Helen Pooley

Call: 2012

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Helen Pooley is a specialist civil practitioner, practising predominantly in personal injury and clinical negligence.

She has been ranked in the directories for several years and is currently listed in Chambers and Partners 2025 in Clinical Negligence and Personal Injury and is listed as a Leading Junior in Clinical Negligence and Personal Injury in Legal 500 2025. In addition, she is identified as a Leading Junior in the Inquests and Inquiries category of Legal 500.

She appears in court on a regular basis in civil hearings in London and further afield. Helen also has a busy paper-based practice advising and drafting statements of case. She also advises clients on the telephone and in conference, both with and without experts. Helen has considerable experience in delivering seminars and presentations and is happy to consider any invitations to do so when appropriate.

Helen prides herself on outstanding advocacy and being approachable and straightforward with clients. She aims to strike the balance between tenacity and confidence in court and pragmatism in advising clients.

Areas of Expertise

Clinical Negligence & Healthcare

Helen dedicates much of her time to her busy clinical negligence practice. She is frequently instructed to advise on merits, evidence and quantum at various stages of claims.

Helen is currently instructed as both sole counsel and junior counsel on a number of high value clinical negligence cases which involve life changing brain injuries. She also has particular experience in obstetric and gynaecological cases, psychiatric cases and delayed diagnosis cases in both cancer and orthopaedic contexts.

She is well versed in dealing with complicated issues surrounding breach, causation and evidence and is confident and experienced in approaching such issues head on with experts in conference.

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Notable Clinical Negligence & Healthcare cases

PD v EL

fatal clinical negligence case which arose out of a tragic and fatal killing of a young man by stabbing whilst an inpatient at a mental health institution. The claim was brought by his widow on behalf of her and her daughter. Helen drafted pleadings, advised in writing and in conference and ultimately settled the case after a JSM, counsel to counsel discussions and approval hearing.

RW v X & Y

fatal clinical negligence case arising out of delayed diagnosis of bowel cancer. The case involved complex issues of causation. The claim was brought on behalf of several dependants including children and grand children and care evidence was obtained in order to particularise the services dependency claim.

IM v X

case involving serious injury to a superficial peroneal nerve during surgery to fix an ankle fracture. Causation was complex and required input from a peripheral nerve expert and chronic pain expert. Settled after a JSM.

SS v X

case arising out of a serious bowel injury during a robotic laparoscopic hysterectomy. There was a delay in recognising the injury post-surgery which led to the Claimant developing peritonitis, sepsis and an entero-cutaneous fistula. This led to the Claimant developing a serious acute kidney injury which required renal replacement therapy and invasive catheterisation dialysis. Causation was complex and expert evidence was obtained from an anaesthetist, nephrologist, gynaecologist and general surgeon. The matter settled for a six figure sum post issue of court proceedings.

Personal Injury

Helen accepts instructions to advise on merits, evidence and quantum in a range of areas. Her personal injury practice is now exclusively multi track. Where appropriate, Helen is confident dealing with settlement discussions and mediations. She deals with the full range of personal injury work including employer liability, occupier liability, public liability, road traffic accidents and holiday claims. She is also has a specific interest in Animal Act claims and military claims.

She is instructed as both sole counsel and junior counsel. Her present case load includes cases involving catastrophic spinal injury, chronic pain and brain injury.

Notable Personal Injury cases

EB v KB

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claim arising out an accident at work where the Claimant's hand was significantly injured in a drill, causing amputation of fingers. The claim settled post exchange of expert evidence and witness evidence and involved complex factual evidence in relation to issue of liability and contributory negligence

FN v MOD

military PI claim in which the claimant sustained an ankle injury with associated chronic pain and psychiatric symptoms. Liability was agreed shortly before a liability only trial and the case settled after a JSM for a six figure sum – the claim included significant loss of earnings and loss of pension claims.

NC v XY

significant shoulder injury following an accident on an escalator in a shop premises, complicated by the exacerbation of pre existing fibromyalgia. Settled for a six figure sum.

DC v KR

a case arising out of an accident involving a bicycle and a dog. Helen represented the brain injured cyclist and successfully obtained judgment in his favour after a trial on liability – the case was brought under the Animals Act and in negligence.

Inquests & Inquiries

Helen is ranked as Tier 4 Leading Junior in the Legal 500 Inquest and Inquiries category. Her inquest practice overlaps significantly with her clinical negligence and personal injury work. She frequently represents families and other interested parties at inquests and is experienced in examining complex medical issues at inquest hearings with medical practitioners. She is instructed on Article 2 inquests and also has experience at inquests sitting with a jury.

Helen prides herself on her ability to deal well with clients in what can be an extraordinarily difficult and challenging legal setting. Helen combines tenacity and confidence in the court with being approachable, pragmatic and straightforward with her clients.

Notable Inquests & Inquiries cases

Inquest into the death of IA

a two day Article 2 inquest–the Deceased died shortly after co-amoxiclav had been administered to him – he had previously suffered an allergic reaction to the same which had been recorded on his medical notes. The issues included complex evidence around allergic reactions, the scientific make-up of the amoxicillin family, the cause of death in light of an underlying deterioration due to biliary sepsis and disputed factual evidence. Evidence was called from a specialist microbiologist .

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Inquest into the death of KM

a young man fell to his death from the Froncysyllte Aqueduct after walking along the outside of the parapets at night. Helen was instructed by the family. At a Pre Inquest Review, faced with expert engineering evidence from one of the interested parties, Helen persuaded the Coroner to instruct an independent expert. There was extensive legal argument and Helen prepared both written and oral submissions. Helen subsequently represented the family at the two-day jury inquest involving lengthy cross examination of two specialist civil engineers – the Coroner issued a PFD report following Helen's submissions.

Inquest into the death of RM

Helen was instructed by the family to attend both the PIR and a four day inquest. RM died following complications during the provision of anaesthetic prior to a liposuction procedure at a private London clinic. Enquiries were also made into the immediate care provided to her, including neuro-cooling, at hospital A&E. The inquest involved expert evidence from an anaesthetist and Helen questioned both the expert and the anaesthetist involved on complex medical procedures centring around airways and laryngospasm.

Education

- Trinity College, University of Cambridge MA, BA(Hons (2:1) Anglo Saxon Norse and Celtic
- City University, London – GDL (Distinction) BPTC (Outstanding)

Memberships

- Personal Injury Bar Association

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