



Ailsa Williamson

Call: 1997

Ailsa Williamson is an experienced and persuasive advocate, having spent over 25 years conducting criminal trials in the Crown Court covering the full range of criminal offences.

Ailsa now divides her time between criminal trials, professional discipline cases, Coroner's inquests and judicial review proceedings. Her considerable experience questioning witnesses and experts is extremely valuable in all proceedings. Her thoroughness and attention to detail gives clients confidence that nothing will be overlooked in the preparation and presentation of their case.

Crime

Predominantly Defence work and regularly instructed to represent Defendants facing serious sexual allegations

Frequently represents police officers charged with criminal allegations with recent acquittals representing officers tried in the Crown Court for sexual allegations, misconduct in a public office, driving offences and allegations of unlawful force

Murder, serious violence, large scale conspiracies to import and supply drugs and subsequent confiscation hearings, high value robberies, rape cases and trials involving other sexual offences

Very experienced in questioning young and vulnerable witnesses

Indecent images and associated computer expert evidence

Money laundering/mortgage fraud/tax fraud

Courts Martial defence work

CPS Advocates Panel: Level 3

Member of the Serious Crime Group (Level 4) and Fraud Specialist Advocate Panels

Instructed in judicial review proceedings connected to criminal cases

Advises on applications for Production Orders and Search Warrants

Notable Crime cases

- **R v Stephen Kyere (2023)**

Represented retired police officer facing rape allegation from 20 years ago. The investigation was reopened after the complainant wrote to Cressdia Dick. Defendant acquitted.

- **R v Ed Welch (2022)**

Represented a advanced police driver charged with causing deaths and serious injury by dangerous driving. He was pursuing a stolen vehicle which lost control and killed two members of the public.

- **R v Benjamin Monk (2021)**

Represented police officer charged with the murder of retired footballer Dalian Atkinson following the discharge of his taser.

- **R v Ben Hannam (2021)**

Police officer charged with terrorism offences following membership of a proscribed extreme right-wing organisation.

- **R v BL (2021)**

Police officer charged with perverted the course of justice.

- **R v DM (2021)**

Successful defence of police officer alleged to have sexually assaulted a female colleague.

- **R v B (2019)**

Successful defence of serving police officer charged with misconduct in a public office in relation to notes and witness statement following a public order incident.

- **R v Gomez [2019] EWCA Crim 2174**

Appeal against sentence in assault by penetration case. Sentence reduced from 8 years to 5 years' imprisonment.

- **R v H & Others (2018)**

Leading prosecution counsel in multi-handed VAT fraud within the construction industry.

- **R v B (2017)**

Successful defence of a serving police officer charged with sexually assaulting a member of the public on a train and the rape of another women he met on a dating website.

- **R v R (2016)**
Junior Defence Counsel in historic murder allegation. Legal argument led to ruling that the Court had no jurisdiction to try the case.
- **R v H (2016)**
Successful defence of custody officer charged with assault as a result of restraining a prisoner and also no finding of misconduct in the subsequent disciplinary hearing (2018).
- **R v K (2016)**
Junior Defence counsel for a youth charged with attempted murder and rape trial. Led by Orlando Pownall KC.
- **R (on the application of the DPP) v South Tyneside Youth Court**
Instructed by the CPS. High Court provided guidance on whether youths should be tried in the Youth Court or Crown Court following change in the law allowing youths to be committed for sentence after a trial in the Youth Court.
- **R v S & S (2015-2016)**
Leading Prosecution Counsel in fraud covering mortgage applications and cheating public revenue.
- **R v W & Others**
Junior Prosecution Counsel in this 12 handed conspiracy to import and supply cocaine involving the largest quantity of crack cocaine ever found at an individual address in the UK.
- **R v B & others (Kingston Crown Court)**
Junior Defence Counsel for the main defendant alleged to have organised the £4.5million currency robbery from Heathrow Airport in 2002 and the attempted robbery of £33million gold bullion, diamonds and currency in 2004.
- **R v C & others (Kingston Crown Court)**
Junior Defence Counsel in this conspiracy to import and supply cocaine focusing on Heathrow Airport. The main prosecution witness was a baggage handler at the airport who had been “ripping off” suitcases full of cocaine for over 10 years.
- **R v S (Cayman Islands Grand Court & Court of Appeal)**
Cayman Islands Grand Court & Court of Appeal.
Defence Counsel for defendant who severed his girlfriend’s right hand with a machete. Sentence reduced from 20 years to 15 years on appeal.
- **R v E (Cayman Islands Grand Court & Court of Appeal) [2007] CILR Note 18**
Defence Counsel for defendant serving an indeterminate sentence following his conviction in the Cayman Islands for murder when he was a youth.

Professional Discipline

- Regularly represents police officers at misconduct hearings in London and throughout the country.
- Extensive experience of professional discipline hearings relating to a broad range of allegations such as inappropriate relationships, use of excessive force, discreditable conduct, the conduct of pursuits and matters relating to honesty and integrity.
- Detailed knowledge of PACE, RIPA, Officer Safety Training and pursuit policies.
- Appeals to Police Appeals Tribunal.
- Represents Officers at judicial review proceedings arising from misconduct hearings.

Notable Professional Discipline cases

- **The King (on the application of Kristina O'Connor -v- Police Misconduct Panel, Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis and James Mason [2023] EWHC 2892 (Admin)**
Ms O'Connor was a victim of robbery in 2011. In 2020 she reported inappropriate behaviour by the officer who took her witness statement. Judicial review relating to the legality of the MPS investigation in 2020 into the allegations of inappropriate behaviour in 2011, and whether the decision of the misconduct panel in 2021 lawful.
- **PC G (2022)**
Represented an officer who having been acquitted of rape in criminal proceedings was then alleged to have committed misconduct by having sexual intercourse with consent. All allegations found not proved.
- **PS K (2022)**
Represented officer who was alleged to have gossiped with colleagues on a group chat about sensitive information connected to the prosecution of ex-PC Wayne Couzens.
- **PC T (2021)**
Successfully represented an officer alleged to have used excessive force when he discharged his taser during a stop and search during lockdown. All allegations found not proved.
- **PC I (2021)**
Represented an officer alleged to have had an inappropriate sexual relationship with a member of the public. Detailed argument in relation to right to private life and the remit of disciplinary proceedings. All allegations found not proved.
- **PC B (2020)**
Allegations of dishonesty including inaccurate information in an officer's notes and witness statement in relation to a public order incident. All allegations found not proved.
- **PC S (2019)**
Representing an officer who executed a blocking manoeuvre in an attempt to stop a moped rider filtering through stationary traffic. The moped crashed into the police vehicle and suffered injury. Allegations of gross misconduct

relating to use of force and duties and responsibilities were found not proved.

- **PC A (2019)**

Successful representation of an officer alleged to have committed gross misconduct by not adequately supervising a detainee in the holding cell at a police station.

- **PC R (2018)**

Representing the officer in judicial review proceedings commenced by the Appropriate Authority following a gross misconduct hearing where the outcome was a Final Written Warning. The judicial review focussed on whether the Panel had correctly followed the Guidance on Outcomes that was introduced in 2018.

- **DC S (2018)**

Representing the officer in judicial review proceedings following a finding by the Panel that the standard of honesty and integrity was not breached and the imposition of a Final Written Warning.

- **PC S & PC J (2017)**

Successful representation of two officers facing allegations of gross misconduct after they transported a suspect who was spitting at them to a police station with a pillow case on his head as West Midlands Police did not issue spit hoods.

Inquests & Inquiries

Ailsa is a specialist in inquests into deaths in police custody or following police pursuits having represented police officers at Coroners' Inquests for a number of years. She has been involved in a number of high-profile inquests following police restraint and is very experienced in questioning pathologists and medical experts.

Ailsa's extensive experience of inquest work means that she is well placed to advise clients throughout the entire inquest process from identifying evidence a Coroner should consider, issues that may arise when witnesses give evidence, potential conclusions at the inquest and considerations for Preventing Future Deaths Reports.

Ailsa appears in several inquests each year.

Notable Inquests & Inquiries cases

- **Inquest into the death of Adam Stone (2022)**

Representing police officers restraining the deceased, who was exhibiting signs of Acute Behavioural Disturbance.

- **Inquest into the death of Kevin Clarke (2020)**

Represented 11 police officers who restrained Mr Clarke who was suffering from mental health problems and developed Acute Behavioural Disturbance.

- **Inquest into the deaths of Rozanne Cooper & Makayah McDermott (2019)**

Representing the driver of a police vehicle involved in the pursuit of a stolen car driven by a member of the public. This car collided with the deceased.

- **Inquest into the death of Onese Power (2019)**

Junior Counsel for the two officers involved in the pursuit of Onese Power who died following a road traffic accident on his motorbike. A fresh inquest was ordered by the High Court 20 years after the original inquest concluded.

- **Inquest into the death of Duncan Tomlin (2019)**

Counsel for an off-duty police officer involved in the restraint of Mr Tomlin.

- **Inquest into the death of Olaseni Lewis (2017)**

Led by Michael Borrelli KC. Represented 11 police officers involved in the restraint of Mr Lewis (a patient at the Bethlem Hospital who developed Acute Behavioural Disturbance.).

Regulatory

Health & safety cases

Fire Authority prosecutions

Appears before licensing committees and on appeal as well as advising on a wide range of licensing matters

Considerable experience in Hackney carriage and private hire vehicle licensing cases

Notable Cases

Criminal cases

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R v Benjamin Monk (2021)

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taser.

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R v H & others

2018

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R v B

2017

Successful defence of a serving police officer charged with sexually assaulting a member of the public on a train and the rape of another women he met on a dating website ([see here](#))

R v R

2016

Junior Defence Counsel in historic murder allegation

Legal argument led to ruling that the Court had no jurisdiction to try the case ([see here](#))

R v H

2016

Successful defence of custody officer charged with assault as a result of restraining a prisoner ([see here](#)). Also no finding of misconduct in the subsequent disciplinary hearing (2018)

R v K

2016

Junior Defence counsel for a youth charged with attempted murder and rape trial. Led by Orlando Pownall QC

R (on the application of the DPP) v South Tyneside Youth Court

[2015] EWHC 1455 (Admin)

Instructed by the CPS. High Court provided guidance on whether youths should be tried in the Youth Court or Crown Court following change in the law allowing youths to be committed for sentence after a trial in the Youth Court

F v R

[2015] EWCA Crim 1933

Instructed by the CPS. First appeal in relation to the Criminal Courts Charge

R v S and S

2015-2016

Isleworth Crown Court

Leading Prosecution Counsel in fraud covering mortgage applications and cheating public revenue ([see here](#))

R v W & others

Kingston Crown Court

Junior Prosecution Counsel in this 12 handed conspiracy to import and supply cocaine involving the largest quantity of crack cocaine ever found at an individual address in the UK ([see here](#))

R v B & others

Kingston Crown Court

Junior Defence Counsel for the main defendant alleged to have organised the £4.5million currency robbery from Heathrow Airport in 2002 and the attempted robbery of £33million gold bullion, diamonds and currency in 2004

R v C & others

Kingston Crown Court

Junior Defence Counsel in this conspiracy to import and supply cocaine focusing on Heathrow Airport. The main prosecution witness was a baggage handler at the airport who had been “ripping off” suitcases full of cocaine for over 10 years

R v R & another

Southwark Crown Court

Defence Counsel in this conspiracy to defraud/money laundering case where the two defendants were alleged to have defrauded McDonalds of £450,000

R v S

Cayman Islands Grand Court & Court of Appeal

Defence Counsel for defendant who severed his girlfriend’s right hand with a machete. Sentence reduced from 20 years to 15 years on appeal

R v E

Cayman Islands Grand Court & Court of Appeal

[2007] CILR Note 18

Defence Counsel for defendant serving an indeterminate sentence following his conviction in the Cayman Islands for murder when he was a youth.

Hearing to determine whether he should be released

R v H

Cayman Islands Grand Court

[2007] CILR 397

Defence Counsel for serving police officer alleged to have stolen money from school fundraising events. High profile case in the Cayman Islands and abuse of process based on adverse publicity argued

Police discipline

The King (on the application of Kristina O'Connor -v- Police Misconduct Panel, Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis and James Mason [2023] EWHC 2892 (Admin)

Ms O'Connor was a victim of robbery in 2011. In 2020 she reported inappropriate behaviour by the officer who took her witness statement. Judicial review relating to the legality of the MPS investigation in 2020 into the allegations of inappropriate behaviour in 2011, and whether the decision of the misconduct panel in 2021 lawful.

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PS K (2022)

Represented officer who was alleged to have gossiped with colleagues on a group chat about sensitive information connected to the prosecution of ex-PC Wayne Couzens.

PC T (2021)

Successfully represented an officer alleged to have used excessive force when he discharged his taser during a stop and search during lockdown. All allegations found not proved.

PC I (2021)

Represented an officer alleged to have had an inappropriate sexual relationship with a member of the public. Detailed argument in relation to right to private life and the remit of disciplinary proceedings. All allegations found not proved.

PC B (2020)

Allegations of dishonesty including inaccurate information in an officer's notes and witness statement in relation to a public order incident. All allegations found not proved.

PC S

2019

Representing an officer who executed a blocking manoeuvre in an attempt to stop a moped rider filtering through stationary traffic. The moped crashed into the police vehicle and suffered injury. Allegations of gross misconduct relating to use of force and duties and responsibilities were found not proved ([see here](#)).

PC A

2019

Successful representation of an officer alleged to have committed gross misconduct by not adequately supervising a detainee in the holding cell at a police station.

PC R

2018

Representing the officer in judicial review proceedings commenced by the Appropriate Authority following a gross

misconduct hearing where the outcome was a Final Written Warning. The judicial review focussed on whether the Panel had correctly followed the **Guidance on Outcomes** that was introduced in 2018.

[2018] 11 WLUK 822

DC S

2018

Representing the officer in judicial review proceedings following a finding by the Panel that the standard of honesty and integrity was not breached and the imposition of a Final Written Warning.

[2018] EWHC 3533 (Admin)

Six Officers involved in the restraint of Olaseni Lewis

2017

Junior Counsel for the six police officers facing gross misconduct allegations following the restraint of mental health patient at the Bethlem Hospital. After a 4-week hearing, all allegations against all six officers were found not proved ([see here](#)).

DI B

2017

Successful representation of a Detective Inspector at a gross misconduct hearing focussing on the allegation that there was insufficient evidence to detain a member of the public ([see here](#)).

PC S & PC J

2017

Successful representation of two officers facing allegations of gross misconduct after they transported a suspect who was spitting at them to a police station with a pillow case on his head as West Midlands Police did not issue spit hoods ([see here](#))

2017

Two week gross misconduct hearing relating to allegations of gross misconduct based on unlawful surveillance, source handling, bullying, search warrants and recording intelligence

Inquests

Inquest into the deaths of Rozanne Cooper and Makayah McDermott

2019

Representing the driver of a police vehicle involved in the pursuit of a stolen car driven by a member of the public. This car collided with the deceased.

Inquest into the death of Onese Power

2019

Junior Counsel for the two officers involved in the pursuit of Onese Power who died following a road traffic accident on his motorbike. A fresh inquest was ordered by the High Court 20 years after the original inquest concluded.

[2017] EWHC 3117 (Admin)

Inquest into the death of Duncan Tomlin

2019

Counsel for an off-duty police officer involved in the restraint of Mr Tomlin ([see here](#)).

Inquest into the death of Olaseni Lewis

2017

Led by Michael Borrelli KC. Represented 11 police officers who restrained Mr Lewis (a patient at the Bethlem Hospital who developed Acute Behavioural Disorder)

Directory Recommendations

“Ailsa Williamson is incredibly capable and experienced. An especially deft hand with clients, gaining their confidence and putting them at ease, she is a first choice for complex and difficult cases.” **Chambers UK 2025: Police Law**

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“... she is a first choice for complex and difficult cases.” **Chambers UK 2025: Police Law**

“She is excellent and pulls off a busy practice.” **Chambers UK 2025: Professional Discipline**

“Ailsa is a fabulous advocate. She readily secures the confidence of tribunals and her clients.” **Legal 500 2025: Inquests and Inquiries**

“Outstanding all-round counsel.” **Chambers UK 2024: Professional Discipline**

“Very easy to work with.” **Chambers UK 2024: Professional Discipline**

“Ailsa has become one of our first choice counsel in the range of work we do.” **Chambers UK 2024: Police Law**

“Her ability to assimilate large amounts of evidence is exceptional.” **Chambers UK 2023: Police Law**

“Incredibly experienced in the field of police discipline, providing a first-class service to all clients.” **Chambers UK 2023: Police Law**

“She is dedicated and personable. Ailsa is lovely to work with.” **Chambers UK 2023: Professional Discipline**

“Incredibly experienced in the field of police discipline, Ailsa always provides a first-class service to solicitors’ lay clients.” **Legal 500 2023: Police Law**

“Very impressive and astute in her submissions; she took a very good tactical stance for her client and was able to

represent them in a creative but totally legitimate way.” **Chambers UK 2022: Professional Discipline**

“A well-prepared barrister who gives her clients clear advice.” **Legal 500 2022: Police Law**

“An excellent all-round advocate. Very impressive and astute in her submissions”. **Legal 500 2022: Professional Discipline**

“Ailsa has a remarkable ability to analyse and get to the crux of a case.” **Legal 500 2022: Crime**

“One of Ailsa’s strongest qualities is her ability to communicate with the lay client – she is able focus minds like no other, on the points and issues that really matter.” **Legal 500 2022: Crime**

“Ailsa is exceptional in case preparation and managing arguments throughout a case and has achieved some really positive outcomes.“ **Legal 500 2022: Crime**

“She was incredibly personable and charming in court”. **Chambers UK 2021: Professional Discipline**

“She is really easy to work with.” **Chambers UK 2021: Professional Discipline**

“She has expertise in dealing with sensitive cases. A really exceptional catalogue of experience.” **Chambers UK 2021: Professional Discipline**

“A very methodical barrister, with excellent client care skills.” **Legal 500 2020: Police Law**

“Extremely competent and able to marshal documents effectively in very complex cases.” **Chambers UK 2020: Professional Discipline**

“Clients like her very well-prepared approach.” **Legal 500 2019: Police Law**

Memberships

- Criminal Bar Association
- South Eastern Circuit
- Association of Regulatory and Disciplinary Lawyers
- Health and Safety Lawyers’ Association
- Women in Criminal Law

Education

- MA (Cantab) – History
- Dip. Law (City)

- Called to the Bar 1997

Other Information

Member of the CBA Working Party on the draft Corruption Bill (2003)

Founding member of the Cayman Islands Criminal Defence Bar Association (CICDBA) (2007)

Drafted the CICDBA response to the Firearms (Amendment) Bill 2007

From 2006-2008 Ailsa was employed as a Defence Attorney by Stuarts Walker Hersant in the Cayman Islands and regularly appeared before the Summary Court, Grand Court and Cayman Islands Court of Appeal. She also prepared cases for appeal to the Privy Council.

Accreditations



Privacy Statement

I, Ailsa Williamson, am a data controller and can be contacted at 3 Raymond Buildings, Gray's Inn, London WC1R 5BH or by telephone on 020 7400 6400 or by email at ailsa.williamson@3rblaw.com. My Data Protection Policy can be found below.

All personal data that I process is for the purposes of providing legal services, conducting conflict-checks, marketing, defending potential complaints, legal proceedings or fee disputes, keeping anti-money laundering records, training other barristers and pupils and when providing work-shadowing opportunities, and/or exercising a right to a lien. The types of data I process vary upon the nature of the legal matter in relation to which I am engaged to advise, but can include names, contact details, biographic details and 'special category personal data' (such as details of racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, religious or philosophical beliefs, health, sex life and criminal convictions and proceedings).

Depending upon the circumstances of the case, the legal bases upon which I process personal data are (i) the

performance of a contract to which the data subject is a party or in order to take steps at the request of the data subject prior to entering into a contract, (ii) the processing is necessary to comply with legal obligations to which I am subject, or (iii) the processing is necessary for the legitimate interests set out above, except where such interests are overridden by the interests or fundamental rights and freedoms of the data subjects which require protection of personal data, in particular where the data subject is a child. When I rely on (iii) legitimate interests, my 'Legitimate Interests Assessment' can be found [here](#). When I process data which has not been obtained directly from the data subject (e.g. personal data contained in evidential materials), it will have been supplied to me as part of my instructions in circumstances covered by legal professional privilege.

Depending upon the circumstances of the case, I may share the personal data with:

1. my Chambers, which supplies professional and administrative support to my practice;
2. Courts and other tribunals to whom documents are presented;
3. my lay and professional clients;
4. potential witnesses, in particular experts, and friends or family of the data subject;
5. solicitors, barristers, pupils, mini pupils and other legal representatives;
6. ombudsmen and regulatory authorities;
7. current, past or prospective employers;
8. education and examining bodies;
9. business associates, professional advisers and trade bodies.

I normally retain personal data for no longer than 7 years after the case has come to an end or as otherwise required by law. In cases where custodial sentences longer than 7 years have been passed, records will be kept until the end of the sentence.

I do not intend to transfer data to any country which is not either within the European Union, 'white listed' by the EU or otherwise permitted by EU law (e.g. to the USA under the provisions of the 'Privacy Shield').

Under the GDPR, data subjects whose personal data I process have the right to request from me access to, and rectification or erasure of, their personal data, the right to the restriction of processing concerning them, the right to object to processing as well as the right to data portability. Data subjects also have the right to lodge a complaint with the Information Commissioner's Office (ico.org.uk).

In cases where there is a contract between me and the data subject, the provision of personal data is a contractual requirement and the data subject is obliged to provide the personal data in order that I can supply legal services. A failure to provide such data may mean that I will not be able to provide the legal services.

Rev 1.0 – 18.05.2018

[Data Protection Policy](#)

[Legitimate Interests Assessment](#)

Direct Access

Ailsa Williamson is qualified to accept instructions direct from clients under the Bar Council's [Public Access](#) Scheme. This means that members of the public who seek specialist advice can come direct to him. In addition, he welcomes instructions from solicitors, in-house law departments, qualified foreign lawyers, and clients licensed by the Bar Council to give instructions direct to barristers under the Bar Council's [Licensed Access](#) Scheme.

For further information please contact our [Clerks](#).