

Curriculum Vitae

Charlotte Lucinda Surley

Called 2000 Middle Temple

Admitted as Solicitor 2005

Higher Rights of Audience 2008

Appointed to sit as Specialist Lay Member in the First Tier Tribunal Health and Social Care (Mental Health) 2021

Expertise

I specialise in representing those facing particularly serious sexual and non-fatal assault allegations in relation to adult and child complainants. I have undertaken the Advocacy and the Vulnerable training.

I have also attended and delivered training on the topics of autism, and mental health in the criminal justice system. My communication skills are particularly suited to representing defendants with mental health challenges, intellectual disabilities or who may be neurodivergent (i.e. autistic, have ADHD or related traits).

Notable Cases

Set out below is a selection of the most recent cases in which Charlotte Surley has been instructed. It should not be regarded as exhaustive.

Serious Sexual Offences

R v H 2025

This was a rape case of the utmost gravity, which ultimately attracted a life sentence. The defendant's previous legal team had withdrawn. The defendant was found to have very particular communication difficulties which had previously been overlooked and required particular care in conference.

R v W 2024

Community Order imposed for the sexual assault of a teenage girl due to cross examination which cast doubt upon the severity of the touching that had initially been alleged.

R v W 2022

Sexual assault of a pre-school-aged child in the context of a childcare setting. Extremely sensitive cross examination of the child was required.

R v T 2021

Historic sexual abuse allegation in which the defendant could not explain why a false complaint had been made some years after he had left the family unit. The defendant was acquitted on all counts.

R v X 2021

Grave crime matter concerning serious sexual offences against two very young children. The young defendant was acquitted of rape and received a non-custodial sentence for one offence of sexual assault.

R v X 2019

This unusual case concerned rape in the context of adult familial sexual activity. The jury were unable to reach a verdict on the issue of consent.

R v T-M 2017

The defendant was acquitted of the 'date rape' of a woman with complex mental health issues.

R v MR 2017

The defendant in this case was acquitted of sexual offences against two of his children who were aged 8 and 11 at the time of the trial. This case was particularly challenging because of the Defendant's fluctuating mental health and associated paranoia.

R v O 2012

The defendant was acquitted despite being named by the complainant as the alleged ringleader of a sustained 'gang rape'. The lengthy indictment included multiple counts of rape, sexual assault and s20 offences. This case required the deployment of large amounts of unused material served on the first day of trial and which related to the complainant's activities in the weeks after making the allegation. The defendant successfully argued consent, but his co-defendant received 14 years imprisonment.

Contact Details

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