

Stephen Meadowcroft KC

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Memberships

- Criminal Bar Association

Criminal Overview

Stephen has specialised in crime for more than 40 years and has both prosecuted and defended in all types of cases.

He is known as a criminal defence specialist dealing with serious and high profile cases.

Apart from appearing in more than 150 murder cases throughout his career, he deals with all types of serious and high profile crime, including international drugs and money laundering cases, gangland crime, serious sexual offences, drugs offences, prison riots, fraud, animal rights cases and every type of conspiracy and joint enterprise case.

Recommendations

Ranked Tier 2 in Crime (General and Fraud)
The Legal 500 2024

Ranked Tier 2 in Crime (General and Fraud)
The Legal 500 2023

“Stephen has specialised in crime for over 30 years, prosecuting and defending all manner of serious criminal cases.”
The Legal 500 2022

“His powers of analysis and persuasion are staggering.”
The Legal 500, 2021

“His powers of analysis and persuasion are staggering.”
The Legal 500, 2020

“A brilliant jury advocate.”
The Legal 500, 2018/19

“He combines outstanding legal skills with great client rapport.”
The Legal 500, 2017

“Recommended for his expertise in public order cases.”
The Legal 500, 2016

Stephen Meadowcroft “is popular with the junior Bar. “He is the one we all try to have as a leader,” said one advocate. “We all aspire to be like him. He’s wonderful and has a way of making the most difficult case sound reasonable in court.”
Chambers UK.

“Magnificent, even in the most difficult cases – his work covers all aspects of serious crime.”
Chambers UK.

Cases

Examples of high profile cases representing the Defence conducted by this Queens Counsel.

R v J & others (Manchester Crown Court) – Conspiracy to Murder. This was an organised revenge attack following the assassination of a well known underworld figure named Massey, who was shot to death outside his front door. The revenge attack resulted in a woman and child being shot as they opened their front door. All the other defendants charged were convicted of all charges, whereas this Defendant was acquitted of all charges. (Verdict – Not Guilty)

R v H & others (Manchester Crown Court) – Conspiracy to Murder. This was a highly organised and professional gangland assassination. The victim was tracked with an electronic tracker and then shot in a pub car park before eventually being found dead outside the door of a local police station. This case is said to have had more digital and telephone evidence than any previous case in Britain. All the Defendants were convicted except one, who was said to be an organiser. (Verdict – Not Guilty)

R v C (Preston Crown Court) – Conspiracy to Murder involving a Gangland Shooting in which a close friend of the Defendant conducted a cut throat defence. (Verdict – Not Guilty)

R v D (Manchester Crown Court) – Murder – Woman accused of Murdering her husband with a defence of “Battered Wife Syndrome” – evidence eventually accepted and plea to Manslaughter accepted.

R v W (Manchester Crown Court) – Murder – Two men were accused of murdering a disabled man after forcibly entering his flat and carrying out a sustained and violent attack, which left blood splashed over the walls, floor and ceiling of several rooms. Their footprints were found in blood inside the flat. They were both seen leaving the flat and were then caught on CCTV attempting to sell items that had been stolen. At the trial the other Defendant blamed W for murdering the victim. The other Defendant was convicted but W was acquitted. (Verdict – Not Guilty)

R v B (Stafford Crown Court) – Murder – Represented a man who was originally convicted of a Section 18 offence of wounding a 91-year old woman. He viciously attacked her during a burglary – the woman remained in a coma for 3 years and subsequently died after which the Defendant was charged with Murder – the Defence forwarded legal arguments at the end of the Prosecution case. (The Trial Judge ordered Not Guilty Verdicts)

R v K (Manchester Crown Court) – Murder – resulting from an arranged fight between two rival gangs in Blackburn, where the victim was stabbed to death. (Verdict - Not Guilty)

R v S (Manchester Crown Court) – Murder – of a middle-aged man by a youth with a baseball bat – Prosecution accepted a plea to Manslaughter after negotiations.

R v B (Warwick Crown Court) – Murder – Serious gangland attack. (Verdict - Not Guilty)

R v A (Sheffield Crown Court) – Gangland Murder by a Professional Assassin – represented the alleged organiser of the Murder a man said to be the most notorious gang leader in the North East of England (Verdict - Not Guilty)

R v D (Preston Crown Court) – Murder, where the victim was kidnapped and the body was never found. During the trial the Prosecution obtained further evidence that put the Defendant at the scene of the murder. After negotiations, the Prosecution agreed to accept a plea to Manslaughter on a limited basis.

R v H (Manchester Crown Court) – Murder – This was a murder of a man outside a night club in Radcliffe, which involved a number of doormen. The whole scene was covered by CCTV and we established that the defendant appeared to have left the scene just before the murderous attack took place. (Verdict – Not Guilty)

R v F (Manchester Crown Court) – Gangland Attempted Murder. (Verdict – Not Guilty of Attempted Murder but Guilty of Possession of a Firearm)

R v L (Manchester Crown Court) – Gang related Murder of a man in a Rochdale nightclub. The Prosecution evidence was based on CCTV evidence of the murder. (Verdict – Not Guilty)

R v X (Manchester Crown Court) – Major international drugs conspiracy. This Defendant was said to be the main importer of Class A Drugs into the North of England. Large quantities of drugs were found by the police, couriers were arrested and there was telephone contact between the couriers and the Defendant at all relevant times. (Verdict – Not Guilty)

R v M - Multi-million pound international money laundering case related to gangland drugs conspiracies.

R v T (Manchester Crown Court) – Conspiracies to carry out a series of Armed Robberies, including banks and cash in transit in different parts of the country. Following a long police surveillance operation the Defendant and others were arrested, at night, outside a supermarket, where one of the men was fatally shot by the police. (Verdicts – Not Guilty on all counts)

R v B (Manchester Crown Court) – Murder of a homeless man under the railway arches near to Salford Railway Station. The victim was battered to death with various weapons, including

clubs and a hammer and was said to have been tortured for several hours before being set on fire. Those responsible were said to have been under the influence of a drug named Spice.

R v S (Manchester Crown Court) – The charge was Attempted Murder, Kidnap and firearms offences. (Verdict – Not Guilty of Attempted Murder)

R v B (Manchester Crown Court) – Murder – The Prosecution accepted a plea to Manslaughter.

R v C (Liverpool Crown Court) – This was a Murder trial involving several defendants. The Defence QC fell ill after several weeks of trial. The trial judge requested that this QC took over the conduct of the trial at a critical stage and allowed only two days for preparation.

R v W (Preston Crown Court) – Gangland Murder on the streets of Preston using an axe and a sword. The Defendants fell out in the dock after they started blaming one another. This ended in a savage fight taking place and several Prison Officers were needed to bring the Defendants under control and remove them from court. All this violence was witnessed by the jury and all the Defendants were convicted.

R v M (Manchester Crown Court) – Murder – A teenage boy savagely attacked and murdered a 2-year old girl whilst acting as a babysitter.

R v G (Chester Crown Court) – Murder – Defendant who was part of a gang who kicked a man to death outside his home after he complained about the noise that they were making.

R v T (Liverpool Crown Court) – Multi-million pound international Drugs and Gun running Conspiracy. This case was said to be the largest drugs conspiracy ever to come before the courts in the north of England.

R v K (Manchester Crown Court) – Gangland Murder Conspiracy – Represented the purported organiser of the Conspiracy.

R v I (Manchester Crown Court) – Murder in a public street in Shudehill, Manchester. The victim was a total stranger. The murder was captured on CCTV.

R v P (Manchester Crown Court) – Murder – The defendant killed a fellow inmate whilst in prison – The Prosecution accepted a Guilty Plea to Manslaughter.

R v S (Manchester Crown Court) – Murder; teenage boy with psychiatric problems stabbed another youth to death believing that his mother was in danger; he Pleaded Guilty on a limited basis.

R v H (Manchester Crown Court) – Alleged Serial Sex Offender, accused of Stranger Rapes and Sexual Assaults on numerous women. The victims gave similar accounts of his behaviour and did not know each other. (Verdict – Not Guilty on 10 counts and the jury were unable to reach a verdict on the other 4 counts)

R v H (Bradford Crown Court) – Mother accused of Starving one of her children to death – The child's mummified body had been kept in her bedroom for 2 years. She was convicted of Child Neglect.