David Kingsley

Expert Witness: British Urban Street Music, Street Gangs & Serious Youth Violence

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CASEWORK	REACH	TRAINING	MEMBERSHIPS
30+	**15**	**130+**	**12**
Cases and investigations since 2025, including 8 joint reports	Police forces and agencies	Police personnel at one multi-force conference	Expert witness and specialist professional bodies

An interdisciplinary practitioner and expert witness in **British urban street music (UK drill, trap and road rap), street gangs and serious youth violence**, instructed by Crown and Defence legal teams as contributing analyst and joint report author. Provides independent interpretation of lyrics, music videos, slang and digital communications, alongside open source analysis of street-based groups, rivalries and territorial dynamics. This expertise is grounded in frontline housing, youth work and safeguarding practice, including cuckooing, closure orders and exploitation referrals, and supporting care leavers affected by county lines, child criminal exploitation and missing episodes. Lived and professional experience across south and south west London (Wandsworth, Lambeth, Merton, Croydon, Richmond, Kingston), central, west and north west London (Westminster, Hounslow, Brent) and north and east London (Hackney, Islington, Newham, Redbridge). This grounding informs, but does not replace, the documentary and open source evidence on which each opinion is based.

01 Areas of expertise

UK drill, trap & road rap interpretation	Slang transcription & translation	Communications evidence
Street gang & group dynamics	Group identity & affiliation	Territorial & postcode dynamics
Serious youth violence	Criminal exploitation & county lines	Cuckooing, ASB & housing-related harm
OSINT / SOCMINT / GEOINT	Youth & street culture	Safeguarding & trauma-informed practice

02 Expert witness practice

Associate

Feb 2025 to present

Criminology Services Ltd (Director: Dr Simon Harding)

- Expert witness in British urban street music, street gangs and serious youth violence: contributing analyst on 30+ cases and investigations for 15 police forces and agencies across England and Wales (including the Metropolitan Police, British Transport Police, West Midlands, Avon and Somerset, Essex, Hertfordshire, Staffordshire, Derbyshire and South Wales) and 6 Defence firms, and joint author with Dr Simon Harding of 8 expert reports carrying own declaration and statement of truth, in matters including murder and attempted murder, firearms, robbery, serious violence, drug supply, county lines and child criminal exploitation (CCE).
- Reviews case papers, MG5 summaries, MG11 witness statements, phone extractions (including Cellebrite), messaging app conversations, prison calls and social media exhibits through secure systems including CJSM, Egress, Axon and 5F DAMS; peer reviews expert reports and contributes to reviews of opposing expert evidence, working to the CPS Guidance for Experts on Disclosure.
- Transcribes, translates and interprets drill, trap and road rap lyrics, videos and slang in their musical, cultural and territorial context, assesses material for gang-related characteristics, sets out alternative readings and the limits of the evidence, and produces open source profiles of street-based groups, including chronologies, network mapping, rivalries and estate and postcode affiliations.

Method

Case paper review
MG5, MG11, interviews, exhibits and phone downloads read against the questions in the letter of instruction.

Music & language analysis
Lyrics, visuals and slang transcribed and interpreted line by line, drawing on ethnomusicology and digital ethnography, separating artistic convention from factual reference.

Open source research
OSINT, SOCMINT and GEOINT, with mapping, timeline reconstruction and cross-source triangulation against independent sources and court records.

03 Relevant professional experience

Tenancy Services Officer

Aug 2025 to present

Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames

- Manages around 500 council homes across Chessington, Hook and Surbiton (previously around 800 across Kingston, Kingston Hill, Kingston Vale, Norbiton and New Malden), with a caseload including cuckooing, closure orders, drug-related anti-social behaviour, tenancy fraud and exploitation referrals, leading multi-agency case management with police, fire, health and social care partners and balancing enforcement (NOSP/NTQ) with early intervention and tenancy sustainment; CertCIH qualified.

Employability Practitioner
Apr 2023 to present

Change In Youth CIC

- Delivers one-to-one and group employability support for young people facing barriers such as housing instability, mental health challenges and social exclusion, using a trauma-informed, strengths-based approach; CertEP qualified and National Careers Week Ambassador.

Workshop Facilitator
May 2021 to present

Various organisations

- Designs and delivers trauma-informed workshops on youth work, employability, safeguarding and UK drill for young people, practitioners and professionals across community, statutory and health settings, including World Café workshops on serious youth violence for One Flow One Brent (Young Brent Foundation, 2021) with young residents of the Chalkhill, Church End and Stonebridge estates.

Deputy House Manager
Mar 2024 to Jul 2025

Ronald McDonald House UK

- Held responsibility for safeguarding and welfare oversight for families of children in hospital at St George's Hospital, coordinating with clinical teams to manage risk during periods of acute stress, managing NHS referral pathways and admissions, and line managing the house team.

Residential Support Worker
Apr 2023 to Mar 2024

Rise Inspired Housing

- Supported care leavers aged 16 to 18 in a mixed supported accommodation service in Redbridge, managing risk and safeguarding concerns including child criminal exploitation (CCE), child sexual exploitation (CSE), county lines, missing young people (MISPER) episodes, weapons, drugs and gang involvement, including identifying coded language and slang linked to exploitation and drug activity, working with police and children's social care, and supporting young people into education and employment.

CYPMF System Influencer Manager
Oct 2022 to Mar 2023

Healthwatch Hackney

- Progressed from participant in the original 2020 pilot to manager of the System Influencers programme, delivering youth engagement and co-production across children, young people, maternity and families services with NHS City & Hackney partners, including qualitative research into how housing pathways for looked after children relate to mental health; produced the programme's Impact and Evaluation Report.

Youth Leader
Sep 2020 to Aug 2022

Hackney CVS

- Supported the Improving Outcomes for Young Black Men programme (ages 16 to 30; later renamed Improving Outcomes for Black Children and Young People) and the Reducing School Exclusions programme, delivered Tree of Life youth mental health sessions in schools with the City & Hackney CAMHS Alliance, and contributed to Account Hackney, a youth advisory group on policing and community safety, including action research on racial disproportionality and police accountability, Know Your Rights workshops with MOPAC and the Metropolitan Police Notting Hill Carnival Observer Programme (2022).

04 Qualifications

HIGHER EDUCATION

MSc Criminal Psychology and Victimology (in progress) Includes INTERPOL HQ educational visit, Lyon, France (2026)	University of Portsmouth	2025 to 2028
Certificate of Higher Education, Early Childhood Studies / Childhood & Society	University of Roehampton	2019 to 2021

PROFESSIONAL & VOCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS

Violence, gangs & exploitation

RSPH Level 4 Award in Violence Prevention and Reduction for Strategic Specialists Completed; certificate pending	CGB Healthcare Training	2026
RSPH Level 3 Award in Violence Prevention and Reduction for Operational Leads	We Do Wellbeing	Aug 2026
AIM Qualifications Level 3 Award in Working with Gangs and Youth Violence	Activating Creative Talent (ACT) CIC / Serious Youth Violence Network	Jun 2026
ProQual Level 1 Award in Open Source Intelligence (OSINT)	IMSL	Feb 2026
QNUK Level 2 Award in Understanding County Lines (RQF)	Richmond Training Associates	Mar 2024

Safeguarding, youth work, advice & advocacy

RSPH Level 4 Award in Suicide First Aid (booked)	National Centre for Suicide Prevention Training	Dec 2026
RSPH Level 2 Award in Understanding the Misuse of Substances (booked)	Inspire Ignite	Nov 2026
SEG Awards Level 2 Certificate in Youth Work Practice (England)	Manjeet Johal Associates	May 2026
NCFE CACHE Level 2 Certificate in Understanding Domestic Abuse	West London College	Mar 2026
RSPH Level 3 Award in Mental Health First Aid	Royal Society for Public Health	Nov 2025
NCFE CACHE Level 2 Certificate in Understanding Adverse Childhood Experiences	West London College	Jun 2025
AIM Qualifications Advocating on Behalf of Children and Young People Level 3 Certificate of Unit Credit (bespoke accreditation, 6 credits)	National Youth Advocacy Service	May 2025
City & Guilds Level 2 Award in Independent Advocacy	Carers Federation	Nov 2024
NCFE Level 2 Certificate in Equality and Diversity	South Thames College Group	Apr 2024
NCFE CACHE Level 2 Certificate in Information, Advice or Guidance	New City College	Mar 2024
NCFE CACHE Level 2 Certificate in Understanding Safeguarding and Prevent	South Thames College Group	Jan 2024

Housing & public health

CIH Level 3 Certificate in Housing Practice	New City College	Mar 2026
RSPH Level 2 Award in Public Health	Royal Society for Public Health	Feb 2026
CIH Level 3 Certificate in Housing Services	New City College	Jul 2024

05 CPD & professional training

Experts Discussions & Joint Statements: From Law to Practice (booked) Online course	Expert Witness Institute	Mar 2027
Beyond the Basics: Advanced Report Writing for Experts (booked) Online course	Expert Witness Institute	Mar 2027
Basics of Report Writing (booked) Online course	Expert Witness Institute	Mar 2027
Law for Experts, England and Wales (booked) Online course	Expert Witness Institute	Feb 2027
Social Network Analysis and Social Phenomena (booked) Two-day online course	National Centre for Research Methods (NCRM) University of Southampton	Feb 2027
Introducing Music Research Advanced level online course	The Open University (OpenLearn)	Nov 2026
NCLCC County Lines National Investigators Safeguarding Hydra Exercise Two-day in-person course	National County Lines Coordination Centre (NCLCC) / South East ROCU Surrey Police HQ, Guildford	Sep 2026
Project Insight and Project Astute Expert Witness CPD One-day in-person course	Metropolitan Police Service New Scotland Yard, London	Jul 2026
MHFA England Mental Health First Aider (MHFAider®) Two-day in-person course; valid to Jan 2027	Transpire Training	Jan 2024
Youth Justice in the UK: Children, Young People and Crime Introductory level online course	The Open University (OpenLearn)	Oct 2023
Strengthening Families, Strengthening Communities (SFSC) Facilitator Certification One-week course (40 hours)	Race Equality Foundation	Jan 2023

06 Fellowships, professional bodies & awards

Fellowships

Fellow (FRGS)	Royal Geographical Society with IBG	Jul 2025 to present
Fellow (FIEP)	Institute of Employability Professionals	May 2025 to present
Fellow (FRSPH)	Royal Society for Public Health	Apr 2025 to present
Fellow (FRSA)	Royal Society of Arts	Apr 2024 to present

Expert witness bodies

Gold Member	National Expert Witness Agency	Oct 2026 to present
Affiliate	Expert Witness Institute	May 2026 to present
Associate	The Academy of Experts	May 2026 to present

Music & culture

Student Member	Royal Musical Association	Nov 2026 to present
Member (MISM)	Independent Society of Musicians	May 2025 to present
Member	British Forum for Ethnomusicology (BFE)	Apr 2025 to present
Member	IASPM UK & Ireland	Apr 2025 to present

Criminology, psychology & analysis

Member	Association of Crime and Intelligence Analysts	Apr 2025 to present
Student Member	British Psychological Society	2025 to present

Practice

Member (MIoL)	Institute of Leadership	May 2025 to present
Member	Institute for Youth Work	Oct 2024 to present
Certified Practitioner (CertCIH)	Chartered Institute of Housing	Sep 2024 to present

Awards

Inside Housing Management 30 (IHM 30)	Inside Housing Awarded at Housing 2026, Manchester	Jun 2026
Rising Leaders Fellow	Aspen Institute UK	Mar 2024
Gary Francis Achievement Award	Hackney CVS	Oct 2022
Change Award	London VRU and Black Men for Change Awarded at The Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC)	Oct 2021
Black Heart Scholarship	The Black Heart Foundation	Oct 2021

07 Speaking engagements & sessions delivered

Drill music session, "Gangs and serious violence: risks and how to safeguard" Co-delivered with Dr Simon Harding, who covered gangs	London Borough of Brent Brent Safeguarding Partnerships; online	Nov 2026
Invited speaker, Gangs, UK Street Slang & Drill Music Evidence CPD Day (Project Insight and Project Astute), "British Urban Street Music, Contextual Interpretation, and Institutional Response"	Metropolitan Police Service In person (hybrid) at New Scotland Yard, London	Jul 2026
Drill music seminar, "British Urban Street Music & Contextual Interpretation", for the CPS Policy Directorate Co-delivered with Dr Simon Harding, who covered gangs	Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) and Ministry of Justice (MoJ) In person (hybrid) at 102 Petty France, London	May 2026
Keynote speaker, "Drill Music: Gangs and Serious Youth Violence", National Tackling Gang Crime, Violence and Weapon Crime Conference 2026 Chaired by Dr Simon Harding	Government Events Online	Jan 2026
Session lead, Level 3 Safeguarding Children Update, "Modern Challenges in Youth Safeguarding: Insight for Healthcare Professionals" for 100+ paediatric, A&E and mental health staff	University Hospitals Bristol and Weston NHS Foundation Trust Online	Apr 2025
Specialist trainer, drill session for 130+ police personnel from Avon and Somerset, Gloucestershire, Swindon and Wiltshire at a police training conference Co-delivered with Dr Simon Harding, who covered gangs, knives and drugs	Avon and Somerset Police In person (hybrid) at UWE Bristol	Apr 2025
Conference speaker, National Combatting Gangs, Violence & County Lines Conference 2025, on interpreting drill and its links to youth violence and territorial conflict	Government Events Online	Jan 2025
Workshop lead, virtual workshop on UK drill for 120 professionals Co-delivered with Dr Simon Harding, who covered gangs and drugs	South Gloucestershire Council Safeguarding Children Partnership and Violence Reduction Partnership; online	Oct 2024

08 Publications, written contributions & media

Written contribution: "Youthwork in the Booth", trauma-informed guidance where drill content references people harmed or killed	Youth Music / Art Not Evidence	Oct 2026
Policy: evidence on "Young People Not in Employment, Education or Training (NEET): The Impact of Poverty and Inequality"	APPG on Poverty and Inequality	Jul 2026
Publication: "Beyond the Crime Scene: Drill Music, OSINT and the Digital Ecology of Youth Violence in Hackney" (research article)	LinkedIn (self-published)	May 2026
Publication: "How housing affects our health"	Royal Society for Public Health	Apr 2026
Media: radio interviews on the "Red v Blue school wars" social media trend	BBC Radio 5 Live; BBC Radio WM	Mar 2026
Written contribution: response to the consultation on 'gang'-related offences guidance and musical expression in evidence (on behalf of Criminology Services)	Crown Prosecution Service	Jan 2026
Publication: "Safety cannot be a lottery. Residents and staff need to stand side by side to tackle rising anti-social behaviour"	Inside Housing	Sep 2025
Publication: "From Postcodes to Playlists: How London's Gang Landscape Has Evolved, and What It Means for Youth Violence Today"	Fighting Knife Crime London	Jul 2025

09 Board, advisory & representative roles

Resident panel member for A2Dominion, representing resident perspectives across London's largest housing associations, which together house around one in ten Londoners	G15 Residents' Group	Mar 2025 to present
Board member: Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Board, shaping the institute's approach to equality, diversity and inclusion across the housing profession	Chartered Institute of Housing	Nov 2024 to present
Resident panel member: informing national housing policy, service standards and complaint handling	Housing Ombudsman Service	May 2024 to present
Research advisor: Clinical Informatics Service Advisory Group (CISAG), advising on AI and natural language processing (NLP) research using electronic health records, with a focus on equity, transparency and social determinants of health such as housing	NIHR Maudsley Biomedical Research Centre	Jan 2024 to present
Board member: Community Accountability Board for the Improving Outcomes for Young Black Men programme (later renamed Improving Outcomes for Black Children and Young People), providing community scrutiny of work on systemic inequalities	London Borough of Hackney	Oct 2022 to Sep 2023
Legacy representative: Hackney Young Futures Commission, keeping youth priorities tied to council policy on mental health, anti-racist practice, crime reduction and homelessness; led a discussion session at the Anti-Racist Praxis Conference	London Borough of Hackney	Jan 2022 to Oct 2022
Public representative: City & Hackney Integrated Care Partnership, bringing youth voice and co-production to mental health, primary care and children and families governance forums; co-authored the Anchor Institutions report	Healthwatch Hackney	Sep 2021 to Sep 2022

Expert's duty

David Kingsley understands that an expert witness's duty is to help the court achieve the overriding objective by giving objective, unbiased opinion on matters within the expert's field, and that this duty overrides any obligation to the instructing or paying party. David Kingsley is aware of the requirements of Part 19 of the Criminal Procedure Rules and its Practice Direction, and of the CPS Guidance for Experts on Disclosure.

References: Dr Simon Harding, Director, Criminology Services Ltd and NextGen Centre for Gangs Research; DS Matthew Corbin, Tactical Policy Advisor, UK Street Slang, Drill Music & Gangs, Metropolitan Police Service. Further references on request. Last updated November 2026.