



# Laura Brickman

1976

Laura is viewed as a successful 'leading junior' barrister by many solicitors for whom she has been their counsel of first choice.

First and foremost, a defence barrister with over 30 years experience, she possesses a calm and assertive manner making her an engaging and most effective barrister. She has the ability to grasp complex issues in a short space of time, and is both very hard-working, and down-to-earth.

As a leading junior, and led junior, she has extensive jury experience in areas of criminal law, ranging from clients facing murder trials, fraud allegations, large scale drug offences and allegations of the most serious sexual abuse.

She has developed particular experience in the cross-examination of expert witnesses, including forensic computer examiners, hand-writing experts, and forensic medical examiners. She also has great experience in the cross-examination of child and learning-disabled witnesses.

For many years, has represented defendants with learning disabilities and was responsible, in part, for changing the law which now grants special measures to defendants (See R v H 2003 below).

Laura has years of experience in appellant work and greatly enjoys this challenge.

Her more general practice includes murder, attempted murder, historic sexual abuse, rape, advanced fee fraud, money laundering, and drug trafficking.

She is also qualified to be instructed under the Direct Access scheme

**"An incredibly hardworking leading junior"**

## General Crime

R v Shartou & others. Wood Green Crown Court 2013: Defending. Large scale class A drugs conspiracy. Leading Junior representing female defendant suffering from Bi Polar Syndrome, whose flat was used by her boyfriend and his friend to produce large quantities of crack cocaine. Considerable observation, telephone and cell site evidence.

R v Helasz & another. Harrow Crown Court 2013: Defending. Hungarian ex-police officer, human trafficking eastern European women into brothels in London and Cardiff. Defence: The women were not 'nurses' as they claimed, but prostitutes, coming to the UK to work in his brothels. Acquitted of trafficking but convicted of controlling prostitution.

R v Brahimi & others. Central Criminal Court 2014: Multi million pound class A drugs conspiracy and money laundering involving Albanian nationals. Representing defendant, privately funded. Very large amount of cell site/telephone evidence and evidence of financial transfers to consider.

R v Ross & others. Inner London Crown Court 2014: Defending Large scale cannabis farming by highly respectable family in South East England. On-going.

R v Aikhomou & another. Woolwich Crown Court 2014: Defending Human trafficking of young Nigerian girls, from Nigeria to South London Brothels by African hairdresser (A) and her accomplice, the brothel owner.

R v Cordero & another. Inner London Crown Court 2010: Defending Computer engineer tried for making and possession of over 4,000 indecent images and films on his computers.

Defence: Forensic computer examiners wrong. D's system overtaken by foreign computer virus akin to stuxnet. Cross-examination of forensic experts.

R v Widdowson & others. Sheffield Crown Court 2009: Armed robbery. Lorry hijacking, representing sole female D, a care worker who was acquitted.

R v Piggins & others. Central Criminal Court 2006: Leading counsel in trial involving the largest, and most serious, case of racial hatred ever tried in England. D, was the editor of the resurrected 'Der Stormer' Nazi magazine, published initially in the 1940's in Germany. The magazine included articles about bomb-making. Klu Klux Klan dolls, and Nazi memorabilia were on display at her home, together with photos of her performing Nazi salutes.

## **Homicide and Serious Violence**

R v Panesar & others. Isleworth Crown Court 2013: Representing 17 year old boy in 6 week grievous bodily harm/violent disorder trial involving a serious incident in Southall where two Asian victims were violently attacked by a gang of 5 younger Asian boys. Extensive CCTV films to consider, identification issues and admissibility of interviews.

R v O' Donnell. Central Criminal Court 2011: Attempted murder of homeowner by D, his guest, who had a string of convictions for violence. Acquitted. Subsequent letter from D to solicitors included this passage – "Please contact Laura, my barrister at trial. Thank her for all the effort, which paid off – she was put in at short notice". Brief returned two working days before trial.

R v Menzies. Sheffield Crown Court 2009: Representing 16 year old boy in revenge attack murder of fellow gang member.

R v Quinn & others. Liverpool Crown Court 2008: Defending. Leading junior for Boy Q. The case involved

the murder of Rhys Jones and generated nationwide publicity. Q was 16 at the time of offences, and at the time of trial was serving 5 years detention in a Y.O.I. for firearms offences. Succeeded in not having the conviction admitted as bad character evidence. On conviction, he received a lenient sentence, which generated further publicity.

R v Chaffe & another. Southwark Crown Court 2006: Leading Junior in a murder case, representing a rape victim, aged 19, who killed a drug dealer. She had previous convictions for GBH and drugs offences and had been in care.

## **Sexual Offences**

R v Barrows. Wood Green 2014: Defending multiple rapes of a child from age 5-12. Police investigation when child aged 6, did not proceed to charge. Lengthy abuse of process argument concerning the investigation.

R v Bees. St Albans Crown Court 2011: Defending Rapes of learning-disabled daughter by father, who is an amputee (one leg) and also learning disabled. On-going.

R v Hopkinson. Sheffield Crown Court 2003: Leading Junior for severely learning disabled D, charged with rape and indecent assault on two different learning disabled women. Acquitted of rape.

R v Britton, Southwark Crown Court 2014: Prosecuting Rape of 3 year old child by babysitter paedophile defendant, who recorded the incident together with dress rehearsals of himself. Practising sexual abuse on a doll. Sentenced to Life imprisonment. Reported in the Evening Standards, BBC News and ITV.

She is Grade 3 prosecutor for the CPS and Rape list approved

## **Fraud and Financial Crime**

R v Wierschzon & others. Blackfriars Crown Court 2014: Defending Large scale conspiracy to defraud the London Rail Network. In excess of 4 million pounds worth of counterfeit rail tickets produced and sold over a three year period, by a group of Eastern European nationals who obtained a genuine printing machine owned by the Rail Network and devised the machine software, to produce the tickets, which were sold on all over London. Expert evidence, observation evidence, telephone and cell site evidence to consider. Ongoing.

R v Abuesole & another. Woolwich Crown Court 2013: Defending. Multi million pound money laundering case, involving the setting up of Western Union offices, in South London, which became a safe haven for money launderers to send monies to Africa. D, was the proprietor. Her defence to lack of knowledge, due to absence, was ultimately accepted, however she was convicted of a statutory offence, resulting in a non-custodial sentence.

R v Siddiqui & others. Sheffield Crown Court 2014: Defending. Large scale immigration fraud, involving sham marriages, bridegrooms from abroad and large quantities of forged or false documents, designed to enable foreign men to gain the right to reside in the UK. D, a businessman, accused of facilitating sham

marriages. On-going.

R v Ogunyemi & others. Woolwich Crown Court 2011: Defending Substantial Advance fee fraud trial.

R v Arnold. Kingston Crown Court 2009: Defending Represented the female manager of the Queens musical composer, Sir Peter Maxwell-Davis. Over a period of years, she allegedly stole £400,000 of his earnings. Acquitted. Reported in the national press.

R v Winter & others. Sheffield Crown Court 2007: Defending in £6 million money laundering case.

## **Appeals and CCRC**

R v Whyte. Court of Appeal 2009: Not trial-counsel, but instructed as leading Junior for the appeal against conviction, against prosecution QC and two Juniors. Successful appeal against W's conviction for murder, in Operation Trident, 'super-grass' witness case.

R v H. Court of Appeal 2003: Severely learning disabled man (H) charged with rape and indecent assault on two learning disabled women. While special measures were available to them as prosecution witnesses, the law specifically prohibited those measures for a defendant, who thus could not have a fair trial. This case 'opened the door' for learning disabled defendants in English courts. Alternative means, to achieving best evidence for a defendant, was provided by the court, using its residuary powers. Reported in The Times newspaper. The law has since changed to enable Defendants to have this assistance.

## **International Work**

Counsel currently instructed by solicitors to the Antiguan Government.