

Tania Griffiths QC

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Clerks' Details

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Appointments

- Recorder (2000)

Education

- Liverpool Polytechnic BA (Hons)
- Law Bar Vocational Course

Criminal Overview

Tania is very experienced in defending allegations relating to sexual offences, particularly those of historic sex abuse, including those made against professionals arising out of their work as carers, teachers etc. or as individuals or family members, whether by multiple or single complainants.

Tania is acutely aware of the impact of such allegations on both individuals and professionals alike in terms of their effect on both professional lives and those of an individual's ability to continue in employment or remain within the family and the impact of adverse DBS checks.

She will deploy the full range of methods available both in written and trial advocacy to achieve the best outcome for the client. She works tirelessly to achieve such result and always gives her best. It may have been Abraham Lincoln who said, "Give me six hours to chop down a tree and I will spend the first four sharpening the axe" but Tania too is a firm believer that nothing should be left to chance and that persistence in the pre-trial stages and close attention to detail is the only sure way to help the client achieve success.

She also believes in a solid team approach and that success is best achieved when the professionals and lay client work together in an open and constructive way each valuing the input of the other.

Recommendations

“Tania Griffiths is not your average Barrister, flitting in and out to download advice; she spent so much time with us, talking things through, listening to our endless worries and our co-defendants and their families were afforded the same compassion and time; everyone admired her.”

Client testimonial 2019

“Passionate, valiant and level headed.”

The Legal 500 2018/19

“A straight-shooter with acute tactical nous.”

The Legal 500 2017

“Recommended for defending serious sexual offence cases.”

The Legal 500 2016

“Known for dealing with cases involving malicious and false allegations of sexual abuse.”

The Legal 500 2015

“Serious crime silks of choice.”

The Legal 500 2014

“Famed for trial skills and for her expertise across a broad range of issues.” – Chambers and Partners Barrister of the Year

Liverpool Law Society

Cases

R v AS (2016) - Successful defence of multiple allegations of rape. Allegations by two ex-partners against professional man. The defence case was that one set of allegations arose after the partner had been hypnotised, the other through malice. Allegations arose in the context of contested contact proceedings following divorce. Detailed consideration of documents in the divorce was required, together with analysis of text and social media messages.

R v A (2016) - A was a lead “target” for the national Operation Pallial enquiry. Serious allegations of multiple offending were made with the defendant being charged in respect of four complainants. Following disclosure of documents persistently sought by the defence, charges against two complainants was discontinued. The case eventually concerned allegations of sexual abuse by two complainants supported by a number of “bad character” witnesses. Contested bad character issues and arguments as to disclosure / abuse of process arose. The defendant was convicted notwithstanding defence criticisms as to the trial process and the reliability of the evidence and an appeal is ongoing.

R v LD (2016) - Successful defence of allegations of historic indecent assault on a young child by a (then) teenage babysitter. Evidence which proved beyond doubt that the accounts of the complainant, mother and other witnesses could not be relied upon showed the extent to which the evidence had been contaminated by gossip and innuendo.

R v TK (2016) - Successful defence of a young health care professional who was charged with digital penetration of a friend’s girlfriend. Case discontinued by the prosecution when it became apparent that the complainant was not going to attend the trial and the judge refused an adjournment after the defence produced compelling evidence of her unwillingness to engage with the trial process.

R v NG (2016) - Successful defence of allegations against a teenager with autism who was accused of racist violence on his first solo outing without his parents/ carers in a place other than his home town. Disability issues arose and expert evidence as to understanding autism was critical in ensuring that the Crown were fully apprised of all the issues , which led to the charges being discontinued.

R v DJ (2016) - Successful defence of another national Operation Pallial case concerned allegations of physical abuse against a husband (whom I represented) and wife who were former care home workers. Again disclosure proved to be the key in proving that allegations made by former residents were false.

R v S (2015) - Successful defence of another lead “target” in the national Operation Pallial enquiry. The case concerned allegations of physical abuse and was effectively 16 trials in one : with eight individual complainants and about eight “bad character”

witnesses. The case involved expert medical evidence, contested bad character issues and arguments as to abuse of process. Disclosure proved to be the key to unlocking the prosecution case by proving in some cases that the allegations were false and others, unreliable. Thorough preparation and a determination for proper disclosure proved to be the key to securing acquittals on all counts.

R v T (2015) - Successful defence of former senior police officer who became head of security at a nightclub. Charged with rape of nightclub goer included allegations that he abused his position to target his victim. Again, defence evidence as to contemporary events was critical in discrediting the complainant's allegations and proving their unreliability.

R v G T (2015) - Successful defence of historic allegation of rape on a step daughter. The chronological significance of events had been missed and/or misunderstood by the complainant so that the defence could easily prove the many fallacies in her account as to what had been the correct factual matrix at the time of the allegations. Evidence marshalled by the defence proved so compelling and in contradiction of the family's account that the judge directed the jury that unless they accepted the family's account, their credibility was so undermined that Not Guilty verdicts were inevitable.

R v SF (2015) - Successful defence of allegations of historic sexual abuse of one brother on another. The defence claimed collusion and abuse of process alleging that the allegations had been timed to await the death of their mother so that she could not give evidence. Allegations failed when a sister called to support the complainant let slip that she was awaiting the death of the father before similarly making an allegation that she too had been abused by another brother.

R v M (2014) - Successful defence of historic allegations of serious sexual assault against a youth worker where the recent allegations had been prompted by a chance meeting between the two many years later. The defendant had, in his capacity as youth worker, taken the complainant "under his wing" and given her lifts and taken her to places both alone and with other members of the church youth club unaware of the fact that she had developed a "crush" on him. The degree of unaccompanied contact (not unusual at the time) with a young female left the defendant "wide open" to allegations of the sort now being made. Fortunately, the defence were able to show the jury that the allegations were unreliable and that the complainant lacked credibility.

R v CA (2014) - Successful defence of historic allegations of serious sexual assault made by three ex partners against a former high ranking police officer. He was convicted of contemporary harassment charges. Issues arose as to the poor quality of the police investigation and the involvement of therapists in producing the complaint.

R v BW (2014) - Successful defence of historic allegations of sexual abuse of two boys by the defendant, then a boy slightly older than the complainants but now a successful local businessman. The defence case was that the allegations arose as part of a protection racket. There were serious failings in the police investigation and a refusal to mount any

proper investigation into the defendant's allegations that this was a scam.

R v PH (2014) - Allegations of abuse by stepfather on stepdaughter and her friend. Usual issues relating to inconsistency and contamination of accounts.

R v Ah (2014) - Successful defence of allegations of sexual abuse in family setting (brother on younger brother). Detailed research was necessary of the family make up, background and recent history (especially ill feeling over a recent marriage) in order to demonstrate lack of credibility in account.

R v NH (2014) - Successful defence of very complex case in which it became apparent that the mother had "put up" the young step son (aged 11) to make allegations against the defendant after the defendant commenced proceedings for contact to their daughter during the divorce. There was tape recorded evidence obtained by the defendant which showed conclusively that the mother was indeed coaching the son in the evidence that he should give and disclosure of that evidence led to difficult but important issues relating to admissibility. The mother was interviewed by the police in relation to this evidence but they declined to charge her in the midst of these proceedings. Also, very difficult tactical issues arose in relation to an admittedly false allegation of rape made by a former girlfriend, evidence of an alleged conspiracy between that former girlfriend and the complainant's mother and abduction of the defendant's other son by the child's mother (the defendant's first wife).

R v A (2014) - Successful defence of a very difficult and worrying case in which two apparently respectable professional women (one a member of the clergy and one a former paediatric nurse) were alleging serious historic sexual abuse by the defendant brother who could offer little reason why these allegations should suddenly be made but was adamant they were untrue. One of the complainants had psychological problems and both had undergone counselling and dubious therapy in which the defence case was that their memories had been tainted by inappropriate suggestion. Legal arguments as to contamination accepted by court and case dismissed.

R v G (2014) - Successful defence of allegations of historic sexual abuse by young brother on step sister. Prosecution offered no evidence on day of trial when messages on social media revealed that this was a false allegation. Allegations had caused significant disruption and upset as the teenage defendant was required to leave home which was occupied by parents and younger sister pending outcome of proceedings. Excellent detective work by mother and supporter unearthed the all-important social media messages.

R v MH (2014) - Successful defence of allegations of inciting a child to engage in sexual activity. Case involved numerous issues including vulnerable defendant (autism) and management of active suicide risk, intermediary, computer forensic expert, fake emails, authenticity and admissibility of Skype logs/electronic evidence and a suicide note relied on as bad character evidence in which threats of a terrorist nature were made.

R v K (2014) - Successful defence of allegations of contemporary sexual abuse allegedly against a shopkeeper on the young daughter of an employee. The defence case had been that the child had made the allegations because she feared that the shopkeeper would tell her mother that she had been sneaking a look at the “adult” magazines on display.

R v AM (2013) - Successful defence of allegations of historic sexual abuse by separate (but linked) complaints by two young girls. The first allegation, by his 13 year old stepdaughter arose in the context of relationship breakdown. The evidence revealed that the mother appeared to have been pressurising the child to make complaints and telling her what to say. In the second interview, the child was heard to complain that her “mum will go mad now” after she failed to make any substantive complaint. Social workers reported that when the child came out of that interview, the mother did indeed “go mad” and said to the child that she had “f***ed up everything” by failing to make an allegation. The second child made complaints many years later, four days after the defendant had confided in her mother the fact of the previous allegation. That child had significant psychiatric issues and was also known to have made a false allegation of rape and to have accused her mother’s cousin of having touched her. At the start of the case the prosecution accepted defence submissions that allegations against the defendant of conducting internet searches for child pornography were misconceived and indeed, the prosecution abandoned this aspect of the case.

R v H (2014) - Case involved allegations of sexual abuse against two young granddaughters.

R v C (2013) - Successful defence of allegations of historic sex abuse against defendant when he was a teenager. Allegations that he had abused his friend’s sister were undermined by contemporary evidence, The influence of therapy on the making of the allegations was also a relevant feature.

R v LC (2013) - Successful defence of allegations of historic sex abuse against defendant made by partner’s teenage daughter who disliked defendant and could be shown to have lied.

R v P (2013) - Successful defence of contemporary allegation of rape: issues involving consent/relevance of distress.

R v Ha (2012) - Successful defence of historic allegations of serious sexual assault dismissed following successful submissions relating to doli incapax.

R v T (2) (2012) - Successful defence of contemporary allegation of rape when prosecution offered no evidence after detailed disclosure exercise revealed flaws in the prosecution case. Raised issues of capacity in drink and consent.

R v W (1) (2012) - Successful application to stay for abuse of process multiple allegation of historic sex abuse including several allegations of rape over 30 years ago when the Defendant was aged between 13-15 (when the doctrine of doli incapax

might have applied).

R v K (2012) - Successful defence of contemporary rape allegations against a businessman in relation to a family member. Disclosure exercise revealed serious evidence of unreliability leading the prosecution to conclude that there was no realistic prospect of a conviction and to offer no evidence. In any event, the indictment was likely to have been stayed as an abuse of process on the basis of irremedial contamination of witnesses by the investigating officer.

R v S (2012) - Successful defence of a Social Services assistant who was acquitted by the jury in respect of historic allegations of sexual abuse by a family member. Case significantly complicated by SSD Investigation preceding the ABE interview and the effects of significant breaches of guidelines on the reliability of the evidence.

R v G (1) (2012) - Successful defence of historic rape allegations dating back over 50 years when pensioner charged with offences said to have occurred when he was a boy. Prosecution offered no evidence after defence submissions of abuse of process and evidence of inconsistencies led to a review of the case.

R v G (2) (2012) - Successful defence of allegations against a businessman of sexually molesting an employee. Protracted applications for disclosure revealed documents which caused the prosecution to review all available material which led them to conclude that there was no realistic prospect of a conviction and to offer no evidence. The prosecution were ordered to pay wasted costs for failures in disclosure

R v W (2) (2011) - Successful defence of multiple counts of historic sex including 7 rapes after a rigorous search for disclosure resulted in the prosecution finally accepting that there was no longer any realistic prospect of conviction. Defence expert described the complainant as “a vulnerable and troubled individual and the combination of self-harm and hallucination may point to a personality disorder with borderline features. Such individuals are known to misperceive and misreport events and the condition is sometimes associated with the making of false sex-abuse allegations”.

R v B (2011) - Successful application to stay for abuse of process multiple allegations of historic sex abuse due to significant contamination by the mother of the daughter’s “recollections”, raising issues of false memory, deliberate “brainwashing” and “piecing” together three police/Social Services investigations to ascertain the extent to which the allegations had changed over the years and the effect of inappropriate interviewing techniques.

R v A (2011) - Successful defence of historic allegations of sexual assault by two sisters when the prosecution acceded to defence submissions that the evidence was contaminated and offered no evidence. The case involved complex and difficult issues of an expert nature including false memory syndrome and issues of childhood amnesia. An essential Defence task was to track through the medical records to ascertain where the seed for the false memory had been planted, which led to a physical therapy professional. Inappropriate interview techniques further contaminated the evidence.

R v H (2011) - Allegations of serious sexual abuse by a child with a very significant psychiatric history who had recently been discharged from being sectioned under the Mental Health Act when she made the allegations of “body memories” of the abuse which she interpreted as real.

R v O (2011) - Successful defence of historic sex allegations when prosecution offered no evidence following an extensive disclosure exercise which supported the defence case that these allegations were total fabrications made by a jealous ex-wife and attention seeking teenage daughter in response to his marriage to his second wife at about the time the allegations were made.

R v R (2011) - Successful defence of rape allegations by three vulnerable complainants to whom the defendant was in a position of trust. Prosecution offered no evidence following successful applications by the defence to adduce bad character and hearsay evidence contained in extensive Social Services and educational records. The allegations were intertwined (the defence said contaminated) and it was necessary to unravel the same to understand the genesis of the complaint, the character of the complainant and the nature, extent and source of external suggestion/contamination.

R v T (1) (2011) - Successful defence of rape allegations when the prosecution offered no evidence at trial having accepted that defects in disclosure made the trial unsafe.

R v H (2010) - Successful defence of historic sexual allegations when the jury acquitted a blind defendant accused of sexually assaulting a child in breach of trust. The case involved disputed expert medical evidence as to the nature, cause and effect of a personality disorder on the complainant’s reliability in which it was necessary to consider in detail voluminous amounts of third party material in the form of medical, prison, psychiatric and probation records.

R v R (2010) - Successful defence of a former senior member of Social Services staff/ former residential care worker when the case was stayed at the close of the prosecution case for abuse of process in relation to multiple allegations of multiple complainants dating from the early 1960’s to 1980’s. An extensive disclosure exercise laid bare inconsistencies in the prosecution case and cross examination exposed significant deficiencies in the police investigation.

R v S (2010) - Successful defence of a private tutor in respect of historic sex allegations in relation to two pupils when jury acquitted following serious inconsistencies in the prosecution evidence which appeared in the disclosure exercise and were exposed in cross examination.

R v G (1) (2010) - Successful defence of Army captain who was acquitted by the jury of allegations of historic sex abuse by a psychologically disturbed teenager. The disclosure exercise provided evidence of unreliability of the single complainant.

R v S (2009) - Successful defence of contemporary allegation of rape after jury acquitted student of “date rape”. Expert evidence called as to capacity issues relating to drunkenness. Importance of “Facebook” evidence.

R v B (2009) - Successful defence of a professional man in respect of historic sex allegations in relation to two sisters after successful twin applications of abuse of process/no case to answer made at the conclusion of the prosecution case following clear evidence of contamination and inconsistency which appeared in the disclosure exercise being exposed in cross examination. Wasted costs orders made against prosecution in relation to disclosure.

R v A C-T (2009) - Successful submission of no case to answer relating to allegations of historic sex abuse when the defendant was then in a position of trust at a residential children’s camp. Serious concerns raised as to reliability of complainant and integrity of police investigation. The prosecution/police were ordered to pay wasted costs for failures in disclosure.

R v H (2008) - Successful defence of historic allegations of sex abuse following defence submissions as to the applicability of the doctrine of doli incapax leading to the prosecution offering no evidence at trial.

R v M (2008) - Successful defence of historic sex allegations when the prosecution offered no evidence following a successful defence application for disclosure of medical records to which the complainant declined consent.