

Harry Laidlaw



Year of Call: 2018

020 7353 5324

Harry Laidlaw has a diverse practice which covers all areas of Chambers expertise and is regularly instructed to represent companies and individuals in Criminal Proceedings, Health and Safety Prosecutions and Inquests.

Harry's grounding is in Criminal Law. He regularly acts for the defence and prosecution in the Court of Appeal and Crown Court as well as the Magistrates' and Youth Court. Harry is regularly instructed in matters involving serious violence (including murder), firearms, drugs offences, fraud and sexual offence and is often instructed to represent vulnerable individuals who suffer with a range of mental health difficulties. Harry acts on both a private and publicly funded basis.

Harry is also regularly instructed to represent organisations at Inquests with a particular speciality in inquests involving complex medical issues. In addition, Harry has experience defending those charged with Health & Safety offences having recently been instructed as junior counsel in the case of *Reading Borough Council v R P Ltd*, a child death health and safety prosecution.

Outside of Court work Harry is currently instructed by Peters & Peters as junior counsel in relation to the Post Office 'Horizon' Appeals reviewing hundreds of convictions from the Post Office's use of data from the Horizon computer system in prosecutions between 2000 and 2014.

Criminal Defence

Harry has a strong defence practice appearing in the Court of Appeal, Crown Court, Magistrates Court and Youth Court.

Harry has extensive experience in all aspects of general crime including serious violence (including murder), firearms, drugs offences, fraud and offences of a sexual nature.

In recent years Harry has acted alone in a drugs cases involving in excess of a million pounds of heroin and was a led junior in the Court of Appeal in a case involving the murder of a child.

Location

2 Hare Court
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Harry is often instructed to represent defendants with complex needs and vulnerabilities having completed the Vulnerable Witness Training course at Middle Temple.

Notable defence cases:

R v TJ (2023)

Led junior for TJ, a 17-year-old who suffered with autism. TJ was accused, along with another, of hacking into BT/EE and ransoming information and was charged with Computer Misuse Act offences, fraud and blackmail. After a two-month trial at Southwark CC TJ was acquitted of a number of charges.

R v HC (2021)

Led junior in the Court of Appeal for HC. It was submitted on behalf of HC that her conviction for the murder of her infant was unsafe due to fresh psychiatric evidence not adduced at trial.

R v GP (2023)

Currently acting for GP, an ex-police officer who is accused of operating a drug line between Manchester and Devon which had transported around 5kgs of cocaine. Case ongoing at Exeter CC.

R v BP (2023)

Currently acting for BP, a builder, who is charged with fraud in relation to various building projects. BP is accused of defrauding several elderly and vulnerable individuals. Case ongoing at Nottingham CC.

R v KV (2023)

Acted alone for KV who was accused of assaulting his neighbour. KV was acquitted after a 3-day trial at Basildon CC.

R v AA (2023)

Acted alone for AA, a builder, who was accused of fraud in relation to a renovation project. AA pleaded guilty as was sentenced to an SSO.

R v BO (2023)

Acted alone for BO, an ex-Army corporal who was charged with defrauding AIG, the insurers, having exaggerated the extent of injuries he suffered whilst serving in Iraq. BO pleaded guilty and the prosecution agreed the benefit figure was far lower than first alleged. BO was sentenced to an SSO at Southwark CC.

LBW v ST (2023)

Prosecuted ST who was accused of false accounting and unlawfully subletting council owned properties on behalf of the London Borough of Wandsworth at Kingston CC.

R v CR (2022)

Acted alone for CR who was accused of conspiring to supply over £1m worth of cocaine and heroin after he was found in a garage which had been converted into a drug factory. CR was acquitted after a 5 day trial at Harrow CC.

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R v NK (2022)

Acted alone for NK, a 16 year old charged with false imprisonment, robbery and theft. A complicated youth sentence resulted in a short period in a YOI.

R v FC (2022)

Acted for FC who was accused of ABH & threatening with a bladed article. FC was acquitted after a 5 day trial at Basildon CC.

R v SLN (2021)

Acted alone for SLN who was accused of a bladed article offence after he was said to have produced a machete from the back of his car during an argument. SLN was acquitted after a 5 day trial at Inner London CC.

Criminal Regulatory

Harry has a keen interest in Health and Safety practice having recently been instructed as a led junior in the case of *Reading Borough Council v R P Ltd*, a child death health and safety prosecution. All defendants, Arcadia Group Ltd, Topshop Topman, R P Ltd and Stoneforce Ltd were charged with s.3 HSWA 1974 offences relating to a queue barrier that fell and killed a 10 year old boy in the Topman Topshop store located in the Oracle Centre, Reading in February 2017.

R P Ltd were acquitted of design, manufacture and supply allegations by the jury following an expert heavy trial that lasted over two months.

Inquests & Public Inquiries

Harry has considerable experience representing interested parties in Coronial Inquests. Harry has a particular interest in cases with complex medical issues.

Notable Cases:

Inquest touching upon the death of X (Swansea Coroner's Court)

Harry was instructed by Clyde & Co to represent a care home at an inquest into the death of a resident who died of a stroke after her medication was mislaid. After oral and written submissions, the Court provided a favourable narrative verdict and did not make a prevention of future death report.

Inquest touching upon the death of Y (Eastbourne Coroner's Court)

Harry was instructed to represent a private medical centre at an inquest into the death of a patient who had undergone routine knee surgery. The patient sadly died of various complications arising from an extremely rare rupture of a pancreatic vessel whilst in post operative care. After oral submissions and extensive questioning of expert medical witnesses a narrative verdict was returned which noted that the care the patient was provided was commendable and the death was rare and unforeseeable.

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Public Prosecution

Harry regularly prosecutes in the Magistrates Court and Youth Court on behalf of the CPS. Harry is a CPS Level 3 prosecutor.

Harry also accepts instruction from the National Probation Service to prosecute breaches in the Crown Court.

Appointments & Memberships

- CPS Advocate Level 3
- Government Legal Department “Junior Junior” Counsel Panellist

- Criminal Bar Association
- Young Fraud Lawyers Association
- Youth Practitioner’s Association
- Honourable Society of the Inner Temple

Education & Qualifications

- Bar Professional Training Course, City Law School
- Graduate Diploma in Law, City Law School
- BA Honours History & Anthropology, University of Birmingham
- Vulnerable Witness Training, Middle Temple

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