



Catherine Osborne

YEAR OF CALL: 2011



Catherine Osborne specialises in criminal defence, inquests as well as associated public law challenges.

She defends in a wide range of criminal cases of a high level of complexity including terrorism, homicide, serious violence, serious drug supply, public disorder, protest, sexual offences and fraud. She also appears in the Court of Appeal on appeals against conviction and sentence as well as advising on references to the Criminal Cases Review Commission.

"Catherine is one of the best junior counsels in the country. She is academically brilliant, a true lawyer who actually loves the minutiae of the law and her capacity for work is unparalleled. She does all this with an engaging charm and always with a smile."

LEGAL 500, 2024

"She is very impressive. She knows the law like the back of her hand and is very compassionate and hardworking."

CHAMBERS UK, 2024

"Incredibly hard-working and very good on the law, she adopts a very sensible, straight approach to defending."

CHAMBERS UK, 2024

"Catherine is so meticulous and really good at judgement calls. She's really good for complicated, highly strategic cases."

CHAMBERS UK, 2024

"Catherine is one of the future stars of the criminal Bar. She has a fantastic legal mind and a great sense of judgement."

CHAMBERS UK, 2023

"An extraordinarily clever barrister who is built to become a silk. She takes on board really difficult issues and makes cases work for her."

CHAMBERS UK, 2022 (CRIME)

If you would like to get in touch with Catherine please contact the clerking team:

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You can also contact Catherine directly:

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CRIMINAL DEFENCE

Catherine defends in a wide range of high-profile criminal cases including:

serious violence

serious drug supply

public disorder

protest

fraud

As a led junior, she is regularly instructed in complex cases involving homicide, terrorism and offences against public justice. Recent significant cases have included complex legal issues involving anonymous witnesses, closed proceedings due to national security considerations, and witnesses from MI5 giving evidence.

NOTABLE CASES

PAST NOTABLE CASES CAN BE VIEWED BELOW. [CLICK HERE TO SEE A LIST OF RECENT NOTABLE CASES.](#)

TERRORISM

R v NP - Leicester CC- April 2022: Defendant charged with 20 counts contrary to s.57 and 58 Terrorism Act 2000. Pled guilty to 5 s.58 counts. Acquitted after trial of all five remaining s.58 counts and all ten s.57 counts.

R v RS – Birmingham CC – November 2021: Defendant charged with dissemination of terrorist publications.

R v AR – CCC– July 2021: Defendant charged with breach of terrorism notification requirements due to his job as a refuse collector.

R v QX – Leicester CC – March 2021: Defendant charged with breach of Temporary Exclusion Order.

R v LF – CCC– February 2021: Defendant charged with breach of TPIM.

R v MAI and another– CCC – June and December 2018 - Led by QC. Defendant was the associate of another who had plotted to attack the prime minister, Teresa May. Defendant accused of intending to travel to ISIS territory in Syria / Libya.

R v REH and another– CCC - October 2017-January 2018 - Led by QC. Defended a female defendant who was charged with plotting a terrorist attack with her co-defendant who she had met on an online dating website.

R v NA and others – CCC - February-August 2017 - Led by QC. Defending one of four defendants charged with plotting a terrorist attack in Birmingham. This case involved undercover officers and significant national security considerations.

R v MA – CCC– April 2016. Led by QC. Represented defendant charged with the dissemination of material supportive of terrorist activities.

HOMICIDE

R v BB – CCC– April-July 2021 - Led by QC. Defendant charged with double murder relating to an alleged Albanian drug feud.

R v AC – CCC– January-February 2020 - Led by QC. Defendant of good character charged with murder following a stabbing in St John's Wood. The Crown accepted that the Defendant did not get out of the car. Acquitted of murder and manslaughter.

R v AM – CCC – November 2019 - Led by QC. Defendant charged with murder of 14-year-old boy in Leyton.

R v AL – CCC– September-October 2019 - Led by QC. Defended a young man charged with double murder arising from a gang-related stabbing in Leytonstone. The Defendant had left the country shortly after the murders and remained away for five years. During this time, four of his friends/associates were convicted of the double murder. On his return, he denied presence at the scene of the murder. Acquitted.

R v IM – CCC– March-May 2019 - Led by QC. Defended a young male involved in group violence in a London park which resulted in the death of one man and the serious injury of another. Acquitted of manslaughter and convicted of violent disorder.

R v PR – CCC - February-March 2019 - Led by QC. Defended a 73-year-old woman charged with murder. She killed her husband following 36 years of abuse. First case of its kind following the Sally Challen judgment on coercive and controlling behaviour. Successfully argued the relevance of the deceased's coercive and controlling behaviour to the jury's considerations. Acquitted of murder. Pleaded guilty to manslaughter.

R v CE – CCC– June 2016 – Led by QC. Defendant was a Hackney drug dealer who had shot and killed the Deceased in an alleged dispute over a mobile telephone drugs line. The evidence demonstrated that the Defendant's life was under threat from the Deceased. Defendant was found not guilty of murder and convicted of manslaughter and possession of a firearm with intent to endanger life.

R v C – CCC – March 2016: Led by QC. Instructed to defend a 17-year-old boy charged with murder. This incident arose from a stabbing in a park in Islington. C accepted driving the stabber to the scene and knowing that he had the knife with him. This was one of the first joint enterprise cases following the Supreme Court judgment of Jogee. C was found not guilty of murder and manslaughter.

R v RC – CCC– December 2014: Led by QC. Instructed to defend a man charged with murder resulting from a fight in an alley in Brixton. Defendant found not guilty of murder, guilty of manslaughter.

SERIOUS VIOLENCE

R v TR – Inner London CC– December 2021: Female defendant charged with kidnap and robbery. Successfully argued that the defendant's experience of domestic abuse was relevant to the jury's assessment of the subjective limb of duress. Acquitted.

R v PT – Snaresbrook CC – January 2021: Young defendant of good character charged with possession of firearms and ammunition after having been stopped by police with a bag containing a loaded firearm. Acquitted.

R v AB – Oxford CC– May and September 2018: Defended a vulnerable former homeless man charged with attacking another vulnerable former homeless man in his supported accommodation block along with another defendant. Cut-throat defence. Acquitted of s.18. Co-Defendant convicted of s.18. Convicted of s.20 following a retrial.

R v ST – Blackfriars CC – February 2016 – Defended male charged with street robbery of female acquaintance. Defence was that this was a dispute about money, not a robbery. Defendant acquitted.

R v TH – Woolwich CC – July 2015: Instructed to defend a carer of good character charged with assaulting her co-worker with a knife. Her defence was self-defence. During the trial, a juror overheard one of the witnesses discussing her evidence over the phone. The jury was discharged and at the fresh trial, called the juror as a witness for the defence. The defendant was found not guilty.

R v CD – Woolwich CC– January 2014: Defended 14-year-old boy of good character charged with knifepoint robbery. Defendant acquitted.

DRUG SUPPLY

R v MW – Winchester CC – February 2022: County Lines drugs operation.

R v WF – Sheffield CC– May 2015: Led by QC. Instructed to defend a man accused of possession of 1kg heroin and five firearms found by police in an allotment. The defendant alleged possible plant by South Yorkshire Police possibly involving a criminal gang in that area. The Crown adjourned the trial and discharged the jury mid-way through the case in order to investigate. The Crown offered no evidence against the defendant in February 2016.

R v FT – Chelmsford CC– February 2015: Represented man charged with 49kg cocaine importation. Following guilty plea and mitigation, achieved sentence of 10 years and four months.

R v DG and others – Exeter CC– January 2015: Instructed to defend second on an indictment of seven charged with a drug supply operation from London to Devon. The case revolved around telephone evidence. Following legal arguments raised regarding the use of that telephone material during the course of the evidence, the Crown offered no evidence against all defendants in the second week of the trial.

OFFENCES AGAINST PUBLIC JUSTICE

R v PJ – Basildon CC – March 2022: Defendant convicted of murder in 2008. Defence at the time was that he was responsible for the shooting but it was an accident. Defendant charged with perverting the course of justice by subsequently claiming to the Court of Appeal that he was not present at the scene of the murder.

R v PB – Croydon CC– January 2019: Defendant charged with conspiracy to evade immigration control. Defence was that he thought he was bringing relative into the UK legally. Acquitted.

R v Bhadresh Gohil – Southwark CC– January 2016: Led by QC. Instructed to defend a man accused of perverting the course of public justice by making allegations of police corruption to the press. The defence in this case was that allegations of police corruption were, in fact, true. Following service of an abuse of process argument and repeated requests for disclosure and review, the Crown offered no evidence on 21 January 2016.

R v TA – Canterbury CC – June 2015: Instructed to defend a teacher charged with breaching the Data Protection Act by seeking to blow the whistle regarding concerns about the safeguarding of children at a school in which she worked. Following legal submissions, the Crown offered no evidence.

R v AN – Hammersmith Magistrates’ Court– June 2015: Instructed to defend a refugee charged with criminal damage to the Iranian embassy. The Crown could not provide the required evidence to prove

identification and yet still proceeded to trial. The Magistrates refused a submission of no case to answer and convicted the defendant. Following an application to state the case to the High Court, the Magistrates subsequently accepted that their conviction had been unsafe and reopened the conviction under s.142 Magistrates' Court Act 1980. The Crown then offered no evidence and the defendant was found not guilty.

FRAUD

R v SB – Leeds CC – May 2018: Defendant charged with conspiracy to defraud and other associated offences. Major police operation in relation to individuals posing as police officers and seeking to defraud elderly people of their savings. Crown offered no evidence against Defendant.

R v SN – Southwark CC – April 2016: Led. Defendant charged with fraud in relation to false claims for employment support being made on behalf of ex-army servicemen and women. Acquitted following legal argument.

R v SN – Oxford CC – September 2016: Defendant charged with benefit fraud over a period of many years. Acquitted.

SEXUAL OFFENCES

R v SA – Chelmsford CC – July 2019: Represented defendant charged with possession of indecent images of children following a Schedule 7 airport stop. Following service of expert report and skeleton argument, Crown offered no evidence.

R v AB – Cardiff CC – February 2018: Represented defendant charged with indecent images offences. Following service of defence expert report on analysis of computer, Crown offered no evidence.

R v TV – Blackfriars CC – January 2018 – Represented defendant charged with sexual assault of a trainee police officer on a bus. Acquitted.

R v KJ – Croydon CC – February 2017: Represented a young defendant charged with sexual assault. The Crown wished to rely on a previous sexual assault conviction from the Magistrates' Court. Having analysed the CCTV footage of the incident, it did not support the complainant's account and applied for appeal to the Crown Court out of time. Appeal was heard and a submission of no case to answer was upheld. The Crown offered no evidence in relation to the other allegation due to disclosure review requested by the defence which

undermined the complainant and eyewitness' credibility in relation to their accounts of the incident.

PUBLIC ORDER

Insulate Britain: NHL v Buse and others [2021] EWHC 3404. Represented Insulate Britain activist charged with contempt of court for breaching High Court injunction.

R v KHA – Harrow CC– October 2016: Defended man charged with racially aggravated public order offence and common assault. Defendant acquitted at close of prosecution case of the racially aggravated offence and acquitted of common assault by the jury at the close of the case.

R v AW – Brighton Magistrates' Court– July 2015: Instructed to defend a young man with Asperger's Syndrome charged with a racially aggravated public order offence. A submission of no case to answer was successful regarding the racially aggravated element of the offence. The defendant was acquitted at the close of all the evidence of the public order offence.

R v DJ and others – Westminster Magistrates' Court – April 2014: Instructed to defend a member of the Anti-Fascist Movement charged with public order offences arising from a demonstration. Defendant acquitted.

R v KB – Stratford MC – November 2013: Successful abuse of process argument to stay proceedings in the Magistrates Court on the basis of the Crown's repeated failures to comply with Court orders for the service of CCTV evidence which could have potentially exonerated the defendant.

CRIMINAL APPEALS

Catherine appears in the Court of Appeal on appeals against conviction and sentence as well as advising on references to the Criminal Cases Review Commission.

NOTABLE CASES

R v Gould [2021] EWCA 447: Guideline Court of Appeal authority on the use of s.66 Courts Act 2003.

R v Gohil [2018] 1 WLR 3697 – Application to reopen an appeal against conviction on the basis of prosecution misconduct. Appeal defined the scope of the jurisdiction of the Court to reopen applications for leave which have been previously determined. Led by QC.

R v Asiedu [2015] EWCA Crim 714 – Appeal against conviction for terrorism offence which defined the scope of the abuse of process jurisdiction. Application for leave dismissed. Led by QC.

R v HJ – **August 2013**- Successful appeal against a burglary conviction to the Court of Appeal based on the wrongful approach to expert evidence at trial.

INQUESTS AND INQUIRIES

Catherine represents bereaved families at inquests, particularly those involving deaths in custody and those with mental health issues.

NOTABLE CASES

Past notable cases can be viewed below. [Click here to see a list of recent notable cases.](#)

Inquest touching on the death of IG: Liverpool Coroner’s Court: April 2022: Inquest arising from death in custody. Mr Galtress was found hanging in his cell. Jury found that an ACCT document should have been opened and that there had been a failure of information sharing.

Inquest touching on the death of LB: Peterborough Coroner’s Court: March 2022: Inquest arising from a death in custody which was not self inflicted. Complex issues of cause of death involving the impact of alcohol withdrawal.

Inquest touching on the death of JH: Crawley Coroner’s Court: October 2020: Inquest following a self inflicted death after a recent voluntary inpatient admission to mental health hospital. Article 2 engaged. Coroner returned a critical narrative conclusion.

Inquest touching on the death of baby Lucia Stear: Liverpool Coroners Court: September 2019: Inquest arising out of the tragic death of a baby. The mother was pregnant and driving along a road on the Wirral. A tree branch fell into the road and fell directly onto her car impacting her abdomen. Tragically the baby died shortly after she was born due to the injuries sustained. Highly critical findings made by the jury in relation to the Council’s tree management system which had not inspected the trees in that area for at least 13 years.

Inquest touching on the death of JS: Aberdare Coroners Court: October 2017: Represented family of JS who died in HMP Parc. JS was under observation at the time of his death due to concerns about his mental health. However, the officer in charge inaccurately recorded that he was completing a jigsaw puzzle

when in fact he was not visible on CCTV in his cell. He was found dead in his cell later that night. Jury returned a critical narrative conclusion.

Inquest touching on the death of SR: Ipswich Coroners Court: July 2016: Represented the family of SR who died after self-harm in HMP Blundeston. Jury returned critical narrative conclusion recording neglect of SR by the prison in failing to care for him adequately after he had self-harmed by cutting himself and bleeding profusely.

Inquest touching on the death of LM: Liverpool Coroners' Court – July 2015: Instructed to represent the family of LM, who died at HMP Liverpool by hanging. Jury found that his death had been contributed to by the fact that the prison had miscalculated his sentence date, informing him that he had far longer to serve in prison than he actually had. Coroner made Regulation 28 Preventing Future Deaths Report on the issue of prison sentence calculation and first aid.

Inquest touching on the death of Eleanor De Freitas: West London Coroners' Court – March 2015: Instructed to represent the De Freitas family with Leslie Thomas QC in relation to the death of their daughter, Eleanor de Freitas, who died shortly before her trial for perverting the course of justice, based upon a rape allegation which she had made. Represented the family in judicial review proceedings seeking to explore the role of the CPS prosecution in the events leading to Ms de Freitas' death.

Inquest touching on the death of CA: Southwark Coroners' Court – September 2014: Instructed to represent the family of CA who died after having been discharged from psychiatric hospital. Discharged into the community without any adequate treatment or management for his diabetes. Successfully argued the engagement of Article 2 and achieved a neglect conclusion. Regulation 28 Prevention of Future Deaths Report made into the role of the care coordinator when looking after vulnerable adults leaving psychiatric hospital.

BACKGROUND

Taught criminal law to undergraduate level from 2010-2011.

Volunteered at the Cambridge House Law Centre in a disadvantaged area of Camberwell, assisting with advice in housing and employment law. Has also volunteered for a number of legal charities, including Liberty, where worked as a legal advice and information volunteer and Reprieve, where volunteered as a researcher.

Throughout university between 2006 and 2008, worked for the Sutton Trust, running summer schools to encourage young people from disadvantaged backgrounds to apply to higher education. In 2009, worked as a

PA for the Ministry of Justice in a team developed to set up and support a panel to advise the Lord Chancellor on judicial diversity.

PUBLICATIONS

Catherine assisted with the writing and editing of *The Struggle Continues*, a book about the history of human rights and political freedom in Zimbabwe over the last 60 years by David Coltart, a prominent human rights lawyer there.

TRAINING AND SEMINARS

Catherine taught criminal law to undergraduate level at City University from 2010-2011.

AWARDS

Catherine has won a number of scholarships and prizes:

Pegasus Scholar, Inner Temple (2015)

Major Scholar, Inner Temple (2010)

Princess Royal Scholar, Inner Temple (2009)

Inner Temple Internship Award (2011)

Inner Temple Wig and Gown Prize (2011)

Purvis Scholarship, Corpus Christi College, Cambridge (2006 and 2008)

INTERNATIONAL WORK

September–November 2015: Worked in Zimbabwe as a Pegasus Scholar for the Inner Temple in 2015. In that time assisted with the writing and editing of *The Struggle Continues*, a book about the history of human rights and political freedom in Zimbabwe over the last 60 years by David Coltart, a prominent human rights lawyer and opposition party MDC politician.

March 2013: Conducted trial observation in the UAE.

EDUCATION

MA, Theology and Religious Studies, Cambridge University - Double First

GDL, City University - Distinction

BPTC, City University - Outstanding

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIP

Criminal Bar Association (CBA)

INQUEST

Liberty

Bar Human Rights Committee

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