context of a contract for the marketing and sale of company shares.
- Acting for a consumer in proceedings before The Property Ombudsman.
- Advising and representing both consumers and estate agents in relation to a number of claims for unpaid commission, concerning arguments as to the fairness of contractual terms under the Unfair Terms in Consumer Contracts Regulations 1999.
- Advising the Office of Fair Trading on the interpretation of the Estate Agents Act 1979, and the scope of its regulatory purview in relation to online forums for the marketing and sale of property in the UK.
- Acting, with William Hibbert, for a group of consumers in relation to a prospective group action against a number of prominent payday lenders for alleged breaches of the Consumer Credit Act 1974, the Unfair Terms in Consumer Contracts Regulations 1999, the Consumer Protection from Unfair Trading Practices Regulations 2008, and the Protection from Harassment Act 1997.

## Data Protection & Freedom of Information

Hannah has a growing practice in Data Protection and Freedom of Information law and is currently instructed by a number of high-profile clients regarding sensitive data protection concerns. Her cases relate both to complaints and contentious subject access requests made by individuals, and to general compliance issues.

Hannah has experience of dealing with vexatious complainants and has provided advice in relation to appropriate policies and procedures for dealing with cases of this nature.

### *Instructions Include*

- Advising a large and well-known members' organisation in relation to data protection concerns raised by a former member and vexatious complainant.

- Advising a smaller members' organisation in relation to a number of subject access requests by a current member. The requests followed a decision to remove the individual from his office within the organisation, on the basis of a highly sensitive and confidential report compiled by a committee put together in order to investigate member misconduct.
- Providing general advice on data protection compliance issues to a client in relation to its computerised database of members, the need for consent under both the current regime and under the new EU General Regulation, and the expected effect of Brexit, with Peter Susman QC.
- Advising a local authority in relation to disclosure of highly commercially sensitive contract information following a tendering exercise.

## What the directories say

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"She is quiet but incredibly effective. She does a lot of work and quietly gets on with it, and has effective judgement."

*Chambers UK 2024*

"Hannah is highly intelligent; she knows documents inside out."

*Chambers UK 2024*

"She has a brilliant ability to cut through heavy matters."

*Chambers UK 2023*

"Hannah has meticulous attention to detail, and is able to get into a commanding position regarding the evidence with impressive speed. A confident advocate, with a natural instinct for which points to push and which to drop"

*Legal 500 2022*

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## Memberships

- Employment Lawyers Association
- Health & Safety Lawyers' Association

## Education

- BA (Hons) Oxon, First Class (2nd in year)
- GDL, City University, Distinction
- BVC, City Law School, Outstanding (1st in year)
- Gray's Inn Bedingfield Scholar
- City Law School Scarman Scholar

## Awards & Recognitions

