

# Vincent Williams

Call: 1985



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Vincent's practice embraces personal injury, inquests and inquiries and police law (malfeasance).

His personal injury practice encompasses high value claims arising principally out of road traffic and work place accidents. He has a particular interest in spinal and head injury cases.

Vincent has been instructed by a number of police forces over the last 20 years in relation to a wide range of high profile police cases, including general malfeasance, judicial review, deaths in custody or in connection with the police, and disclosure issues.

He has also advised on policy matters and speaks regularly on police law issues.

He regularly appears in high profile Inquests – both for the police and on behalf of the Deceased.

Vincent also sits as an Assistant Coroner.

## Areas of Expertise

### Personal Injury

#### Notable Personal Injury cases

O`Connell v Post Office Limited (ongoing)

Shortfalls in the accounts of a Post Office run by C led to her being wrongfully convicted of a number of offences of false accounting. The Post Office maintained that its accounting software was reliable. It was not. No offences had in fact been committed by C. C lost her job, suffered significant financial losses and became ill in consequence of the convictions. The convictions were recently over turned by the CA, following a referral by the Criminal Cases Review Commission. C died prior to her successful appeal. Her Estate is now pursuing a claim for malicious prosecution against the Post Office.

Hillsborough Victims (@ 650 claimants) v South Yorkshire Police (ongoing)

Group civil action based on misfeasance in public office against South Yorks Police & W Midlands Police, arising out of the Hillsborough Stadium tragedy. Damages sought for a variety of psychological injuries caused by alleged police cover-up post incident.

Further the claims originally brought on behalf of the Deceased have been resurrected. It is believed to be the largest civil claim against a police force ever.

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Brewer v Commissioner of Police (2020)

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B's foot was shut in a closing cell door leading to traumatic amputation of his toes. Claim brought in negligence for personal injury damages. Over £500,000 claimed. Case turned on the nature and extent of the duty care owed by police to prisoners and the doctrines of illegality and ex turpi causa.

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W v W (2016)

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Road traffic accident resulting in severe spinal cord injury and consequential tetraplegia. Settlement in excess of £1.5 million plus periodical payments.

## Inquests

### Notable Inquests cases

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In Re Godhino (ongoing)

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The Deceased was stabbed to death by her husband in front of her three year old daughter. Husband was defended by Tom Little QC at the murder trial. A 5 week inquest has been listed for 2022 to examine possible institutional failures which may have caused or contributed to death.

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In Re Samuel Baker (2021)

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The Deceased – a 14 year old youth – was stabbed to death in the course a gang conflict. The Inquest explored alleged failures by Social Services, the police and the local authority (schools and education) to provide support for SB and to ensure his safety.

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In Re Kevin Clarke (2020)

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KC, a paranoid schizophrenic, died in the course of being restrained by the police, whilst suffering an episode of acute behavioural disorder. The case attracted considerable interest because of a continuing public concern into the deaths of black men in police custody. It was the subject of a Panorama documentary on 19.1.21.

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Jon & Vera Savage (2019)

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JS, a 54 year old man with mental health issues, killed his 89 year mother, who also had mental health issues, before committing suicide. The inquest explored the support (or lack thereof) provided by social services, the NHS and the police prior to the deaths.

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Patrick Clarke (2018)

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Mr Clarke, a retired nurse working as a volunteer, was stabbed to death by a patient at a hospital in Croydon. The patient was convicted of manslaughter on grounds of diminished responsibility. The inquest examined the role of various state agencies who had dealing with the patient in the lead up to the killing.

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Alice Gross (2016)

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AG disappeared from her home in Hanwell, on 28 August 2014. Her body was found on 30 September following the biggest search launched by Scotland Yard since the 7/7 bombings in 2005. An inquest jury concluded she was unlawfully killed in a sexually motivated attack at the hands of AZ, a Latvian builder who had previously served a prison sentence in Latvia for murdering his wife. AZ had entered the UK without this fact being discovered by the immigration authorities. He had also been arrested on a charge of indecent assault – but again his previous conviction had not been discovered.

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In Re Gareth Williams (2012)

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The “Spy in a Bag” case. Investigation into death of Gareth Williams, GCHQ employee, seconded to MI6, found dead in a padlocked sports bag, located in a bath. He was naked. The principal issue was whether he had died as a result of his own actions (i.e. locking himself into the bag); or whether there was unlawful third party involvement.

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## Police Law

### Notable Police Law cases

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Hillsborough v S Yorks Police (ongoing)

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see above.

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Y v Commissioner of Police (2020)

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Claim for false imprisonment and trespass, together with claims for discrimination (race) brought by a very senior black officer who was arrested for domestic violence. The officer claims the arrest was unlawful and that as a consequence of his arrest and other acts of discrimination his reputation and career within the MPS has been seriously damaged.

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C1 & C2 v Commissioner of Police (2017)

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C1 & C2 were senior officers who were arrested on suspicion of misfeasance in public office and theft of very large quantities of drugs. They were suspected of serious corruption and having links with Organised Crime Networks. C1 & C2 brought proceedings against the Commissioner alleging false imprisonment, trespass and discrimination on grounds of race. Claims dismissed.

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#### M v Commissioner of Police (2016)

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C placed onto witness protection program having provided information in re a `gangland` murder enquiry. Claims police have breached terms of their agreement to protect her and provide her with a suitable alternative and safe identity and lifestyle. Seeking in excess of £2,000,000 in compensation.

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#### Medihani v Commissioner of Police (2015)

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Claim for breach of art.2 ECHR and/or negligence arising out of death of 14 year old Arseema Dawit (following an inquest). Ms Dawit and her mother reported to the police that Ms Dawit had been threatened by Ms Dawit`s ex-boyfriend, Thomas Ngusse. It was said that the police failed to take the complaint seriously. Ms Dawit was subsequently fatally stabbed by Mr Ngusse (who subsequently attempted suicide and was left with severe brain damage).

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## Education

- Law MA, Cambridge 1984

## Memberships

- Personal Injury Bar Association
- Professional Negligence Bar Association
- Association of Personal Injury Lawyers
- South Eastern Circuit

## Awards

- Harmsworth Scholar, 1985

## Awards



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