

Austin Welch

Call to Bar: 2005



“Austin gets to grips with a case quickly and he is personable with clients.” “Austin is an incredibly sound and skilled advocate.” “He is very experienced, very measured and doesn’t take bad points.” – Chambers and Partners, 2024 – Inquests and Public Inquiries – Band 1.

“Austin is an excellent advocate and an outstanding strategist with an authoritative presence in the court room, and he emits gravitas. He presents clear and well reasoned arguments with ease, and he is one of the best senior juniors in the field of health and safety, inquests, and public inquiries” – Legal 500, 2024 – Inquests and Inquiries – Tier 1.

“Very good on the law and persuasive: he is able to get coroners on his side. Austin is also excellent with the clients and they trust him.” – Chambers & Partners, 2023 – Inquests and Public Inquiries – Band 1.

“Austin is an excellent senior leading junior. A superb advocate with a commanding presence and natural gravitas in the courtroom. He is unflappable during cross-examination, holds real weight with clients and delivers strategic and well thought out advice in a clear and accessible way. He is highly personable and fosters a true sense of collaboration” – Legal 500, 2023 – Inquests and Inquiries – Tier 1.

“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.” – Chambers and Partners, 2022 – Inquests and Public Inquiries – Band 1.

“Excellent knowledge of the law, meticulous preparation, extremely hard working and tactically very astute. He is superb with clients, and very generous with his time. He will undoubtedly be in silk before very long” – Legal 500, 2022 – Inquests and Inquiries – Tier 1.

“A committed and exceptionally talented barrister; without doubt a future QC. He is meticulous in his approach to the case and excellent with the client, he was reassuring, confident and worked hard to ensure a positive outcome for the client.” – Legal 500, 2021 – Inquests and Inquiries - Tier 1.

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Practice areas:

Inquests & Inquiries

Health & Safety

Regulatory

Professional Discipline

Professional appointments:

List of Specialist Regulatory

Advocates in Health and Safety and Environmental Law - List B

"All the qualities you expect in the best barristers – he is meticulous, a great tactician and confident on his feet. He combines all this with a very personable approach, and my clients can't speak highly enough of him."

"Austin's capacity for hard work is mindblowing. He has a diverse practice and is handling high-level and large-scale work." - Chambers & Partners, 2021 - Inquests and Public Inquiries – Band 1.

"Combines superb client care with fantastic technical ability." – Legal 500, 2020 – Inquests and Inquiries -Tier1.

"An excellent tactician who is persuasive on his feet." – Legal 500, 2019 – Inquests and Inquiries - Tier 1.

"His legal, tactical and presentational abilities are excellent." – Legal 500, 2018 – Inquests and Inquiries - Tier1.

INQUESTS AND PUBLIC INQUIRIES

Austin represents companies, local authorities, healthcare providers, NHS Trusts and other public and private organisations at inquests and public inquiries. He has appeared in some of the most high-profile inquests and inquiries in recent years and is considered a leading junior in this field. Austin represents clients in inquests involving a wide variety of issues including deaths in the workplace, deaths in prisons and secure accommodation, healthcare and care home related deaths and road traffic deaths.

NOTABLE CASES

Public Inquiries

The Manchester Arena Inquiry – Austin represented a number of family members of those who died as a result of the bombing at the Manchester Arena in 2017.

The UK Covid 19 Inquiry – Austin advised and represented the Health and Safety Executive in the UK Covid 19 Inquiry. He is presently advising and representing the former head of the Vaccine Task Force.

The Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse – Austin represented two senior police officers in relation to the investigation into alleged sexual abuse by Lord Janner.

The Gosport War Memorial Hospital Independent Panel – Austin was part of the team involved in the investigation into the deaths that occurred at the Gosport War Memorial Hospital between 1988 and 2000 that led to the production of the report of the Independent Panel. Austin was responsible in particular for the drafting of the inquests section of the report.

The Grenfell Tower Inquiry – Austin advised various individuals and companies in relation to their involvement in the Grenfell Tower Inquiry.

Health and Safety Inquests

The Hillsborough inquests - Austin represented two senior police officers alleged to have orchestrated the cover up following the Hillsborough Stadium disaster. The inquest ran for 2 years and is the longest in English legal history.

In the inquest touching the death of P - Austin represented a cable manufacturing company in an inquest into the death of an employee who had been trapped between an FLT and HGV after the safety features of the FLT had been disabled

In the inquest touching the death of E - Austin represented a national energy supplier in a 5-day inquest in relation to the death of one of its employees who was carrying out work on the electricity grid.

In the inquest touching the death of W – Austin represented a national road transport and logistics company in relation to the death of an employee at one of their sites who became trapped between vehicles after a rollaway.

In the inquest touching the death of W – Austin represented a construction company in a 5-day inquest in relation to the death of one of its employees who was knocked over by a telehandler driven by a contractor at a housing development.

In the inquest touching the death of B – Austin represented a company in relation to the death of a contractor who fell through a roof whilst working on site.

In the inquest touching the death of K – Austin represented a waste company in an inquest into the death of one of its employees who had been hit by an LGV whilst on site.

In the inquest touching the death of W – Austin represented a property management company in an inquest into the death of a third-party employee who had been hit by a commercial vehicle whilst attending premises owned by the company.

In the inquest touching the death of T – Austin represented a company in an inquest into the death of one of its employees who had committed suicide following a dispute at work.

In the inquest touching the death of O – Austin represented a clothing distribution company in relation to the death of the child of one of the company's employees. The child had been born prematurely and the inquest considered the extent to which the working conditions had contributed to the premature birth of the child.

In the inquest touching the death of BW – Austin represented a waste company in relation to the death of a cyclist who had fallen into oncoming traffic having slipped on detritus on the road. The Local Authority for the area where the accident occurred instructed leading and junior counsel and had obtained expert evidence suggesting that the detritus had come from the waste company's premises due to a lack of cleaning of vehicles. The Coroner concluded that there was insufficient evidence to make any such a finding.

In the inquests touching the deaths of T & J – Austin represented an interested person at a 9-day inquest into the death of two contractors killed when operating heavy machinery at an industrial plant in Knowsley. Austin represented the supervisor of the contracting company.

In the inquest touching the death of S – Austin represented a company in an inquest concerning the death of an employee who had taken his own life. The inquest considered the extent to which workplace bullying had contributed to the death.

Food Safety Inquests

In the Inquest touching the death of S - Austin represented a national restaurant chain in relation to the death of a customer who suffered an anaphylactic shock. No critical findings were made in respect of the conduct of the restaurant, the restaurants systems and procedures of its staff.

In the inquest touching the death of S – Represented the family of a young woman who died as a result of suffering an anaphylactic shock having consumed a chicken burger coated in butter milk (to which she was allergic) at the Almost Famous restaurant in Manchester. The inquest lasted 7 days and attracted national press attention.

In the inquests touching the death of C - Austin represented a food company that operated a butchers alleged to have been the source of a salmonella outbreak that resulted in the death of two people.

In the inquest touching the death of P – Austin represented a national cheese and fine food distributor in an inquest into the death of a man who died after having consumed an item of cheese that was contaminated with listeria.

In the inquest touching the death of K – represented a fast food business in an inquest into the death of one of its customers who had suffered an anaphylactic shock after consuming food from a takeaway restaurant.

In the inquest touching the death of S - Austin represented a national restaurant chain in relation to the death of a customer who suffered an anaphylactic shock. No critical findings were made in respect of the restaurant's systems and procedures or its staff.

In the inquests touching the death of C - Austin represented a food manufacturing and distribution company that operated a butchers alleged to have been the source of a salmonella outbreak that resulted in the death of two people.

Nursing and Care Home Inquests

In the inquest touching the death of B – Austin represented the provider of assisted living accommodation in relation to the death of a resident with learning difficulties who died from choking,

In the Inquest Touching the Death of W - Austin represented a care home in a inquest into the death of a resident who died after a hypoglycaemic episode after being given the wrong dose of insulin.

In the inquest touching the death of B - Austin represented a care home in relation to the death of a resident who died after falling from his bed.

In the inquest touching the death of O – Austin represented a nursing home in an inquest into the death of a resident who had died after pressure sores became infected.

In the inquest touching the death of B – Austin represented a nursing home in an inquest into the death of a resident who had died after not having been administered medication.

In the inquest touching the death of C – Austin represented a nursing home in an inquest into the death of a resident who had died following suggestion of a lack of ongoing treatment.

In the inquest touching the death of B – Austin represented the manager of a care home in an inquest following the death of a resident who had fallen and suffered fatal head injuries.

In the inquest touching the death of S – Austin represented a care home in an inquest into the death of a resident with dementia who had fallen down a flight of stairs.

In the inquest touching the death of H – Austin represented a care home in relation to the death of a resident who had died having choked on food.

In the inquest touching the death of S - Austin represented a nursing home in relation to the death of a patient who had been administered the wrong medication.

In the inquest touching the death of D – Austin represented a care home in relation to the death of a resident from various co-morbidities arising out of immobility and pressure sores.

In the inquest touching the death of W – Austin represented a nursing home in relation to the death of a resident who died as a result of sepsis following long term issues with pressure sores

Healthcare Inquests

In the inquest touching the death of B – Austin represented an NHS Trust in a 2-week Article 2 inquest in relation to the death of a young woman who had been sectioned and died whilst on leave after having consumed sodium nitrite.

In the inquest touching the death of L – Austin represented the provider of sexual violence support services in a 5-day Article 2 inquest in relation to the death of a young woman who took her own life having consumed sodium nitrite.

In the inquest touching the death of H – Austin represented an NHS Trust in an inquest into the death of a woman who was a psychiatric outpatient who died as a result of alcohol abuse and complications arising from an eating disorder.

In the inquest touching the death of Nicola Bulley – Austin represented Ms Bulley's GP in the inquest into her death. The inquest was one which received national press attention.

In the inquest touching the death of P – Austin represented a GP in an inquest into the death of a patient who had died as a result of cold water shock after having entered a reservoir having consumed alcohol and prescription medication.

In the inquest touching the death of P – Austin represented an HCA in an inquest concerning the death of the resident of a nursing home who had suffered a fall.

In the inquest touching the death of A – Austin represented the nurse in charge of a ward in relation to the death of a patient who had died as a result of medication not being administered on time.

In the inquest touching the death of J – Austin represented a nurse in an inquest into the death of a nursing home resident who had died as a result of a diabetic emergency.

Prison and Probation Service Inquests

Inquest touching the death of S – Austin represented a privately operated prison in relation to the death of a prisoner who had died as a result of a drug overdose.

Inquest touching the death of R – Austin represented a privately operated prison in relation to the death of a prisoner who died following complications concerning the treatment of his heart condition.

Inquest touching the death of W – Austin represented the providers of drug rehabilitation services at an MOJ prison in relation to the death of a prisoner who had self-ligatured.

In the inquest touching the death of B – Austin represented the provider of counselling services at HMP Wormwood Scrubs in a 2-week Article 2 inquest into the death of a prisoner who had taken his own life.

Inquest touching the death of M – Austin represented the MoJ in an Article 2 inquest touching the death of a prisoner at HMP Garth who self-ligatured.

Inquest touching the death of N – Austin represented the MoJ in an Article 2 inquest touching the death of a prisoner with severe mental health needs who had committed suicide at HMP Manchester.

Inquest touching the death of S – Austin represented the MoJ in an Article 2 inquest touching upon the death of a prisoner who suffered an overdose of PS.

Inquest touching the death of O – Austin represented the Probation Service in an Article 2 inquest touching the death of a man who had been killed by a recently released prisoner who had contacted him through a dating app.

Inquest touching the death of S – Austin represented the MoJ in an Article 2 inquest touching the death of a prisoner at HMP Nottingham who committed suicide whilst on an ACCT.

Inquest touching the death of C– Austin represented the MoJ in an Article 2 inquest touching the death of a prisoner at HMP Garth who hanged himself whilst in the segregation unit of the prison.

Inquest touching the death of W– Austin represented the MoJ in an Article 2 inquest touching the death of a recently released female prisoner who took an overdose of sleeping tablets whilst in approved premises.

Inquest touching the death of S– Austin represented the MoJ in an Article 2 inquest touching the death of a prisoner at HMP Manchester who hanged himself in his cell.

Inquest touching death of B– Austin represented the National Probation Service in an Article 2 inquest touching the death of a recently released prisoner who died as a result of a PS overdose at approved premises.

Inquest touching the death of W– Austin represented the MoJ in an Article 2 inquest into the death of a prisoner at HMP Sudbury who died as a result of an epileptic episode in his cell , questions regarding the involvement of PS in the death.

Inquest touching the death of M– Austin represented the MoJ in an Article 2 inquest into the death of a prisoner at HMP Manchester who died as a result of PS toxicity. As well as consideration of the prison's procedures in relation to drug abuse the case also involved consideration of ACCT procedures.

Inquest touching the death of F – Austin represented the MoJ in an Article 2 inquest into the death of a prisoner at HMP Garth as a result, in part, of having contracted COVID. Inquest touching the death of B – represented the MoJ in an Article 2 inquest into the death of a prisoner at HMP Wakefield who died as a result of PS toxicity.

Inquest touching the death of L – Austin represented the MoJ in an Article 2 inquest into the self-inflicted death of a prisoner at HMP Wakefield.

Inquest touching the death of J – Austin represented the MoJ in an Article 2 inquest into the self-inflicted death of a prisoner at HMP Garth.

Inquest touching the death of B – Austin represented the MoJ in an Article 2 inquest into the death of a prisoner at HMP Nottingham who died as a result of a heart attack . The case involved consideration of issues of neglect in relation to the treatment of Mr B.

Road Transport Inquests

Inquest touching the death of D – Austin represented the driver of a motor vehicle in a 7-day inquest into the death of a girl who had died in a collision at a bus stop. The driver had fainted at the wheel and the case involved the consideration of various pieces of crash reconstruction and medical expert evidence.

Inquest touching the death of M - Austin represented a road transport company in an inquest into the death of the driver of a motor vehicle that had stopped by the side of a roundabout and was the subject of a collision by an HGV.

Inquest touching the death of P - Austin represented a farmer who had collided with another vehicle whilst driving his tractor at night on the highway.

In the inquest touching the death of G – Austin represented a national breakdown recovery service in an inquest into the death of a man who had died when his vehicle had caught fire hours after it had been the subject of an inspection by a patrolman. The inquest involved consideration of complex evidence as to how the fire started within the engine of the vehicle.

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