

PR PORTFOLIO

DAVID STANDARD

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

- 02** **About David**
- 03** **Case Study 1 - David Carpenter**
- 04** **Case Study 2 - John Coles**
- 05** **Case Study 3 - Christie Harnett, Nadia Sharif and Emily Moore.**
- 06** **Case Study 4 - Natasha Ednan-Laperouse**
- 07** **Case Study 5 - The Nimrod Families**
- 08** **Case Study 6 - Lance Bombardier Ben Parkinson MBE**

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ABOUT DAVID

David Standard brings more than 30 years of experience working within some of the UK's and the world's leading law firms, including as Head of Communications at Irwin Mitchell and Head of Marketing and Business Development for 11 years at Leigh Day. He was most recently a partner at Thompsons Solicitors before setting up Standard Consulting in January 2026.

David has worked on some of the most sensitive and high-profile cases in the country. From Natasha's Law to the Uber worker rights judgment, the fight for justice for Ben Parkinson, the Mau Mau Litigation, the 'Elephant Man' clinical trials or the fight for Herceptin, David Standard has been behind some of the highest profile legal battles in the UK.

He is a specialist in managing media coverage of inquests, having managed approximately 30 throughout his career, and has earned the trust of journalists, helping manage the most sensitive cases with empathy and compassion. Much of his work is behind the scenes, keeping families out of the spotlight and managing the narrative with journalists, creating a buffer between personal and public. This document contains just a few of the hundreds of cases David has dealt with in his career.

David is a former member of the Great Britain cycling team and is currently a Non-Executive Director of British Cycling. He is also a founding trustee of MASIC, the birth injury charity.



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CASE STUDY 1

Death of David Carpenter

April 2024

David Standard managed the media around the inquest into the death of David Carpenter, a 60-year-old refuse collector employed by Coventry City Council, who died on 19 January 2023 after his clothing became entangled in the lifting mechanism of a bin lorry during a routine shift.

David Carpenter's family sought accountability for a death, the inquest jury would ultimately describe as entirely foreseeable.

The inquest, which concluded in April 2024, exposed serious systemic failings: training for refuse workers was found to be inadequate, the Council's risk assessments were described as 'inadequate, insufficient and incomplete', and the bin lorry itself lacked optimal safety features — a fact acknowledged by the manufacturer, Dennis Eagle Ltd. The jury found that those failings had contributed directly to David's death.

David Standard coordinated the media response to the inquest verdict, securing national BBC coverage that brought David Carpenter's story and the campaign for mandatory safety upgrades to a broad public audience.

The Coroner, Delroy Henry, announced he would issue a Prevention of Future Deaths report to Dennis Eagle Ltd — acknowledging that the vehicles could have been safer, and a software update capable of preventing this type of accident existed but had been only minimally implemented due to cost.

Claire Chetwynd, David's daughter, spoke publicly about the family's grief and the systemic failures behind it: a combination of the personal and the political that is at the heart of effective legal media work.



David Carpenter and his daughter Claire.

CASE STUDY 2

John Coles Inquest

Heathrow Airport

July 2023

David Standard managed the media around the conclusion of the inquest into the death of John David Coles, a British Airways employee who died on 14 February 2018 at Heathrow Terminal 5.

John was driving a British Airways Renault Kangoo across an uncontrolled crossing of Taxiway C when a Heathrow Airport Ltd vehicle, travelling at more than 40 mph, struck his vehicle on the passenger side, causing fatal injuries. The driver of the Heathrow vehicle had not seen him on the crossing.

The inquest, which ran to five years after John's death before concluding in July 2023, heard evidence that background visual interference – the phenomenon by which a vehicle becomes effectively

invisible against a busy visual backdrop – had been an influencing factor in the collision.

David coordinated media relations around the verdict, securing BBC coverage that brought the family's story and the systemic safety concerns at one of the world's busiest airports to a national audience.

The Coroner, Richard Furniss, issued a Prevention of Future Deaths report to Heathrow Airport Ltd, calling on the airport to address the risks posed by background visual interference and to consider whether side-profile lighting on vehicles crossing uncontrolled taxiway crossings could help prevent future tragedies.



John David Coles

CASE STUDY 3

NHS England Reports into the deaths of Christie Harnett, Nadia Sharif and Emily Moore.

November 2022

In a span of eight months, three young women receiving mental health care from Tees, Esk and Wear Valleys Foundation Trust tragically ended their lives. This prompted NHS England to commission independent investigations.

Eagerly awaited by Watson Woodhouse, the law firm representing the families of the deceased, the reports were strategically publicised by David Standard to ensure widespread national attention in accordance with the families' wishes.

Initially, the media's awareness of these reports had been limited, but through David's efforts, significant national press coverage was achieved on the day the reports were launched.

The story gained prominence on the Daily Mail's front page, a two-page feature in The Times, and coverage in The Guardian, Metro, I, and various other publications, along with BBC, ITV, and Sky News segments. The impact was substantial, leading to an urgent question raised in the House of Commons concerning the care of individuals under the Mental Health Act.

"Thank you, David, for all you have done. We could never have gotten close to what has been achieved without your help."

Alistair Smith
Watson Woodhouse



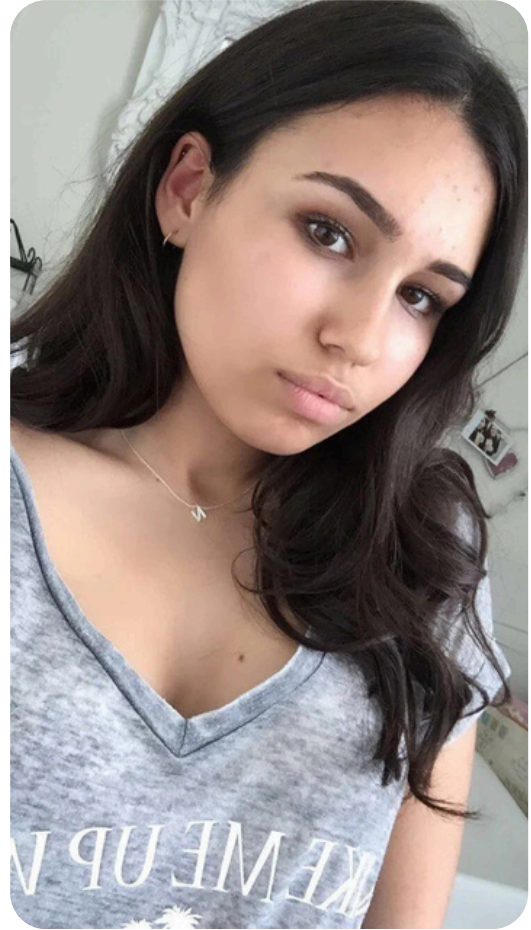
CASE STUDY 4

Pret allergy death Natasha Ednan-Laperouse 2019

Natasha Ednan-Laperouse tragically passed away following an allergic reaction to a sandwich baguette purchased from Pret a Manger, which she had consumed before boarding a British Airways flight.

David Standard collaborated closely with her parents, Nadim and Tanya, to devise a strategic plan that highlighted their daughter's case and the shortcomings in existing food labelling legislation ahead of Natasha's inquest. David managed the media relations throughout the inquest and subsequent stages to fulfil the objectives set by Natasha's parents.

Additionally, he engaged with key governmental figures, orchestrating a visit to Michael Gove, then Secretary of State for Environment, Food, and Rural Affairs, alongside Nadim and Tanya. This targeted advocacy and sustained campaign resulted in Natasha's Law, new legislation that enhanced food packaging and labelling standards, which was officially implemented in October 2021.



"Our daughter's inquest was in September 2018, and it was high profile. During its week-long duration, it captured the interest of the public and media across the UK and worldwide. It was a stressful time for us as a family, and having David support us was invaluable."

"His experience, judgement and ability in Media Relations put us at ease as he navigated the tumultuous media attention we received during and after the inquest. We have always found him highly professional and well-respected by the media."

Nadim & Tanya Ednan-Laperouse OBE

CASE STUDY 5

The Nimrod Inquest 14 Families 2008

Irwin Mitchell represented the families of the 14 individuals tragically lost in the crash of a Royal Air Force Hawker Siddeley Nimrod in Kandahar, Afghanistan, in 2006.

David Standard managed media relations throughout the case, particularly concerning the inquest proceedings. Given the substantial media interest surrounding the case, David remained steadfastly alongside the families of those who had perished, including during the week-long inquest.

On 23 May 2008, the assistant deputy coroner for Oxfordshire, Andrew Walker, delivered a scathing narrative verdict.

He declared that the entire Nimrod fleet had been inherently unsafe "from the first time it was released to service," strongly recommending its grounding.

Walker's statement was emphatic: "This cavalier approach to safety must come to an end." He identified critical failures in monitoring the aircraft's safety, noting that proper recording and action on available information could have uncovered the Nimrod fleet's design flaws earlier.

Ultimately, the Ministry of Defence (MOD) acknowledged its shortcomings and accepted responsibility for the failings, marking a pivotal moment in the pursuit of justice and accountability for the families of those who perished.



The families of those killed in the Nimrod tragedy lay flowers on the way into the Coroner's Court

CASE STUDY 6

Ben Parkinson **The fight for justice** **2007**

Irwin Mitchell sought to secure equitable compensation for Lance Bombardier Ben Parkinson MBE, a former British paratrooper. At the time, Ben was recognised as the most gravely injured soldier to have survived the Afghanistan war. In 2006, while travelling in a Land Rover in Helmand province, Ben sustained severe injuries from an IED explosion.

A critical issue in Ben's case was the limitation of the Armed Forces Compensation Scheme (AFCS), which only acknowledged three injuries for computing compensation necessary for the long-term care of injured service personnel.

The media-relations approach by David Standard included a strategic communications plan, working closely with Ben and his mother, Dianne, to amplify awareness of Ben's situation through media channels. Despite the Ministry of Defence (MOD) initially maintaining that the existing compensation scheme was sufficient, the concerted media campaign efforts and the looming threat of legal action eventually led to a significant policy shift.

The government relented, resulting in substantial changes to the AFCS, thus ensuring a more accurate representation of the needs of all injured service members.

"In his handling of the Lance Bombardier Ben Parkinson compensation case, David Standard gave a master class in how public relations should be conducted."

Senior Producer - BBC



Lance Bombardier Ben Parkinson MBE

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