

Leonie Hirst



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Profile

Leonie has a broad-based civil practice covering a range of areas including public law, immigration, Court of Protection, prison law, inquests, mental health, community care, and discrimination law. Her work has a particular focus on deprivation of liberty, mental capacity and equality issues. She is a strong technical lawyer noted for her oral and written advocacy and client skills.

She is on the Equality and Human Rights Commission 'B' panel of counsel, and is ranked as a leading junior by Chambers & Partners in Court of Protection, Immigration, and Civil Liberties, and by the Legal 500 in Civil Liberties.

What the directories say

"She is one of the cleverest juniors around, and her pleadings are always concise and robust." - Chambers and Partners 2023

"An excellent advocate. Her drafting is very persuasive and thorough. Able to see the big picture and get things done." - Legal 500 2023

"Has a really good tactical brain and is a real team player. She has real attention to detail and produces excellent legal analysis. She has a very collaborative approach too." - Chambers and Partners 2022

"Leonie is a persuasive and powerful advocate with gravitas. Her legal mind is second to none. She accepts instructions at short notice and gets through vast amounts of paperwork at speed." - Legal 500 2022

"A really excellent technical lawyer who is extremely pleasant to work with and very experienced." - Chambers and Partners 2020

"She gets to the heart of the case very quickly." - Chambers and Partners 2020

"She's extremely effective on her feet and drafts concise, compelling pleadings." - Chambers and Partners 2020

Related practice areas

Court of Protection & Mental Health

Administrative & Public Law

Immigration

Community Care and Health

Anti-Trafficking

Children's Rights Group

Discrimination

Immigration Detention Group

Mediation

Inquests and Public Inquiries

Key cases

- **R (on the application of McCourt) v Parole Board & Ors** [2020] EWHC 2320 (Admin): Key case on the standing of family members in parole proceedings
- **Hafeez v SSHD** [2020] EWCA Civ 406: Deportation appeal involving the interpretation of 'imperative grounds' protection
- **R (Hafeez) v SSHD** [2020] EWHC 437 (Admin): Successful challenge to the legality of certification under Regulation 33 EEA Regulations

- **R (MK) v SSHD** [2019] EWHC 3573 (Admin): Challenge to delay in decision making for unaccompanied asylum-seeking children
- **R (ASK and MDA) v SSHD** [2019] EWCA Civ 1239: Challenge to detention practice and procedure in two linked appeals involving detainees lacking mental capacity
- **R (W) v SSHD** [2019] EWHC 254 (Admin): Successful challenge to the application of the restricted leave policy
- **R (Slade and Anor) v HM Attorney General** [2018] EWHC 3573: Challenge to the refusal to review criminal cases following collapse of a high-profile murder trial
- **R (VI) v London Borough of Lewisham** [2018] EWHC 2180 (Admin): Challenge to a Care Act assessment of needs and subsequent provision for severely disabled woman
- **R (MS) v SSHD** [2017] EWHC 2797: Successful challenge to detention of a victim of trafficking with mental health needs
- **ARF v Home Office** [2017] EWHC 10 (QB): Successful unlawful detention claim in which detention of a mentally ill victim of trafficking was found to breach Article 3 ECHR
- **R (X) v SSHD** [2016] EWHC 1997 (Admin): Successful challenge to detention for an EU national subject to certification
- **R (Gomes) v SSHD** [2016] EWCA Civ 373: Successful challenge to detention of an EU national
- **R (Weddle) v Secretary of State for Justice** [2016] EWCA Civ 38: Challenge to the failure to provide offending behavior work for a life-sentenced prisoner with amnesia
- **R (JM & Ors) v SSHD** [2015] EWHC 2331 (Admin): Challenge to the operation of the Detained Fast Track in relation to vulnerable detainees
- **SSHD v MG** [2014] EUECJ C-400/12: Reference to the CJEU on protection from deportation under the Citizens Directive
- **R (McIntyre) v Parole Board** [2013] EWHC 1969 (Admin): Successful challenge to Parole Board procedure which resulted in the requirement for panel chairs to keep a record of proceedings
- **R (D) v SSHD** [2012] EWHC 2501 (Admin): Successful challenge to unlawful detention in which immigration detention was found to breach Article 3 ECHR

- **KK v STCC** [2012] EWCOP 2136: Successful challenge to deprivation of liberty on grounds of capacity; leading authority on the approach to be taken to assessing capacity