

Brenda Campbell KC

Call to Bar: 2002

Silk Year: 2018



Brenda is a leading KC in criminal law and Inquests. She has a high-profile, cross jurisdictional practice, appearing in courtrooms in England & Wales and in Ireland, north and south.

Brenda is regularly instructed to defend in the most serious of criminal allegations including murder, terrorism and international fraud. She is, in addition, a highly respected Inquest & Public Inquiries silk, representing families in Article 2 inquests, including historic or legacy Inquests & police shootings, and in ongoing Public Inquiries.

"Brenda takes command of any courtroom. She is skilled at explaining complex issues to vulnerable clients in a straightforward and accessible way." Legal 500, 2026 - Tier 1 - Crime (General & Fraud)

"She is an excellent trial advocate and among the best cross-examiners." Chambers UK 2025 - Crime

"Brenda is one of the best barristers at the Bar. She gets to grips with very difficult and voluminous cases with apparent ease and is masterfully elegant. She is a real fighter and a fantastic orator and foremost, a great lawyer with a huge amount of commitment." Legal 500 2024 – Crime

"Her command of the evidence, her cross-examination and her closing speech were all out of the top drawer." Chambers UK, 2024 - Crime.

"Brenda is an all-rounder. She is a master strategist and a very powerful and clever advocate." Chambers UK, 2024 - Inquests & Inquiries.

"She is a particularly good cross-examiner: she is an expert at trapping witnesses and taking apart those who give less than perfect evidence. She also really connects with jurors." Chambers UK, 2023.

"Her cross-examination in cut-throat defences are a masterclass." Chambers UK, 2022 - Crime.

"Brenda's strengths would be cross-examination and attention to fine detail and her preparedness for trial knowing all aspects of her case extremely well, preparing for the unforeseeable." Legal 500 2022 - Crime

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Practice areas:

Criminal Law

Inquests & Inquiries

International Human Rights

Professional appointments:

Criminal Bar Association

Inquest Lawyer's Group

South Eastern Circuit

Bar Human Rights Committee

CRIMINAL DEFENCE

Brenda is regularly instructed in high profile and complex criminal cases or to act on behalf of vulnerable defendants. She ensures a consistently high standard of representation, working closely with Instructing solicitors, junior counsel and clients, always leading the team to achieve the best outcome.

NOTABLE CASES

Murder

R v DSP, Loughborough CC (2023) Multi-handed trial. Representing a teenage defendant with significant learning disabilities and complex mental health issues. Allegation of murder arising out of a conspiracy to rob a cannabis farm. Acquitted of murder, sentenced to six years imprisonment for manslaughter.

R v B, Central Criminal Court (2023) Appointed by the Court to represent a mother with serious and long-standing mental ill-health who was accused of the murder of her four-year-old son. Defendant was unfit to plead.

R v L, Belfast Crown Court (2023) Ongoing 'Diplock' trial on allegations of double murder following successful extradition of the defendant.

R v BAZ, Bristol Crown Court Representing a teenage girl accused of murdering her mother's boyfriend. Highly complex background of trauma, abuse and vulnerability complicated by a significant learning disability. Prosecution accepted a plea to manslaughter on the grounds of diminished responsibility after the commencement of the trial. Successfully resisted an AG Ref on sentence (R v BAZ [2022] EWCA Crim 940).

R v TZ, Birmingham Crown Court Representing defendant in high profile allegation of a sophisticated and professionally organized murder by shooting. The case was reported here.

R v LK, Central Criminal Court, (2020) An allegation of murder by shooting. The defendant shot at the deceased 6 times, hitting him with at least 5 shots. It was the prosecution case that the killing was an act of revenge, the defendant having discovered that the deceased, who was his friend, was having an affair with the defendant's former partner. The defendant was acquitted of murder. The case was reported here.

R v RWR, Central Criminal Court (2019) The defendant, an 18 year old man with autism, was accused of a joint enterprise stabbing. He was tried alongside 2 other teenage defendants. It was the prosecution case that the defendant had lured the deceased to a park and thereafter participated in a joint attack with knives, including a Rambo knife and machete. The defendant was acquitted of murder. The case was reported here.

R v CF, Central Criminal Court (2019) The allegation of joint enterprise murder arose out of an arson attack on a residential home in the middle of the night. The defendant was the driver of a motorbike that had transported the arsonist to the scene, waited for him and then sped him away. He was the second of six defendants in this long running trial. He was acquitted of both murder and manslaughter. The case was reported here.

Previous Cases

R v Bell, Central Criminal Court (2016) Allegation of murder by driving at the deceased. It was suggested that the defendant acted in revenge immediately following an attack by the deceased on another individual. Following the collision the defendant fled the scene & the associated damage to the vehicle was repaired. Defendant was acquitted of murder and convicted of manslaughter. The case was reported here.

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R v Seamus Daly, Omagh Magistrates Court (2016) Seamus Daly was accused of 29 murders and offences relating to the 1998 Omagh Bomb. He had already been found liable, on the same evidence, in the civil courts. The case was listed for an old style committal. Following her cross-examination of a key witness, the prosecution sought an immediate adjournment to review, and ultimately withdraw, all charges. The case was widely reported in the global media including [here](#), [here](#) and [here](#).

R v Nathaniel & others, Central Criminal Court Murder, conspiracy to commit GBH. Represented the first defendant in this 10-handed trial. Mr Nathaniel was a high-profile sports and celebrity agent, alleged to have planned a revenge attack upon young people who had robbed his business partner. The complex and lengthy trial, which was advanced on a joint enterprise basis against all defendants, ended in the acquittal of all but the stabber. This case was reported by the BBC.

R v SS & others, Central Criminal Court Double murder and attempted murder. The case was built upon the identification of one of the accused (the identical twin of another accused) by the surviving victim of this triple shooting, together with cell site evidence and a revenge motive. Following a successful legal argument, the identification evidence was excluded by Fulford J. The ruling amounted to a terminating ruling against all four defendants. It was appealed by the Crown to the Court of Appeal who in turn upheld the High Court Judge's ruling. All charges were the subject of formal not guilty verdicts.

R v Harrison & others, Central Criminal Court Murder. Three defendants, all teenagers, accused of joint enterprise stabbing in a stairwell in Battersea in the course of an apparent cannabis transaction. Omar Harrison, the second defendant, was inside the stairwell while the stabbing occurred and had blood from the victim on his clothing. Following a trial involving cutthroat defences, the first and third defendants were convicted of murder while Mr Harrison was acquitted of murder and convicted of manslaughter. This case was reported by the BBC.

R v AC & others, Central Criminal Court Murder. The defendant faced a second trial on an allegation of murder, the jury having been discharged in his initial trial following a successful severance argument. It was alleged that the defendant was involved in the execution of the deceased, Larry Malone, and moments later had passed the murder weapon (a Mac 10 machine gun) on to another defendant for safe-keeping. The Crown's case relied on telephone evidence, knowledge of the victim and association with the movement of the murder weapon. The defendant was acquitted of murder and convicted of possession of a prohibited weapon and ammunition. This case was reported by the Daily Mail.

R v McPherson & another, Central Criminal Court Murder / attempted murder. Defendant accused of shooting his co-defendant (Nankani) immediately after Nankani had fatally driven at the defendant's friend outside the Ministry of Sound nightclub.

R v Lee & another, Central Criminal Court Murder. Defendant was the passenger in a car that reversed over and killed a pedestrian following an argument. Defendant acquitted. Co-defendant, the driver, was convicted on re-trial.

R v C & others, Central Criminal Court Represented one of seven defendants accused of murder and attempted murder following a shooting at Streatham Ice Rink. Acquitted at half time.

R v S, Central Criminal Court Allegation of attempted murder following a shooting in which the victim was shot in excess of 14 times and named the defendant as a perpetrator. Unanimously acquitted.

R v B & others, ongoing Case alleging 32 counts including directing terrorism, membership of a proscribed organisation and preparation for acts of terrorism.

R v SS & others, Kingston Crown Court (2018) Allegations of conspiracy to evade duty & money laundering. Case collapsed when pursuit of disclosure revealed improper conduct of HMRC investigators.

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INQUESTS AND INQUIRIES

Brenda is regularly instructed to represent families in Article 2 inquests. She has particular expertise in representing families in complex, historic inquests in England and Wales, and legacy inquests in Northern Ireland.

NOTABLE CASES

The Stardust Inquests, Dublin Coroner's Court Representing bereaved families in the fresh Inquests into the 1981 Stardust nightclub fire. See [here](#) and [here](#).

The UK COVID Inquiry Lead Counsel on behalf of the Northern Ireland Covid Bereaved Families for Justice. You can watch Brenda's cross examination of former Prime Minister Boris Johnson [here](#).

Inquest into the death of Noah Donohoe, Belfast Coroner's Court Representing the mother of Noah Donohoe, the 14-year-old child who went missing in Belfast in June 2020 and whose deceased body was found, days later, in an underground storm drain.

Inquests into the deaths of Raneem Oudeh and Khaola Saleem, Birmingham Coroner's Court Representing the bereaved families of mother and daughter, Khaola Saleem and Raneem Oudeh who were violently killed by Raneem's ex-partner. Their murders occurred against a background of multiple police failings and missed opportunities. Read about the case [here](#).

The Hillsborough Inquests Between 2013 and 2016, Brenda was part of a team of counsel who represented the families of 77 of those who died in the Hillsborough Stadium disaster. Brenda directly represented the families of 14 of those who were unlawfully killed.

Inquest into the death of Joseph Rainey Joseph was found suspended from a ligature on the first night of his remand at HMPYOI Hydebank Wood. The catalogue of failures that contributed to his death were recorded by the jury in a lengthy and damning verdict. Watch a documentary on Joseph's case [here](#).

Inquest into the death of Steven Colwell, ongoing Steven Colwell was shot by a PSNI officer in 2006. The Inquest is continuing before Belfast Coroners Court.

The Ballymurphy Inquests Representing bereaved families in the Inquests into the deaths of eleven innocent people who were unlawfully killed by British Army soldiers between 9 – 11 August 1971.

Inquests into the deaths of Martin McCaughey & Dessie Grew Brenda appeared in the Belfast Coroner's Court, led by Karen Quinlivan QC, representing the families of Martin McCaughey and Dessie Grew, who were shot and killed by the SAS in October 1990.

Inquest into the death of Gareth Myatt Together with Dexter Dias QC, Brenda represented the mother of Gareth Myatt, a child who died following restraint in the privately-run Rainsbrook detention centre. This is reported to be the longest inquest into a death in prison custody.

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CRIMINAL APPEALS

Brenda has an active appellate practice in the Court of Appeal (Criminal Division).

INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS

Brenda has worked extensively in the field of human rights, both nationally and internationally, with a focus on women's rights, children's rights and the rule of law.

With a focus on international women's rights, Brenda has represented the International Women's Rights Action Watch (IWRAP) Asia Pacific on the Steering Committee of the NGO coalition for the Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Economic Social and Cultural Rights.

Having been an active participant in the drafting process at the United Nations Palais des Nations in Geneva, she then became involved in the global campaign for the ratification of the Optional Protocol.

Brenda has advised on lodging communications before UN Human Rights Bodies and lectured on UN Human Rights mechanisms.

YOUTH JUSTICE & CHILD RIGHTS

Brenda is highly experienced in representing children and young people and ensuring their effective participation in the criminal justice system. She has represented children across the full spectrum of criminal allegations and is an experienced advocate in cases involving young and vulnerable witnesses. Her approach is always young person focused and she has particular expertise in representing children with special educational needs, learning disabilities and autism.

She sits on the Board of Just for Kids Law.

BACKGROUND

Brenda is Irish and lives with her family near Manchester.

LINCOLN
HOUSE
CHAMBERS