



Marie Spenwyn

Year of Call: 1999

A well-established criminal defence practitioner with an excellent reputation for her thorough preparation, client care and persuasive advocacy in all areas of criminal defence work, principally:

- **Murder, Manslaughter and Serious Violence**
- **Serious Sexual Offences**
- **Drugs Offences, Organised Crime and Firearms**
- **Fraud and Financial Crime**

Testimonials

“Marie is an excellent advocate and an instinctive tactician. When faced with difficulties in cases she meets them by making difficult but very sound judgement calls. Her speeches to juries are eloquent and persuasive. Marie has a straightforward and accessible style yet has a gravitas that commands attention” – Legal 500, 2025

“Always well prepared and a consummate professional, she is fantastic to work with.” – Chambers and Partners, 2024

“She has fantastic judgement and is really good at the detail.” – Chambers and Partners, 2024

“She is meticulous, methodical and very proactive, thinking about the trial from the word go and doing the very best for her client.” – Chambers and Partners, 2023

“A tough opponent who is one of the most organised barristers out there.” - Chambers and Partners, 2023

MURDER, MANSLAUGHTER AND ATTEMPTED MURDER

Frequently instructed in high-profile murder, manslaughter and attempted murder cases, Marie is specialist criminal defence practitioner who has developed a particular expertise in dealing with ‘difficult’ and vulnerable clients particularly young defendants and those with mental health problems. She regularly appears in the most serious cases of violent crime (murder, manslaughter, wounding with intent) often involving psychiatric defences and mental health disposals.

SERIOUS SEXUAL OFFENCES

Marie has significant experience in conducting proceedings concerning sexual offences across the spectrum of serious sexual offences to include historic and multi-handed cases. Her case preparation is second to none and she is often selected to deal with cases on her ability to effectively engage with clients. Increasingly instructed in cases involving serious sexual



allegations against young and very young defendants; details of which are kept confidential given reporting restrictions. These cases regularly involve vulnerable witnesses, use of s28 pre-recorded cross-examination and use of intermediaries. Marie is trained to deliver Vulnerable Witness Training and has done so on a number of occasions including for Gray's Inn.

DRUGS OFFENCES, ORGANISED CRIME AND FIREARMS

Regularly appears in cases concerning firearms, organised drugs offences, county lines prosecutions, and multi-handed drugs conspiracies. These increasingly involve trafficking, modern slavery and the use of the National Referral Mechanism.

BUSINESS CRIME

Involved in a number of complex and lengthy fraud cases with attendant confiscation proceedings. This area of Marie's practice has concerned a number of forms of fraudulent activity including acquisition, MTIC and Trading Standards (largely on-line) offences including Very High Cost Cases.

GENERAL CRIME

In addition to the specific areas of expertise noted above Marie deals with cases across the spectrum of allegations of criminal offending and specifically cases involving kidnapping, armed robbery, serious violence and offences of dishonesty.

APPOINTMENTS

- Recorder (Crime) 2022
- Pupil supervisor
- Gray's Inn – advocacy trainer
- Vulnerable witness training facilitator
- Appointed member of the Council of the Inns of Court Tribunal Appointments Body from 2018
- Visiting Lecturer University of Law
- Committee member of the Youth Practitioner's Association (YPA)
- Appointed Trustee of Transform Justice from 2020

MEMBERSHIPS:

- The Criminal Bar Association
- Women in Criminal Law
- Youth Practitioner's Association



PRACTICE AREAS:

MURDER AND MANSLAUGHTER

R v B [2024] Bradford CC Instructed as junior counsel alone in 'one push' manslaughter trial.

R v O [2024] Nottingham CC Instructed to represent a young defendant charged with attempted murder involving an axe.

R v P [2024] CCC Defendant accused of causing the death of his elderly mother giving rise to issues of causation, mercy killing, application of recent CPS guidance, and diminished responsibility.

R v * [2023] CCC Case concerns female defendant charged with causing the death of a baby raising complex issues of causation and concerning wider expert evidence.

R v * and others [2022] Woolwich CC Junior counsel representing young defendant charged with armed robbery and subsequent murder; client acquitted of murder and manslaughter.

R v K and another [2022] Leeds CC Appeared for the mother in the murder case concerning the death of Sebastian Kalinowski heard at Leeds Crown Court earlier this year before Mrs Justice Lambert. The sentencing hearing was broadcast following recent changes allowing TV cameras into Courts. The case was deemed to be exceptionally serious and a minimum term of 39 years was imposed.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-leeds-63489229>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-leeds-62009952>

Sky News recording: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6hYzO-u2XoQ>

R v G and others [2022] CCC Junior counsel in multi-handed joint enterprise allegation of murder.

R v S [2021] CCC represented female defendant as junior counsel alone in relation to the murder of a child where a plea to diminished responsibility was accepted and the case resolved by way of a s37 hospital and s41 restriction order.

R v H [2021] Derby CC Led by Queen's counsel in allegation of murder in context of local dispute. The defendant was alleged to have driven his car deliberately at the deceased. Issues of pathology, collision expertise and defence of accident arose. Acquitted of murder, manslaughter and causing death by dangerous driving.



<https://www.derbyshiretimes.co.uk/news/crime/chesterfield-pensioner-found-not-guilty-of-murder-3148681>

<https://www.derbytelegraph.co.uk/news/local-news/derbyshire-death-crash-pensioner-gets-5050686.amp>

R v C [2020] Nottingham CC Led by Queen's counsel in allegation of child murder.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-nottinghamshire-55331111>

R v M [2020] Nottingham CC Led by Queen's Counsel in multi-handed murder allegation said to be a revenge killing against a back ground of organised and extensive drug dealing.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-nottinghamshire-55415853>

R v Y [2020] Central Criminal Court The defendant was alleged to be part of a joint enterprise stabbing; acquitted of murder and manslaughter.

<https://www.standard.co.uk/news/crime/entrepreneur-one-of-victims-in-six-days-of-knife-violence-a4172851.html>

R v T [2020] Nottingham CC Instructed to defend 17-year-old defendant accused of murdering his friend.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-nottinghamshire-51449250>

R v T [2019] Nottingham CC Represented defendant charged with the murder of his brother; acquitted of murder and manslaughter on the basis of self-defence.

<https://www.nottinghampost.com/news/local-news/murder-trial-over-stabbing-meadows-2293399>

<https://www.nottinghampost.com/news/nottingham-news/mum-praised-son-cleared-brothers-3312936>

R v H and others [2019] Leicester CC Represented defendant charged with conspiracy to pervert the course of justice linked to attempted murders

R v Lewis [2018] Leicester CC One punch manslaughter case representing with Queen's Counsel a Millwall fan charged with assaulting a Nottingham Forest fan. At trial the Crown offered no evidence on the manslaughter after expert evidence on causation forced a review.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-nottinghamshire-45889608>

R v Ahmed [2018] Central Criminal Court Led by Queen's Counsel in murder trial featuring group attack at a party in East London with a significant number of eye-witnesses.



<https://www.standard.co.uk/news/crime/lamar-stewart-stabbing-first-picture-of-young-man-stabbed-to-death-as-house-party-rages-out-of-a3648001.html>

R v Thurston [2018] Chelmsford CC High-profile case of gross negligence manslaughter concerning the death of a seven-year-old child on a bouncy castle.
<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-essex-44494748>

<https://www.standard.co.uk/news/crime/summer-grant-two-fairground-workers-convicted-of-gross-negligence-manslaughter-after-sevenyearold-a3834556.html>

R v Zakaria Bulhan [2017] Central Criminal Court Heavily publicised incident concerning attacks on members of the public in Russell Square attacks August 2016 leading to the death of an American tourist and the stabbing of five further people. The attacks were originally thought to be terrorist in nature although in due course it became clear the defendant was suffering from a severe mental illness. The defendant was in Broadmoor in the lead-up to the trial. Prosecution ultimately accepted pleas to manslaughter on the grounds of diminished responsibility and s18 wounding. There were significant medical and legal arguments concerning whether the appropriate sentence should be a hospital order pursuant to section 37/41 MHA 1983 or life imprisonment. Ultimately a hospital order with an indefinite restriction was imposed.

<https://news.sky.com/story/teen-killer-given-indefinite-hospital-order-over-russell-square-rampage-10759492>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-38878443>

<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2017/feb/06/teenager-zakaria-bulhan-admits-russell-square-killing-of-us-tourist-in-stabbing-spree>

R v Lee [2016] Guildford CC Led by Queen's Counsel in murder trial concerning death of a night porter in a hotel where self-defence was raised.

R v L [2016] Central Criminal Court: Represented the defendant charged with attempted murder involving use of a firearm.

R v E [2015] Blackfriars CC This defendant was charged with attempted murder by strangulation said to have occurred during a robbery after consensual sex.

R v D [2015] Kingston CC Represented female defendant at trial for attempting to murder concerning multiple stab wounds inflicted on her partner. Acquitted of attempted murder.

R v B and another [2015] Central Criminal Court Allegation of joint enterprise murder concerning a stabbing. Led by Queen's Counsel. Successful half-time submission for 17 year-old defendant.



R v F and others [2014] Central Criminal Court Leading junior in relation to a disturbance during which the Crown a murder took place. Acquitted of violent disorder.

R v L and others [2014] Snaresbrook CC Led by Queen's Counsel in case concerning allegation of attempted murder in a takeaway shop put on a joint enterprise basis.

R v T and another [2013] Central Criminal Court Junior Counsel representing first defendant in joint enterprise murder where Crown's alleged that deceased who was shot with a firearm was a victim of mistaken identity.

R v O and others [2011] Central Criminal Court: Led junior instructed in a high-profile multi-handed murder trial concerning the large group attack which led to the death of a young man at Victoria station in front of passengers at rush-hour.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-15310015>

SEXUAL OFFENCES:

R v S and others [2024] Isleworth CC: Instructed in multi-handed grooming trial concerning historic offences.

R v N [2023/24] Oxford CC: Representing former football coach in allegations from a number of young witnesses cross-examined under s28.

R v Y [2023] Warwick CC Trial of historic serious sexual offences concerning two familial complainants.

R v W [2022] Nottingham CC allegations of rape against vulnerable defendant raising issues as to admissibility of police interview.

R v S [2022] Nottingham CC represented doctor charged with sexual assaults on patients.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-nottinghamshire-60201032>

R v K [2022] Nottingham CC s28 case involving young witness and defendant with developmental disorders giving rise to the need for intermediary. This case involved specific applications for defendant's evidence directions and special measures under the CPR.

R v H [2022] Nottingham CC

<https://www.chad.co.uk/news/crime/mansfield-lorry-driver-jailed-for-rape-of-underage-girl-3534748>

R v V [2021] Guildford CC Historic case concerning victim who was 13 at the time of the offences.

R v G [2021] Isleworth CC Multiple allegations concerning child where defendant was already serving sentence for offender of particular concern involving consideration of life sentence.



R v H [2021] Derby CC Instructed in case concerning sexual offences with online elements.

R v D [2021] Basildon CC Case concerned very young witness with s28 pre-recorded XX. Defendant acquitted of all counts.

R v S [2021] Norwich CC Instructed to represent defendant on allegations of historic rape and sexual abuse where defendant was already serving an extended sentence for like offences.

R v H [2021] Nottingham CC Allegations relating to familial sexual abuse.

R v R [2021] Bradford CC Represented ex-Bradford City footballer sentenced for sexual offences.

<https://www.thetelegraphandargus.co.uk/news/19040768.tyrell-robinson-friend-jailed-underage-sex-girls/>

<https://www.examinerlive.co.uk/news/local-news/former-bradford-city-footballer-tyrell-19707022>

<https://www.thesun.co.uk/news/13852148/arsenal-footballer-sentence-paedophile/>

R v B [2020] Nottingham CC Sexual offences concerning vigilante paedophile group posing as underage children.

R v S [2020] Derby CC Historic allegations involving four young witnesses.

R v K [2019] Isleworth CC Represented elderly defendant on multi-count indictment concerning offences said to have taken place in the 1970s. It was a feature of the trial that these allegations came to light following publicity concerning later convictions for sexual offences.

R v W [2019] Derby CC Trial concerned allegations of rape and indecent assault made by a niece against her uncle which took place approximately twenty years ago.

R v M [2019] Hove CC Represented defendant in rape trial where the attack was caught on CCTV.

<https://www.theargus.co.uk/news/17703191.lanes-rape-trial-brighton-accused-claims-woman-consented/>

R v R [2019] Snaresbrook CC Represented Uber driver accused of sexual assault on passenger in presence of another.

R v V & others [2018] Nottingham CC Defended in multi-handed trial which featured allegations of people trafficking for sexual exploitation and controlling prostitution.

<https://www.nottinghampost.com/news/local-news/jury-human-trafficking-trial-hear-1784332>



R v D [2018] Southwark CC Defended Uber driver accused of raping his passenger.

<https://www.standard.co.uk/news/crime/uber-driver-raped-drunk-passenger-on-back-seat-of-his-car-a3805416.html>

R v B [2018] Harrow CC Trial concerning historic inter-familial allegations which led to the severe psychiatric illness of one of the complainants.

R v J [2017] Bristol CC Instructed in multi-handed case alleged to involve grooming of one complainant where defendant had significant previous convictions for sexual offending.

R v H [2017] WGCC Trial concerned allegations of male rape; acquitted.

R v R [2017] Harrow CC Rape allegations featuring evidence that was recorded on the victim's mobile telephone.

<https://www.mirror.co.uk/news/uk-news/rapist-unwittingly-confessed-sex-attack-11032098>

R v L [2017] Nottingham CC Representing convicted sex-offender resulting in a reduction of charges from rape to sexual activity with a child.

R v C [2017] St Albans CC Represented elderly defendant charged with offences against a 6 year-old boy.

R v H [2017] Lewes CC Acquitted of multiple allegations of rape. This defendant was convicted of an offence of coercive/controlling behaviour within a relationship.

R v H [2017] Northampton CC This case concerned a defendant with prior convictions for rape charged with similar offences on his young grandchildren.

R v R [2017] Burnley CC Multi-handed historic abuse case featuring multiple count indictment alleged to reflect Asian group grooming. Acquitted following successful half-time submissions.

BUSINESS CRIME:

R v G and others [2024] Southwark CC Instructed as junior counsel in multi-handed Very High Cost 'acquisition tax' fraud valued at over £20 million. For trial in late 2024.

R v O [2023] Southwark CC Complex Very High Costs Case. Multi-handed fraud allegation split into several trials, representing defendant in first trial.

R v K [2022] Nottingham CC Trading Standards investigation into conspiracy to defraud.

R v S [2022] Leeds CC Instructed in Trading Standards e-commerce investigation concerning websites



R v S and others [2021] Southwark CC Three-month conspiracy to defraud representing accountant.

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-10337687/Fake-agent-helped-53-students-stay-UK-false-references-phoney-production-company.html>

R v W [2021] Lincoln CC Represented defendant in relation to a number of counts of fraud committed against England Golf.

<https://thelincolnite.co.uk/2021/02/tee-thief-avoids-jail-after-defrauding-england-golf/>

R v A [2020] Bournemouth CC Represented defendant who obtained significant funds from an elderly couple and other elderly victims by holding himself out to be a senior police officer.

<https://www.bournemouthcho.co.uk/news/18232158.man-who-pretended-pc-take-1m-bournemouth-couple-appears-dock/>

<https://www.pressreader.com/uk/daily-mirror/20200804/281745566726919>

R v D and another [2020] Isleworth CC Trial concerned fraud by false representation arising from the Grenfell Tower tragedy where a couple were said to have purported to reside in the home of a victim of the fire.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-london-48674084>

<https://www.mylondon.news/news/west-london-news/couple-faked-friendship-grenfell-tower-17809533>

R v Smith [2019-20] Leeds Crown Court Led junior in highly-publicised 'ticket tout' fraud trial, confiscation proceedings in 2022 resulted in a significant order being made

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/ed-sheeran-acted-on-touts-after-obscene-charity-gig-mark-ups-fraud-trial-told-bh790zjfk>

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-7760421/Ed-Sheerans-manager-tells-ticket-tout-trial-took-stand-against-absurd-resale-prices.html>

R v Locke [2018] Southwark CC Defended in six-week two-handed trial concerning a pension liberation fraud.

R v T [2018] Central Criminal Court Allegations of fraud and trademark offences committed over the internet



DRUGS OFFENCES, ORGANISED CRIME AND FIREARMS:

R v H [2024] Nottingham CC Instructed to represent defendant in high-volume Class A drugs conspiracy.

R v B [2023] Northampton CC Female defendant concerned in street operation, engaging third strike.

R v M and others [2023] Nottingham CC Represented Defendant charged with multi-handed drugs conspiracy and a separate multi-handed firearms conspiracy, said by the Crown to be leader of an OCG.

R v * [2023] Birmingham CC Instructed to represent young defendant found in possession of firearms and ammunition. MSA issues engaged although the s4 defence does not apply to firearms offences representations made resulting in the Crown offering no evidence.

R v C [2023] MSA defence raised and representations made following which Crown offered no evidence.

R v G and others [2022] Nottingham CC Instructed in large multi-handed drugs conspiracy, resulted in agreed basis of plea and suspended sentence for represented defendant.

R v N and others [2021] Lewes CC Multi-handed county lines allegations.

R v K and others [2021] Nottingham CC Multi-handed case concerning cannabis cultivation.

<https://www.chad.co.uk/news/crime/three-men-jailed-for-working-in-massive-ps125m-cannabis-factory-in-kirkby-3254071>

R v G [2021] Taunton CC county-lines drugs case

R v N [2021] Swansea CC Supply of Class A drugs in a county lines case, this case involved modern slavery, operation of the NRM and a successful argument that exceptional circumstances could avoid the imposition of a minimum term sentence.

R v M and others [2021] Derby CC Class A conspiracy to supply.

R v H and others [2020] Derby CC Instructed in multi-handed allegations of drug supply.

<https://www.derbyshiretimes.co.uk/news/crime/derbyshire-defendants-accused-drug-dealing-have-had-their-case-re-listed-new-date-39395>

R v K [2019] Leeds CC Represented defendant concerning significant exchange and storing of Class A drugs.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-leeds-50838290>



R v T and others [2018 and 2019] Isleworth CC Leading junior in trial and re-trial of offences concerning breaches of immigration law said to be conducted by an organised crime group facilitating travel of non-EU nationals into the United Kingdom through the Republic of Ireland.

R v D and others [2019] Southwark CC Successfully defended female defendant on charges of kidnap, blackmail and false imprisonment against a background of drug dealing. Case concerned the imprisonment of a male for a number of hours in the home of the represented defendant. Acquitted on all counts.

R v C and others [2018] multi-handed conspiracy to supply synthetic cannabinoids.

R v S [2018] Derby CC Instructed to defend allegations of fraud concerning facilitating illegal immigration for profit.

R v L [2018] Northampton CC Case concerning supply of drugs between drug users which resulted in a death.

R v B [2017] Nottingham CC Plea to firearm offences where defendant suffered significant mental health problems where a suspended sentence was imposed.

R v C [2017] Harrow CC Firearms offence for a young defendant resulting in imposition of a suspended sentence.

R v D and others [2017] Northampton CC This multi-handed trial concerned allegations of kidnap, possession of a firearm and perverting the course of justice said to arise from local turf war over drug dealing in Northampton. Defence succeeded on submissions in relation to hearsay applications to adduce evidence from a witness not before the court.

R v J [2017] ILCC Trial concerning possession of firearms and ammunition with intent to endanger life linked to drug dealing.

GENERAL CRIME:

R v S [2022] Derby CC s18 allegation involving a knife; successful submissions for suspended sentence.

R v S [2021] Nottingham Crown Court Threats to kill and assaults in domestic context.

<https://www.chad.co.uk/news/crime/paranoid-mansfield-man-jailed-for-violent-attacks-on-partner-of-three-weeks-3473456>

R v H and others [2021] Harrow CC false imprisonment case concerning vulnerable victim.



R v B [2021] Southwark CC Represented defendant charged with offences of perverting the course of justice that related to seeking to implicate an individual in the Westminster Terrorist attacks.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-lancashire-57089311>

<https://www.standard.co.uk/news/crime/westminster-bridge-terror-attack-framed-gerald-banyard-b934740.html>

<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2021/may/12/police-hunt-man-who-tried-to-frame-person-for-westminster-terror-attack>

R v G [2020] Nottingham CC domestic abuse case

<https://www.nottinghampost.com/news/local-news/husband-throttled-wife-slashed-putty-4800379>

R v O [2020] Nottingham CC Represented mother in case concerning allegations of child assault and neglect.

R v F [2019] Woolwich Crown Court This case concerned a multi-handed prison mutiny at HMP Whitemoor where the disturbance was caught on CCTV in which all defendants had significant previous convictions for serious offences of violence.

<https://www.cambstimes.co.uk/news/whitemoor-snooker-balls-hurled-at-officers-1-6029270>

R v M [2019] Snaresbrook CC Section 18 wounding with intent featuring an attack on a housemate with a knife and screwdriver.

R v **[2019] Lincoln CC Represented defendant in child abduction case.

<https://www.sleafordstandard.co.uk/news/crime/sleaford-area-woman-who-abducted-five-month-old-girl-jailed-12-months-132516>

R v L [2018] Nottingham CC Represented defendant on a multiple count indictment concerning child abuse and neglect.

R v L and others [2017] Nottingham CC Conspiracy to rob in transit vans.

<https://www.leicestermercury.co.uk/news/local-news/armed-robbers-jailed-total-30-161779>



LIBERTAS
CHAMBERS

Marie Spenwyn

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PUBLIC AND PRISON LAW

Instructed to advise on various prison law matters including parole, categorisation and licence conditions including advising on Judicial Review proceedings and representation at prison adjudications as well as parole hearings.

APPEALS AND CCRC

Instructed to advise and review numerous 'old' cases concerning conviction and sentence.

