



GARDEN COURT CHAMBERS

Helen Butcher

YEAR OF CALL: 1999



Helen combines intellect with forceful advocacy and makes an impressive Jury advocate. She has an exclusively criminal defence practice with particular expertise in challenging sexual offence cases. She is increasingly instructed in large-scale organised crime cases.

"Helen impresses with her intelligence, client skills and the way she gets to grips with complicated information and difficult questions."

CHAMBERS UK, 2024

"Very approachable, responsive and hard-working, she provides good direction when tackling the cases that come to her."

CHAMBERS UK, 2023

"Easily gets along with clients, and her knowledge of the law is undeniable."

"Tenacious and brave in her advocacy defending clients in court. Also meticulous in preparation of cases, identifying pertinent issues with efficiency and thoroughness."

LEGAL 500, 2021 (CRIME)

"An excellent cross-examiner and particularly skilled when dealing with sexual offences."

LEGAL 500, 2020

"An excellent cross-examiner and particularly skilled when dealing with sexual offences."

LEGAL 500, 2020

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CRIMINAL DEFENCE

Helen is a highly experienced criminal defence specialist, with particular expertise in challenging sexual offence cases. Her practice consists of serious sexual, violent, drugs and financial crime offences. She is increasingly instructed in substantial organised crime group allegations.

She has a flair for cases involving children, sexual allegations and vulnerable clients. She is often instructed in cases involving vulnerable clients, which call for extremely sensitive cross-examination, and in cases where key expert evidence requires robust challenge.

NOTABLE CASES

Past notable cases can be viewed below.

Murder and Serious Violence

R v DA, Croydon CC 2023

Allegation of murder and attempted murder, issue self defence.

R v X, Central Criminal Court 2023

Allegation of joint enterprise murder and violent disorder

R v ME, Central Criminal Court ongoing

Allegation of conspiracy to murder arising out of encro chat infiltration

R v X, Snaresbrook Crown Court 2023

Allegations of multiple instances of kidnap, false imprisonment and GBH arising out of gang tensions

R v SF, Southwark Crown Court 2021

Instructed in an allegation of violent disorder arising out BLM protests

R v AL, Maidstone Crown Court 2021

Allegation of s18 GBH inside prison, caught on CCTV. Issue ID.

R v H, Central Criminal Court 2021

Instructed as junior counsel for youth accused of murder, the background to which was said to be connected to rival gangs postcode war.

R v RW, Basildon Crown Court 2020/21

Client, unfit to plead, accused of GBH, firearms offences and possession with intent to supply. Finding of unfitness and trial of the facts.

R v JG, Maidstone Crown Court 2019/2020

Instructed as junior counsel in Murder midway through trial. Allegation that drug dealers based in London had travelled to Maidstone to attack victim after drugs had been stolen.

R v S, Reading Crown Court 2019

Junior in Murder trial where there was a background of domestic violence and extensive psychiatric issues.

R v C, Hove Crown Court 2015

Led Junior Instructed for Conspiracy to Murder trial, where the Prosecution alleged that the intended victim

was someone different from the actual victim of the shooting.

R v C, Chelmsford Crown Court 2015

Stabbing by a female partner with extensive background of domestic violence offences committed against her by complainant.

R v M, Blackfriars Crown Court 2015

Instructed to represent a man accused of being part of a conspiracy to rob jewellery shops in smash and grab raids committed on mopeds and involving weapons.

Organised Crime and drugs

R v X, Snaresbrook Crown Court

Allegation of involvement in cannabis factory resulting in industrial scale quantities

R v JI Snaresbrook Crown Court 2022

Allegation of lengthy conspiracy to supply substantial quantities of class A drugs

R v CJC, Leicester Crown Court 2018

Instructed for trial importation/supply conspiracy involving multi million pound importations and seizures and well practiced organised crime group. Main defendant, represented by QC and junior, ran cut throat defence against the client which was successfully rebutted. Reported in [Leicester Mercury](#).

R v A, Birmingham Crown Court 2015

Instructed to be lead Counsel in a conspiracy to supply drugs trial involving several organised crime networks operating nationally.

Terrorism

R v XX, Birmingham Crown Court 2017

Instructed for trial of two allegations of rarely prosecuted Terrorism Offences (54 Counter Terrorism Act 2008). The allegations spanned a number of years. Client acquitted of one allegation. Reported by BBC.

Sexual Offences

R v XX Snaresbrook Crown Court 2023

Allegation against a youth accused of rape, assault and non fatal strangulation

R v H Snaresbrook Crown Court 2021

Allegation against a female of grooming a young person

R v AS, Snaresbrook Crown Court 2021

Allegation of online grooming progressing to meeting and committing sexual offences against a young person.

R v EB, Guildford Crown Court 2021

Instructed to represent client extradited to face trial for historic sexual offending against young child relative.

R v FA, Snaresbrook Crown Court 2021

Instructed for trial of historic sexual offending where client now unfit due to cognitive decline.

R v CW, York Crown Court 2020/21

Instructed for trial of serious sexual offences, involving witnesses now based abroad and issues surrounding initial failure to conduct phone download.

R v AM, Snaresbrook Crown Court 2020

False imprisonment and sexual offences.

R v ND, Guildford Crown Court 2020

Allegation of late-night stranger gang rape against a woman too intoxicated to consent and left to be found semi-conscious on the street.

R v KC, Leicester Crown Court 2020

Allegations of Multiple domestic rapes over several years.

R v B, Gloucester Crown Court 2020

Allegations of serious sexual offending by a youth along with others against another young person.

R v DX, Kingston Crown Court 2018

Instructed to represent man accused of lying about his gender in order to engage in sexual activity with multiple complainants he met on line. The case was reported on in the Independent.

R v AC, Luton Crown Court 2018

Leading Counsel defending allegations of stranger rape and stalking.

R v IB, Nottingham Crown Court 2018

Instructed to represent a man accused of historic sexual offences against daughter and stepdaughter spanning two decades.

R v KT, Wood Green Crown Court 2017

Instructed for trial of a man charged with extensive historic sexual offences against child in care, client already serving substantial sentence for other historic sexual offending.

R v EO, Luton Crown Court 2017

Instructed for trial of psychiatric nurse accused of sexually assaulting a psychiatric in-patient. Extensive cross-examination of forensic expert.

R v DG, Birmingham Crown Court 2017

Instructed for trial of man alleged to have groomed a child he met online with the intent to commit sexual offences.

R v XX, Aylesbury Crown Court 2017

Instructed for trial of sexual assault against five-year-old allegation where client had Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder and complex needs.

R v F, Winchester Crown Court 2017

Instructed for trial of four allegations of rape against two complainants. Legal argument regarding the admissibility of parts of the Prosecution expert (bruising) evidence successful.

R v C, Winchester CC, 2017

Instructed to represent a convicted sex offender accused of multiple breaches of SOPO through encrypted use of a home-built computer, described by the Prosecution expert as the most complex he had seen in his career. Careful cross-examination of prosecution expert resulted in successful half time submission.

R v X, Lewes Crown Court 2015

Instructed for trial of man accused of raping a woman whom he had just met and was allegedly incapable of giving consent through intoxication.

R v X, Youth Court 2015

Instructed for trial of a 12-year-old accused of rape, when he was 10, of a six-year-old.

R v S, St Albans Crown Court 2014

Man accused caught Internet grooming a 14-year-old girl by a vigilante paedophile hunter who extensively publicised this on Facebook pre charge. Additional historic sexual offences came to light. Detailed written advice provided on the issues raised by the unusual manner in which these offences came to police attention. Detailed skeleton argument drafted re contested SOPO terms.

FINANCIAL CRIME AND CONFISCATION

Past notable cases can be viewed below.

R v DK Southwark Crown Court 2023

6 week trial involving allegation of fraudulent bank loan application as part of wider £1.25mill conspiracy.

R v SI Gloucester Crown Court 2022

Courier fraud targeting multiple elderly and vulnerable victims

R v EG Inner London Crown Court 2019

Fraud of multiple victims stemming from hacked data

R v RK Inner London Crown Court 2019

Charity commission offences and associated frauds.

R v D Southwark Crown Court

£1.3million pounds internet fraud and £70k cheque fraud. Representing the first defendant in a four-week long trial. Covered in [*The Evening Standard*](#).

R v G Harrow Crown Court

Conspiracy to Defraud and eight substantive counts of Fraud arising out of a sophisticatedly planned and executed lottery scam.

BACKGROUND

Before coming to the Bar Helen worked for the Howard League for Penal Reform. Helen qualified as a US Attorney in 2008. She volunteered with Human Rights Watch Refugee Policy Program in Washington, DC where she drafted submissions to the ECtHR and analysed the compatibility of domestic law with international law.

EDUCATION

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