

Kitty Colley

Call to Bar: 1992



“An advocate of great skill and substantial experience with highly developed inter-personal skills and a deep and detailed knowledge of applicable law.” – Retired circuit judge

“A highly skilled practitioner, able to communicate complex and highly sensitive issues to a jury and court alike with consummate ease”– Senior Circuit Judge

Kitty Colley specialises in all areas of serious crime. She is renowned for her expertise in the most serious offences including Murder & Manslaughter, Fraud & Money Laundering and Drug Conspiracies and is widely considered as being one of the leading regional practitioners in Sexual Offences. She is a highly skilled trial advocate of significant experience having been in practice since being called to the Bar in 1992.

Kitty is a consummate professional and has a thorough, analytical and adaptable approach. She is particularly skilled in the handling of young and vulnerable witnesses and defendants, including those with mental disability and incapacity. She is highly personable, putting clients from all backgrounds at ease, and has an established reputation as being a tenacious advocate.

Kitty offers a top-class service to private clients in the full spectrum of criminal offences and in cases before tribunals.

In addition to criminal law, Kitty also has a keen interest in coronial law and, having dealt with many professionals in criminal proceedings throughout her career, professional disciplinary law.

Kitty is an extremely popular and active member of the profession who has attracted wide judicial endorsement and been heavily involved in the training and development of her colleagues at the bar. In addition to being involved in numerous circuit educational programmes, Kitty has held the position of Senior Lecturer in Criminal Litigation & Advocacy on the BVC (BPP Law School), she is IATC trained and Hempel method trained and has been an external advocacy assessor and trainer for the CPS since 2008.

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Practice areas:

Criminal Law

Kitty was Guest Speaker at Middle Temple Scholars Day in 2018 and 2019 and Lead Trainer for the Questioning of Vulnerable Witnesses training program with the Inns of Court College of Advocacy.

Kitty also acts as a mentor to Leeds University Law Students.

Murder & Manslaughter

Kitty has experience as both leading and junior counsel in murder, manslaughter, child cruelty cases (where death occurred) and death by dangerous driving. Since 2019, she has been instructed by both prosecution and defence in several homicide cases.

Recent Cases of interest include:

R v D: Murder-successful prosecution, upheld on appeal- man who was stabbed through the heart in the street. Leading junior.

Operation Palenville: Murder - prosecution junior counsel

Operation Parking Mike: -Murder- prosecution junior counsel - 7 defendants- Sheffield CC.

R v B: Murder: defence- Domestic violence/Loss of Control by daughter.

R v T: Murder: defence- vulnerable victim in relationship with D.

R v P: Murder- prosecution- Asian community-victim killed by husband in family home.

R v C : Defence- Multiple violent and sexual offences upon a 3 year old boy, involving complex medical evidence.

Private Client

Kitty regularly receives instructions from private clients accused of a range of criminal offences, however, as a result of her recognised leading status in serious or historic sexual offences this is an area in which she is in particularly high demand. She regularly succeeds in securing not guilty verdicts for clients facing allegations of rape and sexual abuse.

Cases of interest include:

R v C – Not Guilty: Successful defence of (former) premiership footballer, charged with rape. Unanimous Not Guilty verdict after a 9 day trial. Jury deliberated for 45 minutes.

R v B – Non-recent rapes and sexual abuse of step-daughter: not guilty.

R v D – Non-recent sexual assault of child by a businessman of good character; not guilty.

R v G - Private historic sexual abuse case in Haredi Jewish Community, Manchester

R v X - Sexual Abuse: Doctor of Chinese Medicine- private client defence

R v S - Ex-husband of serving specialist police officer accused of rape of friend - acquitted.

Fraud & Money Laundering & POCA

Cases of interest include:

R v L – Mortgage fraud of £1m, with others; plea and community sentence- defence

R v AH and other: Prosecution-contested POCA £4m benefit from Class A drug supply conspiracy

R v TJ and Others – Controlling prostitution for gain and money laundering- prosecution.

R v T - Charity Fraud – 6 week trial- multi-defendants- defence

Drug Conspiracies

Cases of interest include:

R v FL and others: Drugs- prosecution/complex case conspiracy to import and supply cocaine/POCA.

R v W and others: Drugs conspiracy/complex case/ conspiracy to supply heroin and production of cannabis.

Sexual Offences

“Recommended for cases involving either recent or historic sexual offences.” – The Legal 500 (2021 and 2022)

Over the past 15 years, Kitty has become one of the most highly rated specialists in cases involving rape and other serious sexual offences. She has both prosecuted and defended the most serious cases. Instructions include cases of stranger and familial rape (including at gunpoint or involving extreme violence), as well as recent and non-recent complaints and those of the utmost complexity, sensitivity or public interest. She is very experienced with multi-count indictments, multiple complainant and multiple

Child Sex Exploitation

Child Sex Exploitation Kitty has been instructed by the defence in all CSE operations across Yorkshire since 2015. She was appointed as lead defence advocate in the Rotherham exploitation trial in September 2016. Kitty is highly experienced in multi-handed sexual offences cases and has a sensitive understanding of the particular dynamics involved. Vulnerable witnesses Kitty has extensive expertise in questioning and dealing with the most vulnerable witnesses and defendants, including those with severe communication difficulties and mental-health issues. In one case, she dealt with an autistic complainant who could only communicate through drawing. She has extensive experience of pre-recorded cross examination of vulnerable witness since the Section 28 pilot scheme launched in 2016.

Cases of interest include:

CSE-defence- Operations Kellera Abbey, Polymor, Tendersea, Hazelshot, Tournway and Tapeton.

R v S: defence-Knife point stranger rape of school-girl in a graveyard/defendant with personality disorder.

R v P: defence- rape and robbery of elderly lady in her home. R v JH: defence-16 yr old boy accused of multiple rapes of girlfriend.

R v JG: prosecution- gunpoint kidnap of stranger and sexual assault.

R v W: prosecution: Foster carers charged with sexual abuse of 3 vulnerable children in their care.

R v W: prosecution- rape of a female police officer

R v D: prosecution- familial historic sexual abuse over 4 decades involving 3 generations, including foster children.

R v M and D: prosecution- paedophile ring with 10 victims involving internet grooming and pornography.

R v D: prosecution-Rape by a police officer of a vulnerable woman whilst on duty.

R v C: prosecution-Rape and burglary of an elderly lady.

R v C & S: prosecution of internet grooming to abuse young children/undercover operation.

Reported cases

R v JOC: [Crime – sexual offences] – Non-recent complaint. Rape. Appeal point on presumption of incapacity/doli-incopax.

R v Perkins: [Crime – sexual offences] – Status of victim personal statements.

R v Lomax: [Crime-historic rape] Section 41 application

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