

Isabella Forshall QC



Call: 1982

Silk: 2010

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Profile

Isabella Forshall is a specialist criminal practitioner who listens carefully to clients and reflects their instructions with well-honed trial and appellate skills.

With long experience of defending in serious criminal cases, particularly of politically motivated offending from terrorism to protest; and of homicide and serious sexual offending, Isabella acts for clients ranging from the most intelligent and demanding to the most vulnerable. Terrorism cases have concerned the Jammu-Kashmir Liberation Front, IRA, DHKPC, the Tamil Tigers, Al Qaeda and the PKK.

Protest clients include those accused in major public disorders from Tottenham via Yarlswood to Burnley, animal rights activists, fitness fanatic and prison hostage-taker, Charles Bronson, and serial urban nudist Vincent Bethell.

Homicide clients include parents charged with killing their children, young alleged gang members, and mentally disordered offenders.

She is also exceptionally experienced in serious sexual cases.

She is listed in **Chambers and Partners** and the **Legal 500**.

Education

Newnham College, Cambridge – BA English Literature

Manchester Polytechnic – CPE

Ins of Court School of Law - Bar Exams

Languages

French

Italian

Spanish

Related practice areas

Criminal Law and Appeals

Criminal Appeals

Recent appeal against conviction for serious sexual offending of IM secured his acquittal at his retrial.

Homicide and Related Grave Offences

- R v Cameron McFly: murder/manslaughter trial re kicking to death of acquaintance by client with severe personality disorders. CCC
- R v Jermael Moore: group of 15 and 16 year olds charged with GAS gang knife murder outside his school of Zac Olumegbon, aged 15. Central Criminal Court
- R v Rafik Hamaizia: acquittal after trial of a 19-year-old with very high functioning Asperger Syndrome, assisted by an intermediary, for the revenge murder of Marvin Henry, aged 17. Central Criminal Court.
- R v Dwayne Mackintosh Wisdom: trial of a 16-year-old boy involved in the firearm murder by the London Fields Boys of a 16- year-old girl. Central Criminal Court
- R v Laura Vestuto: eventual plea by mother to causing death of toddler son by administering her own sedative drugs to him. Central Criminal Court and Court of

Appeal reported at Crim App R (S) 108

- R v Head and Head: defence at trial for one of two learning disabled identical twins assisted at trial by an intermediary: both represented on appeal against sentence.
- R v Chandrasekera: plea by nurse of excellent character to diminished responsibility manslaughter of her husband for which she received a community order.
- R v Charles: successful defence of addict mother for manslaughter by drugs overdose of her toddler daughter.

Terrorism

Recent cases include:-

- R v Bashir: Trial of 5 men for organising /addressing Ramadan meetings in support of ISIS. CCC 2016
- R v Saud: Trial of group who eventually pleaded guilty to planned armed action in Dewsbury against the EDL, and appeal against sentence in the Court of Appeal. Woolwich CC, CCC 2013, 2014
- R v Yadirgi: Petrol bombing of social club in North London by a group of Kurdish women. Woolwich CC. 2012
- R v Rahman: Stock Exchange bomb plot case, involving conspiracy to cause an assortment of explosions and other jihad-inspired activities by a group of adherents of Anwar Al Awlaki and Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula. Woolwich Crown Court. 2012
- R v Vosper and Tapping: Known as R v Avery and others, acting for two clients in the largest ever prosecution of animal rights activists - for a conspiracy to blackmail by Stop Huntingdon Animal Cruelty. Winchester Crown Court. 2010
- R v Tharan et al: acquittal after trial of alleged Tamil Tiger high-tech quartermasters. Kingston CC. 2009
- R v Sulieman: acquittal after trial of alleged confederate of Al Qaeda recruiter. Blackfriars CC 2009
- R v Kapan and others: trial of four men and two women members of DHKPC, a Turkish group, for terrorist funding - ended by abuse of process submission. Kingston CC 2004
- R v Ali Khelifi and others: terrorist funding fraud investigated by SO13 at trial and in Court of Appeal correcting sentence. Middlesex CC 2006
- Numerous other cases during career for members and alleged members of other proscribed groups - JKLF, KLA, IRA, and PKK, and for people accused of politically motivated offending including in connection for example with Animal Rights activism, the Yarlswood Immigration Detention Centre riot and fire, and the Burnley riot

(including correcting unfair sentencing of Asian defendants in Court of Appeal).

Protest Cases

Instructions in cases for other politically motivated alleged offenders have included numerous cases for ALF defendants including:

- R v Tibbles and Duriez (firebombing meat dealers and transporters)
- R v Shanahan and others (explosions case re HLS) and numerous affray and riot cases, including politically unclothed person Vincent Bethell.
- R v Kayani and others, the Burnley riot case for a member of the South Asian community, both at first instance and on successful appeal against sentence
- R v Abdul and others, the Yarlswood Immigration Detention Centre riot
- R v Charles Bronson, allegedly the UK's most unpredictable prisoner, and a long history of representing political, peace and anarchist protesters, including many strikers, and peace campers.

Other Serious Criminal Offence

- R v A: Partially successful defence of head teacher accused by former pupil of sexually abusing her in context of mentor relationship 20 years ago when she was under 16. Bournemouth CC 2017
- R v Nick Taylor: Partially successful defence of D1 of 2, already serving a sentence for similar offending, for non-recent supply of crack cocaine to and sexual abuse of 11 vulnerable complainants who were children at the time, including his own children and local foster children. Leicester CC 2017
- R v Abdi: Trial of young man on borderline of learning disability for a campaign of street sexual offending against strangers. Successful appeal against sentence. Snarebrook CC 2016
- R v Hussain: Partially successful defence of Oxford man, D1 of 7, accused of non-recent sexual abuse in a group context of a girl in care - second sequel to Operation Bullfinch investigation. Oxford Crown Court 2016
- R v Adams: Partially successful defence of D2 of 4 for sadistic group sexual abuse of his own small children. Norwich CC 2015
- R v Gibbons: Trial of man for sexual abuse of wife and sister in law in the early 1960s.

Kingston CC 2014

- R v Taylor: Trial of senior mental health nurse for sexual abuse of three learning disabled patients suffering from personality disorders in a residential unit. Evidence of one complainant successfully excluded on basis she had been placed under interrogative pressure. Sentence successfully appealed on grounds of delay . St Albans CC 2014
- R v Tilal Mahdi: First follow on trial of a defendant for involvement in the group sexual offending against vulnerable complainants know as Operation Bullfinch. Oxford CC 2013
- R v Daniel Reece: Successful defence of prisoner serving life for contract killing and wide-ranging sexual offending for rape of a fellow prisoner. Guildford Crown Court 2013
- R v B: case of serious family sexual offending against young girls resulting in birth of child. ACC
- R v Tyler: successful defence of man accused of serious sexual abuse of his girlfriend's young daughters 10 years previously. Oxford CC
- R v Taghipour: Successful defence of medical doctor accused of sexual offending against patients – Harrow CC
- R v IM: Successful appeal against conviction for client not represented at first instance; acquittal at retrial. Rapes of profoundly deaf family member. Court of Appeal and Blackfriars Crown Court 2011. Reported at 1 Crim App R 3
- R v Kamwa, Mappa et al: Trial of woman for trafficking for exploitation of young woman from Cameroon. Arguments re handling of complainant by combination of Social Services and Police investigation led to successful submission of no case. Croydon Crown Court
- R v Taylor: successful abuse of process submission for man accused of severe and persistent sexual abuse of his half sister 30 years earlier. St Albans CC
- R v Zulfiqar: Extremely culturally sensitive trial of historic family sexual abuse in Muslim household. Snaresbrook Crown Court
- R v Karjekar: successful defence in culturally sensitive case of man accused of severe historic sexual and physical abuse of his wife. Snaresbrook Crown Court
- R v Denton: trial of profoundly deaf man for severe sexual abuse of younger boys 30 years earlier when he himself was a teenager: Wood Green CC- and successful appeal against sentence to Court of Appeal.