



Kristen Bender

Position

Solicitor

Practices

- [Prison Law](#)
- [Civil Liberties, Human Rights & Police Actions](#)

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Kristen Bender is a lawyer specialising in Human Rights, Civil Liberties, Prison and Public Law. Kristen uses her considerable experience and advocacy talents to represent those in society in need of a voice – life sentenced prisoners, residents of secure healthcare facilities and their families.

Kristen also represents HNW individuals and their families and those with a media profile requiring a sensitive and confidential approach.

Kristen believes that society should grant all access to justice and is a passionate advocate of the rights of the individual. She also believes that rehabilitation, the opportunity of redemption and compassion are the keys to enabling prisoners and patients to re-enter society in a safe, productive and positive way.

Kristen grew up in the USA and obtained her BA from Michigan State University followed by her Juris Doctorate from the American University in Washington, D.C. She first qualified as a lawyer in the United States in 1991 before working for a federal judge in the capital as a prosecutor trying serious criminal cases through investigation, grand jury procedure and jury trial to verdict. Kristen also worked in the US as a professor specialising in criminal advocacy, criminal justice public policy and human rights issues.

After trying over 100 cases to jury verdict Kristen relocated to Europe in 2000 to work on several large scale legal reform and rule of law projects, primarily in Eastern Europe. She worked to align post-Soviet legal systems with human rights and adversarial systems of legal procedure with particular attention to ensuring human rights compliance of criminal justice structures and procedures.

Kristen brought this strong human rights and criminal justice background to the UK when in 2002 she qualified as a solicitor and was appointed Head of Department for the Human Rights and Prison Law Department for a large Northwest law firm.

In November 2005 Kristen set up her own consultancy. She has worked as a consultant for Scott Moncrieff Solicitors primarily advising life sentenced, extended licence and indeterminate prisoners. She is a frequent advocate before the Parole Board of England and Wales and has also appeared before the Scottish Parole Board. In November 2013 Kristen began acting as a consultant as well for Kirwans Solicitors, again primarily acting on behalf of long term and life sentenced prisoners. Kristen acted as a supervisor for Scott Moncrieff and Kirwans and meets the Supervision criteria set by the Legal Aid Agency for publicly funded cases.

These days Kristen consults primarily for Tuckers Solicitors, the largest criminal law firm in the United Kingdom. She undertakes both publicly funded and private instructions on a flexible fee basis.

Kristen is acknowledged by Chambers and Partners, a directory which ranks lawyers in the UK, as a leading individual in the field of civil liberties, commenting that she is *“very busy and very good at spotting points for judicial review and running with them”*. She is an internationally experienced lawyer with a pan-European interest in states and their commitment to human rights.

Kristen is a member of the Association of Prison Lawyers, Liberty, the American Bar Association, the Advocacy Section of the Law Society of England and Wales and the Howard League for Penal Reform.

Kristen also delivers training and supervision for other professionals and has provided training to psychologists involved in Parole Board practice. She has delivered training to the Parole Board for England and Wales as well as other lawyers via the Association of Prison Lawyers.

Kristen endeavours to work closely with other professionals such as psychologists, offender managers, prison staff and the Parole Board to ensure that the most accurate and complete evidence is presented to the Board to achieve the best possible outcome for her client, the victim and society as a whole.

A typical week for Kristen involves a lot of travel – she understands the importance of being available to meet clients in custody, families in the community and of appearing in person before Parole Board panels. She works tirelessly to understand the needs of everyone involved in cases and is happy to provide advice to client’s families over the phone or in person. As well as representing clients in custody, Kristen is also busy working with those who have been released, creating opportunities for work and support in the community. She supports several charities and local community organisations.