

Ben Amunwa

Year of Call: 2013
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Administrative and Public Law

Ben Amunwa is frequently instructed in urgent, high-profile and complex public law matters for individuals, NGOs (such as The Unity Project and LIBERTY) and local authorities. He has acted in high-profile, cutting-edge litigation. Several of his recent cases have been reported in the national media.

Ben has a track-record of successfully deploying equality law points in judicial review proceedings. Working closely with committed teams of solicitors and other colleagues, he has helped achieve life-changing outcomes for some of his clients, often obtaining urgent court orders for interim relief and substantial settlements or awards of compensation.

Ben enjoys a good reputation before the Administrative Court and is undaunted by heavyweight opponents. He has appeared in cases that concern the application of international law, rights derived from Treaties as well as domestic statutory interpretation and issues of constitutional and fundamental rights.

Ben regularly assists on matters of international law, extraterritorial jurisdiction, fundamental rights, detention, discrimination, statutory duties and costs. He maintains an interest in child rights and education law challenges (including special educational needs cases). He has published many articles and blog posts on these topics.

Ben assists individuals and public sector clients on information law, privacy and data protection matters. He has acted for claimants and defendants in numerous damages claims involving unauthorised disclosure of personal data and breaches of human rights, (including vicarious liability claims). Ben has advised and represented clients in information rights appeals in the First-tier Tribunal (General Regulatory Chamber), including appeals concerning legal advice privilege, historic protection arrangements for the Royal Family and Cabinet Ministers and intelligence concerning the analysis of criminal offence data.

Notable recent cases

TG, MN, HAA & MJ v SSHD (2024): acting for a lead Claimant in a systemic challenge to the re-purposing of RAF Wethersfield as asylum support accommodation and related policies. Instructed by DPG.

Smith v SSHD (2024): acting for a proposed intervenor in a constitutional challenge to the compatibility of the new criminal offence in section 60C of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994 with the ECHR. Led by Tim Buley KC. Instructed by LIBERTY.

MN, ZR & others v (1) SSHD (2) SSD (3) SSFCDA (4) The Prime Minister (2023): representing lead claimants in a challenge to the Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy. Proceedings led to a large-scale urgent evacuation of Afghan citizens from Pakistan to the UK. Case widely reported in the Independent and BBC News. Led by Tom de la Mare KC. Instructed by Deighton Pierce Glynn ('DPG').

PA & NA (by her litigation friend and mother PA) v SSHD [2023] EWHC 2476 (Admin): SoS's 'no recourse to public funds'

('NRPF') policy declared unlawful for misdirecting caseworkers on the exercise of their statutory discretion. SoS produced a new policy in response. Led by Alex Goodman KC. Instructed by DPG.

R (HA & Ors) v SSHD [2023] EWHC 1876 (Admin): correct interpretation of regulation 10A of the Asylum Support Regulations 2000 payments to pregnant women and children under 3, while accommodated in contractor-run hotels. Systemic delays and breaches of the statutory duty to provide asylum support quickly. Led by Zoe Leventhal KC. Instructed by DPG.

Home Office v ASY & Ors [2023] EWHC 196 (KB): scope and content of the ECHR Article 3 duty to avoid the inhuman and degrading treatment by reason of destitution. On appeal to the Court of Appeal. Led by Alex Goodman KC. Instructed by DPG.

Training/Conferences

Ben is also a prolific trainer and conference chair and speaker whose recent engagements have included:

- Chair at Public Law Project's event on 'Challenging unfairness in the immigration system'
- Chair and speaker at 'Asylum support in the cost of living crisis'
- Speaker at Public Law Project's Advanced Judicial Review conference on 'Systemic legal challenges'

Academic qualifications

- BA Hons in English and Related Literature (1st Class), University of York
- BPTC (Very Competent), City University of London
- GDL (Distinction), City University of London

Scholarships

- Lord Denning Major Scholarship, Lincoln's Inn
- Lord Brougham CPE Scholarship, Lincoln's Inn

Professional bodies

- Administrative Law Bar Association ('ALBA')
- Education Lawyers Association ('ELAS')
- Employment Lawyers Association ('ELA')
- Advocate (formerly the Bar Pro Bono Unit)
- Bar Council, Race training panel
- Lincoln's Inn

Direct Access

Ben Amunwa is qualified to accept instructions directly from members of the public and professional clients under the Direct Public Access scheme.