

Charles Durrant

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Charles Durrant is a criminal defence specialist with a practice beyond his years. He is an intelligent and thoughtful lawyer, and a quick and able advocate.

He has successfully appeared in all levels of criminal courts in England and Wales. In 2010, he spent four months at the Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia as part of the defence team for Ieng Thirith, a Minister in the Khmer Rouge accused of genocide.

Charles has been admitted to the list of assistant defence counsel to the Special Tribunal for Lebanon, a court whose jurisdiction includes, for the first time in history, terrorism as an international crime.

He has also practiced in various Courts Martial, both here and abroad. Most recently, he has been instructed as a Disclosure Counsel on the historically significant Grenfell Inquiry.

Outside of his busy practice he completed a Master's Degree in law in 2009, writing his thesis on Part I RIPA 2000. He has also written for the Inner Temple yearbook, the Solicitors Journal and The Barrister magazine.

Charles is accredited by the Bar Council to provide Public Access Services.

Expertise

Organised Crime

Charles regularly represents defendants accused of the most serious organised criminality.

Notable Organised Crime cases

[R v L \[2022\]](#)

Combined Operations, Wisdom and Arbus, into three separate kidnap and blackmail allegations where the victims were caused life changing injuries. Alleged offences occurred both in England and Wales. Trial involves 12 defendants and will be tried over 16 weeks. Cardiff Crown Court.

[R v W \[2022\]](#)

Operation Bexley: 5-week conspiracy to supply class A trial – expert evidence called – Lewes Crown Court – acquitted of the conspiracy.

[R v Torhavs \[2021\]](#)

Importation of £3m+ cocaine from Latvia into UK – Canterbury CC – hung jury after 2-week trial – acquitted on retrial

[R v AM \[2021\]](#)

SSO imposed at the end of lengthy proceedings for defendant’s second PWITS Class A case, including a separate escape from custody. Successful opposition to Crown’s forfeiture application re. monies proved to have come legitimately from a well-known Belgium football player. Kingston Crown Court.

[R v Coppin and others \[2021\]](#)

Honeytrap conspiracy to rob trial. Four days before Rec Clegg QC at Chelmsford Crown Court. Complex bad character and successful s.78 PACE argument surrounding her interview. Acquitted.

[R v Chipunza \[2020\]](#)

Flying Squad Operation into two armed robberies of banks in Essex. Case involved substantial legal arguments over a tainted police ID from CCTV; narratives from missing other CCTV; ANPR without proper RIPA authorisations; and a separate non PACE compliant civilian ID procedure. Two-week trial at Chelmsford Crown Court. HHJ Turner QC described Defence Counsel as ‘exemplary’.

[R v Charles \[2020\]](#)

Large-scale violent disorder on the streets on Notting Hill between members of the ‘10/11’ gang and the ‘harrow road boys’. It involved the discharge of a hand gun and the use of machetes. Three weeks at Isleworth Crown Court. Successfully contested CBO terms which would have prevented him producing music with Fredo. Case features in BBC’s ‘Defending Digga D’.

R v Ahmed [2020] Operation Yahtool

Investigation into the sale of a loaded pump action shotgun, purportedly used in a murder days before, to members of a gang in South Kilburn. Two weeks at Isleworth Crown Court. Acquitted of main allegation.

R v Kingswell-Shaw [2019]

Operation Holms II. Conspiracy to commit aggravated burglary of a drugs factory in the north of England by another gang in Bedford. Five weeks at Harrow Crown Court. Convicted but served no additional sentence.

<https://www.cambridge-news.co.uk/news/local-news/bedford-crime-kempston-block-gang-17394472>

R v Beech [2019]

Operation Wisdom: Conspiracy to burgle ATMs £500k+ and conspiracy to rob a drug dealer. Cell site, Covert Video and Audio Surveillance, Voice Analysis. Lewes Crown Court.

R v Joseph [2019]

Operation Holms II: Conspiracy to supply drugs into both prisons and Luton Crown Court during the currency of a trial. 11 defendants. 'K Block' gang-related case. More than 300 pages of legal argument uploaded. Drill music videos, picture messaging, text message and certain call data excluded. Six-week trial at Harrow Crown Court. Acquitted of one and convicted of other counts.

R v W [2016-9]

Over the course of three years, he has represented this client across 14 separate indictments alleging various offences from harassment to robbery to mortgage fraud. W was acquitted in all but two cases – one by his own plea to one count on a four-count indictment, leading to a community order; the other by a jury, where he came close to successfully pleading insanity through a dissociative fugue to three counts of shoplifting. Four psychiatrists called. Sentence ultimately challenged in the Court of Appeal.

R v Finn [2018]

Operation Scrabble: Conspiracy to kidnap. Firearms and other weapons used in the context of maintaining a successful County Line. Set down for four weeks at St Albans Crown Court. Acquitted.

R v Singh [2017]

Complex case concerning a black money scam which resulted in a man's untimely death. Manslaughter, false

imprisonment, perverting the course of justice. Pathology, telecoms data, voice recognition. Led Junior. Seven weeks at Nottingham Crown Court before a HCJ. Acquitted of all counts.

<https://www.thesun.co.uk/news/3765782/peter-ndlovu-brother-in-law-killed-dumped-car-park-deal-went-wrong/>

R v Ballard [2017]

Operation Einsteineum: Robbery amongst a wider conspiracy to steal motor cars in order to commit commercial burglaries. 13,000 pages. Croydon Crown Court. Acquitted.

R v Shah [2017]

Operation Tornado: Flying Squad case of kidnap and blackmail. Prosecuted by a silk. After a day of negotiations and legal argument, prosecution was persuaded to accept a plea to theft. Client was given a suspended sentence order.

Fraud (commercial & serious)

Charles is a fraud specialist.

Notable Fraud (commercial & serious) cases

R v F [2022] Operation Leviathon

Million-pound advance fee ticket fraud involving corporate hospitality at Twickenham. Four-week trial at Southwark Crown Court. Acquitted of fraud.

[R v Owen \[2019\] Operation Midas](#)

Multimillion-pound ‘misallocation’ of Welsh Assembly Grant Funding into the Aquaculture industry. Five-year police investigation, highly political. VHCC. Led Junior. Trial set down for four to five months at Cardiff Crown Court. Acquitted of all counts.

[R v Baker \[2018\] Operation Dougal 2](#)

Multimillion-pound conspiracy to defraud, allied money laundering charges, allegations of perverting the course of justice, and Consumer Protection Regulations infringements; all concerning the use of copycat websites. Led Junior. Trial was 10 weeks at Teesside Crown Court. Acquitted of all six counts.

R v Hashim [2017] Operation Action

Multi-handed fraud and money laundering trial surrounding the delay/repay compensation scheme operated by train companies. Complex financial tracing, legal issues surrounding the definition of criminal property and a client with schizophrenia. Four-week trial at Blackfriars Crown Court. Acquitted.

R v Woodcraft [2015-16] Operation Starling

Led junior in a complicated, multi-handed, multimillion-pound money laundering case that was tried over six months at Bristol Crown Court. Billed as the largest ever fraud against Carillion Tellent/British Telecom. The defendant was acquitted by the judge of two counts of money laundering after a successful submission of no case, and one further count by the jury. Convicted on one remaining count.

R v (Business Innovations Skills Dept) v Rafferty [2016]

Client caught with a swimming pool of liquid tamsipan without a licence and found to have sold out of date cough syrup and other medicines by the tonne (all whilst in breach of his second separate disqualification order from acting as a director of a company). Short suspended sentence engendered through long negotiations with Crown on pleas. A zero compensation and confiscation order after argument. Crown had requested more than £200k. Prosecuted by a silk and junior and co-defended by a silk. Cut-throat negotiations.

R v H [2012]

Alleged conversion of criminal property. Case involved two teenage brothers. Importation and distribution of 'legal highs' and the laundering of hundreds of thousands of pounds of the business' proceeds. Cuba, Spain, Aston Martins, Ferraris, Rolexes and a year on the run. Case attracted considerable local interest. Winchester Crown Court. Acquitted.

R v Millers [2012]

Led junior in six-week SOCA money laundering trial. Operation Occasion. Winchester Crown Court.

R v Hayble [2011]

Led junior in a + million pound advance fee fraud. 'Operation Reseal'. St Albans Crown Court. Acquitted.

R v Apinoko [2010-11]

Led junior for first defendant in multi-handed conspiracy to defraud. Forex and share trading. 'Operation Perfume'. St Albans Crown Court. Acquitted after eight weeks.

Sexual Offences

Charles practices in complex sex cases.

Notable Sexual Offences cases

R v Jackson [2022]

Inter familial rape allegations dating back to the 1990s but with contemporaneous accounts – 2 week trial – multiple and complex disclosure requests to produce material for sensitive cross examination – acquitted of all counts – Winchester CC

R v H [2017]

Historic allegations of familial rape with contemporaneous reporting to a firm of solicitors. Case required highly sensitive cross-examination and legal argument surrounding similar non-conviction bad character. Six days at Croydon Crown Court. Acquitted.

R v Danansan [2015]

Allegation of ménage-a-trois rape. Bound and blindfolded whilst various acts were performed upon the complainant. Complex and sensitive cross-examination. Two-week trial at Salisbury Crown Court. Acquitted.

R v GM [2014]

Father accused of videotaping his stepdaughter while she was in the shower for his own sexual gratification. Camcorder placed in bedroom and red light was flashing, but there was no evidence that a tape was inside, the red light also flashed when the battery was low, and police did not find a tape. Sensitive cross-examination of a child witness required involving a previous unproven complaint of sexual assault. Acquitted. Isleworth Crown Court.

Courts Martial

Charles often appears in military cases both in the UK and abroad.

Notable Courts Martial cases

SPA v Bradbury [2022]

s.18 GBH and sexual assault trial. Conduct alleged to have occurred in BATUK in Kenya. Complicated expert forensic

pathology – acquitted of all charges

SPA v Col [2022]

Coercive controlling behaviour allegations morphed into disorderly conduct trial against this high ranking officer in BATUS Canada – acquitted of all charges

SPA v Glanvil [2022]

Bulford Courts Martial case which started out as rape allegations against his wife and ended in a trial for the supply of drugs which went down to the construction of words in text messages and an alternative proposition to Twist – complex jurisdictional points argued given conduct took place on a base in Canada where activity if true would have been legal – acquitted of all charges

R v CH [2019]

Sexual assault and other matters of violence alleged against juvenile whilst on an RAF base in Akrotiri, Southern Cyprus. Acquitted of allegation of sexual impropriety and fined for battery.

R v SAC Ward [2018]

Allegation of GBH on a senior officer in a bar in Akrotiri, Southern Cyprus. Digital analysis expert instructed. Military Court Centre in Cyprus. Acquitted of all criminal charges and fined for a minor service offence. 85% costs returned.

R v Wynn [2011]

Corporal accused of taking part in stamping on a subordinate. Bullford Military Courts Centre. Acquitted.

Appellate work

Charles advises privately on appeals and often appears in the appeal courts.

Notable Appellate work cases

R v Day [2019]

Court of Appeal reduced the sentence of a prolific drug addict on counts of burglary, thefts and breach of a suspended sentence order from 21 months to 11 months imprisonment, which led to his near immediate release. This case was characterised by a hard-fought battle post sentence for reports on the appellant's mental health, the success of previous

community elements of old orders, and an investigation into the legality of the committal proceedings in the magistrates' courts. This provided the pathway for the Court of Appeal's involvement in this case.

R v B [2018]

Court of Appeal reduced the sentence of a man convicted of a series of sex acts on a child from eight years to six years. Court said at the end of proceedings that they were "genuinely grateful for the assistance Mr Durrant has provided with his detailed and helpful analysis of each count, both orally and in writing".

R v Smith [2016]

Court of Appeal reduced the sentence of a drug dealer in possession of eight separate controlled substances from 54 months to 44 months after "attractive oral submissions were made with persistence".

R v Hall [2016]

Court of Appeal reduced the sentence of man guilty of historic indecent assault from three years to two-and-a-half years.

R v Noel [2012]

EWCA Crim 956. Successfully reduced four months' immediate imprisonment to a straight community order in a £12k benefits overpayment case. Complimented for his "admirable tenacity" by McCombe J.

R v A [2011]

Not yet reported. Successful appeal against conviction for breach of SOPO. Court of Appeal.

R v Gordon [2010]

EWCA Crim 2987. Successfully reduced sentence for affray and criminal damage from 21 months to 15 months. Court of Appeal.

R v Maxsims Milhailsens [2010]

EWCA Crim 2545. Successfully reduced sentence for ABH from 24 weeks to 16 weeks. Court of Appeal. Complimented by the Vice President LJ Hughes for clarity and delivery.

R v Arinze [2010]

EWCA Crim 1638. Successfully reduced 15 months to nine months. Court of Appeal. Counsel commended for his “attractive written and oral advocacy” by judge.

R v Doyle [2009]

EWCA Crim 308. Successfully reduced eight months immediate custody to three months suspended imprisonment for burglary. Court of Appeal.

Memberships

- Inner Temple
- Criminal Bar Association
- Young Fraud Lawyers Association
- Justice

Languages

- French