

## Curriculum Vitae

### Charlotte Lucinda Surley

Called 2000 Middle Temple

Admitted as Solicitor 2005

Higher Rights of Audience 2008

### Expertise

I specialise in representing those facing serious sexual allegations including rape and historic sexual offences. I have undertaken the Advocacy and the Vulnerable training. I also have considerable expertise in relation to autism.

I have attended and delivered training on autism, mental health and the criminal justice system. My skills are particularly suited to representing defendants with mental health challenges, intellectual disabilities or who may be neurodivergent (i.e. have autism, ADHD or related traits). I also empathically but robustly defend members of the LGBTQPIA communities.

I have successfully represented clients facing allegations of serious violence and have experience of firearms offences relating to armed robberies and aggravated burglaries.

I regularly provide written advice on funding and appeal in a wide range of cases. Many are high-profile matters and include murder, extreme and prolific sexual offending against children, IPP sentences and jurisdictional issues.

I have a strong history of consistently returning positive results in unusual or particularly distressing cases involving complex defences and/or vulnerable defendants. I have also earned the loyalty of prolific offenders, many of whom now refuse other advocates for their court appearances. I attribute this success to my down-to-earth, empathic and respectful approach when engaging with clients.

### Notable Cases

Set out below is a selection of the most recent cases Charlotte Surley has conducted as junior alone. It should not be regarded as exhaustive.

#### Serious Violence

##### **R v S 2018**

The Defendant had committed a particularly violent aggravated burglary involving several victims. Initially he was assessed as being mentally well. After conducting our conferences sympathetically and drafting a detailed advice, S was diagnosed with bipolar disorder. He had suffered a hypomanic episode at the time of the offence. The mitigatory effect of this afforded him a significant reduction in his sentence as well as treatment for a condition that had lain undiagnosed for many years.

##### **R v G 2017**

The Defendant was severely mentally unwell and I initially met with him on a secure ward. He had hitherto refused to speak to any legal professionals but we forged an extremely positive professional relationship. This enabled him to receive a Hospital Order promptly, thereby securing the treatment that he urgently needed.

**R v R 2017**

The Defendant was acquitted of possession of a firearm with intent. He was a resident at supported accommodation for adults with learning disabilities, as was the Complainant. As such, the case required clear and thoughtful communication both in conference with the Defendant and in cross-examination of the Complainant.

**R v B 2016**

The Defendant was acquitted of arson with intent to endanger life having successfully argued that she had been 'framed' by her co-defendant.

**R v MR 2016**

The Defendant was acquitted of false imprisonment relating to two teenage females who were allegedly detained at a residential address for several hours and threatened with torture. This case also concerned alleged gang membership.

**R v T 2015**

The Defendant was acquitted of wounding with intent arising out of the stabbing of a male during a gang-related fight.

**R v H 2013**

This case concerned an attempted armed robbery of a Post Office where the Defendant argued duress arising from his former gang membership. This was a Central Criminal Court (Old Bailey) case.

**R v Q 2013**

The Defendant was acquitted of s18 assault concerning the alleged unprovoked stabbing of a neighbour. The Defendant, a highly intelligent graduate, was sectioned during the course of the case and required extremely sensitive representation.

**R v M 2012**

I represented this Defendant in two separate trials, both concerning gang-related drug debt enforcement by means of aggravated burglary and the possession of firearm with intent to endanger life. Both cases involved detailed cell site analysis and concerned the use of sawn-off shotguns. In the second case the firearm was discharged necessitating the analysis of ballistics and other expert evidence.

<b>Serious Sexual Offences</b>
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**R v M 2018**

This case concerned a prolific offender who committed multiple child sex offences including additional offences whilst on bail from the Crown Court.

**R v H 2018**

In this unusual case, the Defendant admitted to using false identities online to groom a sibling and a teenage male. Psychiatric evidence of the Defendant's delayed development, emotionally and physically, was put before the court and led to a substantial reduction in the sentence that was ultimately imposed.

**R v A 2018**

The Defendant was alleged to have committed two sexual assaults whilst suffering from a severe but transitory mental illness. Instructing Solicitors acted upon my advice and the case against him was discontinued.

**R v T-M 2017**

The Defendant was acquitted of the 'date rape' of a woman with complex mental health issues.

**R v F 2017**

The vulnerable Defendant in this case was acquitted of committing a serious sexual offence against a woman who had self-harmed immediately before his arrival at her home.

**R v L 2017**

The Defendant was a transgender woman accused of historic sexual offences and, as such, required respectful and sensitive representation. I also ensured that she was not 'dead-named' throughout the court proceedings.

**R v MR 2017**

The Defendant in this case was acquitted of sexual offences against two of his children who were aged 8 and 11 at the time of the trial. This case was particularly challenging because of the Defendant's fluctuating mental health and associated paranoia.

**R v H 2016**

The Defendant was acquitted of the rape of a former partner despite forensic evidence. This case occurred against the backdrop of contemporaneous family proceedings. Significant bad character evidence against both parties meant that the Complainant required delicate but positive cross-examination which was praised by the Learned Judge at the conclusion of the trial.

**R v U 2015**

The Defendant was acquitted of the rape of a teenager at a 'crack house'. The Defendant's name had been found in graffiti at the address and he had been identified by the Complainant but successfully argued that he had been implicated by a former friend, not party to the proceedings, who was allegedly concerned in Child Sexual Exploitation.

**R v B 2015**

The Defendant was acquitted of rape and assault in the context of an allegedly volatile relationship.

**R v R 2015**

This case concerned a 16-count combination of historic rapes and sexual assaults upon siblings in a foster family setting. The abuse spanned at least 6 years and was of a particularly violent nature, demanding careful cross-examination of the Complainants. The Defendant was able to provide a wealth of contemporaneous evidence which led to the presentation of a very detailed case for the defence.

**R v A 2014**

The Defendant was acquitted of assault by penetration, alleged to have occurred during the course of a playground game. This case concerned several young eyewitnesses and a successful legal argument to exclude bad character evidence.

**R v M 2014**

Historic sexual assault of a male with cerebral palsy by his carer. The offence came to light when the Defendant made an unsolicited confession. The Defendant was seriously ill and extremely ashamed of his sexuality and so required very sensitive representation.

### **R v B 2013**

Defendant acquitted of all counts relating to an alleged 'stranger rape' in a town centre. The defence was consent and use of CCTV footage from the evening in question, served as unused material by the Crown, was a key factor in achieving a successful outcome.

### **R v T 2013**

This case concerned sexual activity in the presence of a child and possession of extreme pornography relating to the Defendant's activities as leader of a fetish club.

### **R v O 2012**

The Defendant was named as the alleged ringleader of a sustained 'gang rape'. The lengthy indictment included multiple counts of rape, s20 and sexual assault offences. This case required the successful utilisation of large amounts of unused material served on the first day of trial and relating to the Complainant's activities in the weeks after making the allegation. The Defendant argued consent and was acquitted. His co-Defendant received 14 years imprisonment.

## **Miscellaneous**

### **R v P 2014**

The Defendant, a member of the LGBTQ community, was acquitted of the alleged robbery of an autistic male. This case required particularly sensitive advocacy given the vulnerability of the Complainant and the Defendant's reluctance to put forward his defence because it required him to expose his sexuality.

### **R v W 2013**

A joint-enterprise robbery was alleged where CCTV footage appeared to show the Defendant searching the pockets of a man whom his co-Defendants had violently beaten. A powerful closing speech as to the limitations of CCTV evidence secured his acquittal.

### **R v G 2012**

Undercover police recorded the Defendant taking delivery of a package of cocaine with a street value of £160 000. The Defendant denied knowledge of the contents of the package although they bore his name and address. A powerful closing speech, highlighting the lacunae in the Crown's evidence and urging the jury to apply their personal experience to the facts, secured his acquittal.

## **Contact Details**

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Offices in Cardiff, Swansea, Pontypridd, Cheltenham, Darlington & London.  
Available to meet solicitors and clients at any convenient location.