

Partner

Offices: London

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Education: Girton College, Cambridge, M.A.

Admitted: England and Wales, 1981

Languages spoken: French

Year joined: 1988

Year became partner: 1991



Overview

Alison is the Head of the Charities and Philanthropy Group at Withers, with over 25 years of experience in advising charities and other non-profit bodies, and those who contract with or donate to them.

Her clients include an eclectic mix of service providers, grant-makers, educational bodies, aid agencies and research institutes, as well as individual and corporate philanthropists, with the following being a representative sample: British Red Cross Society, Cambridge University, Cancer Research UK, Girls' Day School Trust, Guy's & St Thomas' Charity, Macmillan Cancer Support, Orders of St John Care Trust, Paul Hamlyn Foundation and TATE.

She is particularly well known for her expertise on medical charities (especially those linked with the National Health Service), charities associated with government and international charity issues.

Alison is well used to negotiating for clients with the Charity Commission and other regulators.

She is the immediate past Chairman of the Charity Law Association.

Highlights

- Acting General Counsel for the International Baccalaureate Organization 2009 - 2010.
- Governance reviews for Cancer Research UK, Girls' Public Day School Trust and Orders of St John Care Trust.
- Advice for NHS charities on the impact of the Government's proposals to establish Academic Health Science Centres with leading universities; and the structuring of relevant corporate and other entities to enable appropriate fundraising initiatives.
- Participation (by invitation) in the Review Group set up by HM Treasury to assess the implications for NHS Charities of the application of International Accounting Standards.
- Establishment of the British Olympic Foundation to assist with the delivery of the British Olympic Association's charitable objectives in relation to the 2012 Olympic Games in London.

Publications and speaking engagements

- Alison (with Clive Cutbill, also of Withers) has been commissioned by Oxford University Press to edit a new volume to be entitled 'The Law and Practice of International Charitable Giving' (publication due late 2011); she has also contributed to a book by the Bertelsmann Foundation on comparative legal structures for charities and other non-profits across the European Union.
- She led the discussion on 'public benefit' in the context of the 'promotion of health and the saving of lives' at the CLA's 'For the Public Benefit' conference at Westminster, which led to the publication of a series of essays to inform the development of the Charity Commission's statutory guidance under Charities Act 2006.
- She writes (with Anna Sumner, also of Withers) the 'Charities' chapter of Tolley's 'Revenue Law - Principles and Practice'.

Memberships

- Charity Law Association (Chairman 2008-2011; executive committee member 1997 - 2007; deputy chairman 2004 - 2007; member of Standing Committee on Taxation; member of Charities Act 2006 implementation working party; former chair of working party on European Commission's challenge to the UK Revenue's treatment of foreign charities)
- Society of Trust and Estate Practitioners (Charities Special Interest Group)
- Law Society of England and Wales

On a personal note

Alison is Governor of the Godolphin and Latymer School and former trustee of two grant making foundations.



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