



New Park Court

ANNUAL REVIEW 2024



New Park Court



Foreword from Joint Heads of Chambers

Sharon Beattie KC & Nick Lumley KC

We have been joint Heads of Chambers for a little over a year now and as is frequently the case at this time of year, we have been reflecting on the activities and achievements of the last year in the professional life of Chambers. Looking through the pages of this review reminds us of the enthusiasm and commitment of our members and staff to everything they do, be it acting and advising in complex cases of the nature set out in our regular “news feed” [some of which feature here], or, in their free time, scaling the three peaks in memory of our late friend and colleague James Gelsthorpe, or taking the time to bake for our annual Macmillan coffee morning, they truly make these a special Chambers to be part of.

At our Chambers dinner in September, we reflected on the enormous achievements of our many distinguished past and present members and the history we have as a set of Chambers, from our foundations nearly 80 years ago to the present day. Never ones to rest on our laurels, it is a matter of enormous pride that our existing members, be they the most senior or the most junior starting out, bring the same commitment, ability and integrity to every case they undertake, just as their predecessors have done over the best part of a century. Times and circumstances may change but those qualities endure.

As well as welcoming pupils to Chambers just starting on their professional journey, we bid farewell to Tim Hartley, a distinguished and loyal member of Chambers and retiring after 50 years. Tim was and remains an exemplar of the qualities referred to above, we wish him a happy retirement and we are confident in our hope that the next generation, in this modern world, with all its challenges, will hold good to the standards set by him and others.

Thank you all for your support over the last year and we wish you, and those you love a happy and peaceful 2024.



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Some Of Our Chambers' High-Profile Cases

Over the last 12 months, Members appeared in a wide range of interesting and high-profile cases. The examples below are just some of them that featured in our news feed.

Nick de la Poer KC and **Matthew Donkin** successfully defended PM who was accused, together with another man, of the murder of Bradley Wall in Leeds during the summer of 2022.

The prosecution case was that the two defendants had attempted to rob Mr Wall causing him to fall from the first-floor window of a flat in the Beeston area. Once in a basement area Mr Wall was subjected to an extremely violent assault. He suffered over 130 separate injuries including fractures to the skull, the larynx and multiple lacerations. An attempt was made to burn his body and heavy paving slabs had been thrown onto him. The co-accused was heard to have boasted about the killing and referred to it as "ISIS style".

The trial lasted six weeks at Leeds Crown Court and involved complex issues of joint enterprise, analysis of the pathological evidence and cause of death and a 'cut-throat' defence. PM was acquitted of both murder and manslaughter.

On 30 January 2023, Leon Matthias was convicted of the murder of his 9 week-old son, Hunter, following a trial before Mrs Justice Lambert at Sheffield Crown Court which lasted for three months.

Robert Smith KC and **Tom Storey** prosecuted this complicated case which involved the calling of multiple expert witnesses in order to prove the cause of Hunter's death.

The jury found by their verdict that Hunter had been shaken and/or thrown against a hard surface by his father in a moment of frustration, causing multiple severe injuries to his brain and eyes, bruising to his scalp and fractures to the bones of his leg. The defence at trial involved a challenge to virtually every aspect of the medical evidence; several defence expert witnesses from other jurisdictions were called in an ultimately unsuccessful attempt to cast doubt on the opinions of the experienced mainstream medical practitioners called on behalf of the prosecution.

The defendant was sentenced on 2 February 2023 to life imprisonment. Mrs Justice Lambert ordered that he should serve a minimum term of 16 years before his case was eligible for consideration by the Parole Board.

Following a 5-week trial prosecuted by **Nick de la Poer KC** and **Richard Holland** before Mr Justice Goose at Bolton Crown Court, the jury convicted Colleen Campbell and Stephen Cleworth of conspiracy to rob and manslaughter and Reece Steven of conspiracy to rob and murder. A fourth defendant was acquitted of participating in the activities of an organised crime group.

The defendants had conspired together with others to rob the victim at his home address, hoping to find valuables and substantial quantities of illegal drugs. Having stalked the victim and rehearsed their plan in the days before the attack, three men, armed with blades, ambushed the victim on his door-step. They bundled him into his home, where he was restrained with gaffer tape and then subjected to nearly 2 hours of torture, causing his death. They ransacked his house, searching for what they had come for, before leaving him for dead.

The prosecution were able to prove that Colleen Campbell, the victim's ex-wife, had fed crucial information to the robbers intending that at least some harm be caused to her former husband, and that Stephen Cleworth, despite not attending on the evening of the killing as he had gone partying instead, had played an integral part in the planning and execution up until the day of the killing, including placing a tracker on the victim's vehicle. Reece Steven was proved to be one of the three men who made up the attack-team who killed the victim.

The Judge sentenced Reece Steven to a life sentence with a minimum term of 37 years, Stephen Cleworth to a life sentence with a minimum term of 12 years, and Colleen Campbell to a sentence of 13 years' imprisonment.

The case carried all the hallmarks of Organised Crime Group violence, including the use of multiple stolen vehicles on false plates intending to frustrate the police investigation and the destruction of evidence after the event, and involved the successful presentation by Nick de la Poer and Richard Holland of numerous standards of circumstantial evidence. These included the distillation of hours of CCTV footage, meticulously gathered and analysed by the police tracking the movements of the defendants and other conspirators in the days and hours before the attack, extensive use of cell-site and mobile phone location data, analysis of messaging and calling patterns between the defendants, DNA evidence of some complexity, and other expert evidence.

Prosecuted by **Jason Pitter KC** and **Tom Storey**, the Defendant was convicted of the disappearance, murder and attempted disposal of the body of his 20 year old niece. He had dumped and concealed her body in wasteland amongst refuse in the industrial area of Bradford. The case was complicated by the fact that by the time her body was discovered it was decomposed to the extent that a cause of death could not be identified.

The case received widespread national publicity because the Deceased had been removed from her home address under a Forced Marriage Protection Order to reside at an address with her mother and another uncle as a result of her father's alleged attempts to force her to marry. The Defendant had asserted that his niece had in fact been killed by her father as a so called "honour based killing" as revenge for her refusal to marry and that he had been recruited to dispose of her body.

The Defendant was convicted following his trial and was sentenced to life with a minimum term of 25 years.

The case involved sensitive cultural issues in relation to honour based killings affecting the family and wider community and was reported in the national media.

Following a 7-day trial before HHJ Adams at Newcastle Crown, **Gavin Doig** leading **Claire Anderson**, successfully prosecuted Matthew Stevens who was convicted of attempted murder.

The victim sustained a brutal and shocking assault leaving her lying unconscious in a woodland, close to the A1 north of Newcastle. Further examination revealed the victim had received a total of 38 injuries, including various fractures to her face. A combination of CCTV, telephone and scientific evidence led to the arrest and subsequent conviction after trial.

Mr Stevens was sentenced to a term of 32 years imprisonment, consisting of 29 years custody and 3-year period of extended licence.

Matthew Donkin acted for the prosecution in a case against two defendants who had acquired extremely rare Anglo Saxon coins. The coins were treasure from a hoard and of high monetary value but were also extremely important culturally and, particularly, for an understanding of English history and the reign of Alfred the Great and his ally, the little known Ceolwulf II of Mercia.

The coins were believed to have come from a hoard that was dug up in Herefordshire but only recovered in part and was therefore being traded on the black market. The defendants held 46 of the coins, with an estimated value of nearly £800k, and were attempting an "off books" sale to an American buyer. The buyer was fictitious and was in fact an undercover police officer. When one of the defendants attended to meet with the 'buyer' at a hotel in Durham he was arrested with three coins on him. The remainder were recovered from the other defendant's home.

The case attracted national and international media attention as the coins in question "re-write the history of England".

Luke Skelton was accused of planning to carry out a terrorist attack on police stations in Newcastle. Prosecuted by **Nick de la Poer KC**, the defendant was unanimously convicted by a jury in Middlesbrough, in a trial before the Recorder of Middlesbrough.

The prosecution's case was that the defendant subscribed to a neo-Nazi ideology and wished to accelerate what he believed to be a coming race war through the commission of a terrorist act. It was alleged that over a period of twelve months, the defendant explored a number of potential targets for his attack, including sites abroad.

It was alleged that the defendant wrote a manifesto and a document he described as "a Final Note" in which he set out his ideology and his vision for a white supremacist state. It was also alleged that he wrote down the ingredients for two types of explosive and researched a number of others. The defendant also travelled to Newcastle and took photographs in the vicinity of a police station in what the prosecution contended was hostile reconnaissance.

The defendant was arrested by Counter Terrorism Police North East before taking further steps in his plan.

His defence was that he was engaging in an 'ego trip', wished to push boundaries online and had never intended to carry out any attack.

On 1 June 2023, following a trial lasting six weeks at Leeds Crown Court that was prosecuted by **Tom Storey** and **Ashleigh Metcalfe**, Christine Grayson was convicted of conspiracy to cause criminal damage to 5G phone masts. Darren Reynolds was convicted of the offences of encouraging terrorism, dissemination of terrorist information and possessing information likely to be of use to a terrorist.

They had both used the Telegram platform to discuss the destruction of 5G phone masts, which Ms Grayson believed were responsible for damaging the health of both people and animals. She repeatedly discussed ways of "killing" the masts in order to remove them from the area of York where she lived.

Mr Reynolds had used Telegram to make repeated calls for Members of Parliament to be hanged, and asserted that a race war between the "indigenous white race" and Jews and non-whites was imminent. His views were underpinned by an extreme right-wing ideology. Reynolds disseminated a link to a Telegram channel called the White Alexandria's Library, described by an academic experienced in the study of the far right as comprising a "fascist canon", and containing terrorist materials such as the manifestos of high-profile right-wing terrorists like Anders Breivik and Brenton Tarrant. He also possessed a number of digital documents which, amongst other things, contained instructions for making viable explosive materials and devices.

On 5 June 2023, the Defendants were sentenced. Christine Grayson was sentenced to 12 months' imprisonment for her involvement in the conspiracy to cause criminal damage. Darren Reynolds was sentenced to a total of 12 years' imprisonment with an additional 1 year on licence as an offender of particular concern.

Paul Greaney KC and **Nick de la Poer KC** conducted the final hearing in the Manchester Arena Inquiry. The oral evidence hearings of the Manchester Arena Inquiry concluded in June with a process by which the Chairman monitored recommendations that he had made in the three volumes of his Report. This involved those to whom recommendations have been directed giving evidence to explain what they had done, or not done, to implement them.

Eight defendants, prosecuted by **Eleanor Fry** and **Richard Holland**, were sentenced on 26 June 2023 to a total of 83 years and 5 months' imprisonment for their involvement in an organised crime group which supplied kilograms of cocaine into York and plotted to produce cannabis on a commercial scale.

Father and son team, Michael and James Leaf, were the lynchpin of the operation where, unbeknownst to them and their fellow conspirators, the police were listening to and recording their incriminating conversations using covert devices. They received sentences of 16 years 5 months and 14 years 8 months, respectively.

In a trial lasting 4 weeks, the prosecution knitted together evidence of phone data, ANPR material, covert recordings, evidential seizures and scientific findings, allowing the court an insight into the workings of a complex and sophisticated criminal conspiracy.

Five defendants pleaded guilty, just before the trial was due to begin, some shortly before and some after legal argument was heard.

Three defendants were convicted by the Jury, including Leeds resident, Gwyne Hollis, who failed to attend for his trial, was tried in his absence and was sentenced to 17 years' imprisonment for his role as the bulk supplier of cocaine to the group. A ninth defendant was acquitted of the charge he faced.

Adam Birkby represented a police officer facing multiple allegations of breaching the Standards of Professional Discipline arising out of his use of force when arresting a child at a school for pupils with behavioural problems. The officer was cleared of all charges following a 4-day gross misconduct hearing.

Paul Greaney KC represented Festival Republic, the organiser of the Leeds Festival at the inquest into the death of David Celino, a 16-year old who died after taking MDMA at the festival in 2022.

Jason Pitter KC and **Geraldine Kelly** appeared for the Crown in the successful prosecution of Michael Hillier and Rachel Fulstow for the carefully orchestrated murder of Liam Smith, father of two. The case received widespread national publicity during the six-week trial at Minshull Street Crown Court Manchester.

Both defendants received a minimum of 30 years sentence by HHJ Greene who referred to the offence as a brutal and cold-blooded murder.

Paul Greaney KC acted on behalf of the trainer of Terence “Bud” Crawford and Chris Eubank Jr. Brian McIntyre, known as BoMac, is a world renowned boxing trainer. In August 2023, he travelled to the UK to train Chris Eubank Jr for his fight with Liam Smith on 2 September 2023. On 3 September 2023, as he attempted to fly home to the US, a handgun and ammunition were discovered within BoMac’s hold luggage. He was charged with possession of a prohibited weapon and ammunition. He pleaded guilty. At the sentencing hearing before the Recorder of Manchester, several witnesses were called including Terence “Bud” Crawford, the best pound for pound boxer in the world. The Recorder found exceptional circumstances justifying a departure from the normal minimum term of 5 years’ imprisonment. A suspended sentence was imposed.

Alistair MacDonald KC leading **Jeremy Barton** appeared for the Crown at Leeds Crown Court in the successful prosecution of three defendants; Amaan Ansar, Sahil Ansar and Wahaab Seif. They were convicted of Murder (Amaan and Sahil Ansar), Robbery (Amaan only) and Manslaughter (Wahaab Seif). Both Amaan and Sahil Ansar were also prosecuted successfully for additional unrelated violent offences by Mr Barton.

In total, Amaan and Sahil Ansar received sentences with minimum terms of 26 and 25 years respectively with Wahaab Seif receiving a determinate sentence of 14 years for manslaughter. Mr Justice Jacobs described the young defendants as ‘violent and dangerous individuals’ after the victim was stabbed and bled to death in the presence of his young son. The case has received national publicity following the conviction.

Paul Greaney KC appeared for the Crown in the prosecution of the men charged with the murder of Ashley Dale and with conspiring to murder her partner Lee Harrison. James Witham, Joseph Peers, Niall Barry and Sean Zeisz were convicted.

Ashley was killed when the gunman, James Witham, smashed his way into her home with a Skorpion sub-machine gun, pursuing Ashley through the house, before shooting her dead. Having done so, the gunman went upstairs and opened fire in a bedroom, so as to send out a message to Lee Harrison, who was not at home. The background to the case was organised criminality of an extremely serious type, in which Ashley (an environmental health officer with the local authority) was entirely uninvolved.

The case received widespread national publicity during the 7-week trial before Mr Justice Goose at Liverpool Crown Court.



Chambers Appointments and Achievements 2023

We are delighted to be able to celebrate and share the appointments and achievements of our people over the course of this year. Recognising and celebrating success is an important part of who we are. So congratulations to:

- **His Honour Judge Gavin Doig** for his appointment to the Circuit Bench.
- **Jason Pitter KC** who has taken post as our Circuit Leader.
- **Georgina Goring** who was appointed legal qualified chair for the Health and Care Professional Council.
- **Chloe Hudson** and **Georgina Goring** for their appointments as Legal Advisors to the General Optical Council.
- **Bryan Barclay-Semple** for his promotion to Senior Practice Manager.
- **Rob Wagg** for his election to the Bar Council.
- **Maryam Ahmad** who completed the 25/25 Pro Bono Challenge.
- **Sharon Beattie KC** for having an article published in The Times.
- **Simon Kealey KC** who was appointed Head of the Criminal Team.
- **Nick de la Poer KC** for his appointment as Head of the Regulatory Team.
- **Geraldine Kelly** who become our Deputy Head of the Criminal Team.
- **Georgina Goring** and **Adam Birkby** who respectively became Deputy Head of the Regulatory Team (Professional Regulation) and Deputy Head of the Regulatory Team (Criminal Regulation).
- **David Outterside** who joined our Criminal Team as a tenant.
- **Amber Walker** who joined our Criminal Team as a tenant.
- **Gabrielle Wilks** who accepted an offer of tenancy post pupillage.
- **Daisy Wrigley** who joined us for pupillage.
- **Antonia Adie** who joined us for pupillage.
- **Yousra Berry** who joined us an Assistant Practice Manager.

Our Work with the Bar Council

In March we partnered with the Bar Council to host and deliver pan-Circuit training on the Fair Allocation of Work and Fair Recruitment; in recognition that the importance of the subjects transcends our own Chambers. With the number of attendees totalling over 100, it was the first time ever our Circuit had been successfully brought together in this way.

Come May, we were delighted to welcome and host the Chair of the Bar Council, Nick Vineall KC, alongside his colleagues the Deputy Chair of the Bar Council, Sam Townend KC, and the Bar's Director of Services Carolyn Entwistle at both our Newcastle and Leeds Chambers. Discussion topics ranged from pupillage to the challenges of maintaining a busy Practice.

As part of supporting and embedding new joiners to The Bar Council, we welcomed Helen Plumley, Senior Services Co-Ordinator, to our Leeds Chambers in July to provide an insight into the organisations that The Bar Council support. After spending a morning with our CEO, Rob Wagg, Helen sat with our Clerks for the daily Crown Court listing meeting before spending time shadowing two of our barristers on a criminal trial.



Refurbishment of Newcastle Chambers

In May of last year we completed an infrastructure refresh of our Newcastle Chambers, aimed at improving client experience and access as well as creating a stronger brand and contemporary feel.

From a structural redesign to new flooring and paintwork we also brought new desks, chairs, equipment and updated our kitchen. Those with an eye for detail and an interest in Quayside architecture may also recognise some familiar sights in our new artwork.

If you are yet to visit and have a look around do let us know, we would be delighted to show you.

Our Partnership with Make it Wild

We are pleased that our partnership with Make It Wild has entered its second year this year. To celebrate our commitment to the environment and offsetting our carbon emissions we are also pleased to share that the New Park Court Woodland has grown by an additional 50 trees.

We take our responsibility to the environment seriously. As leaders in our profession, we have a moral obligation to set the standard and encourage those around us to follow suit. My thanks to all at Make It Wild, who we have worked closely with over the last year, for helping, supporting and enabling us to be better.

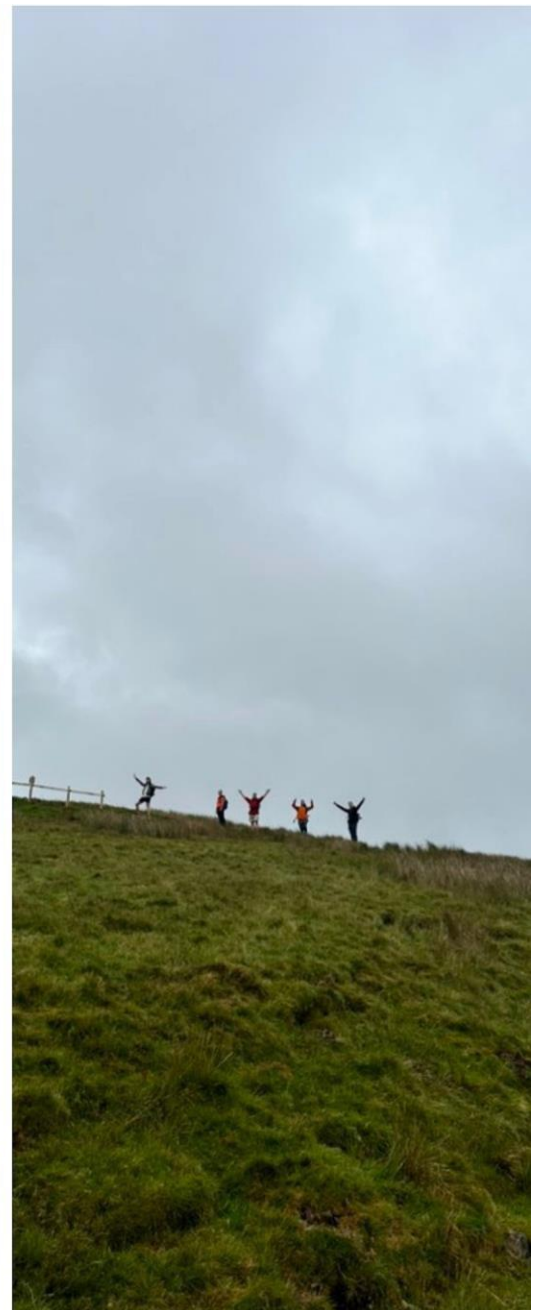
Furthermore, we have worked to reduce our natural resource consumption and to change our habits for the better where we can. A simple example of this being limiting the number of hard copies of this Annual Review that are produced as well as ensuring that those that are use recycled materials.



North Eastern Circuit Charity Yorkshire Three Peaks Challenge

In memory of James Gelsthorpe, who we remember as good humoured, hard working and full of potential, a team from the North Eastern Circuit made up of many members of New Park Court conquered the Yorkshire Three Peak Challenge in a day.

Despite battling heavy rain and thunderstorms, the team (and two dogs) battled through raising more than £7,500 for the charity Mind.



Bar Council Wellbeing Certification



Wellbeing
at the Bar

Certificate of Recognition

Awarded to

New Park Court Chambers

For invaluable work demonstrating commitment
to wellbeing in the barristers' profession



Nick Vineall KC, Chair of the Bar of England and Wales 2023



Awarded in 2023, expires 2026

Here at New Park Court we are committed to the wellbeing and wellness of our Chambers family.

So it was really rewarding, during Mental Health Awareness Week, to be amongst a select few to have been awarded Bar Council Wellbeing Certification in recognition of our range of initiatives and activities all aimed at helping, enabling and supporting our people to be the best that they can be, even when life's challenges present.

These initiatives vary in size and scope. From providing everyone in Chambers with 24/7 access to counselling support through to a regular drum beat of social activities, we aim to provide a safe and supportive environment in which our people can flourish. This intent also stretches beyond our walls and across the wider Circuit. This year we planned and hosted the North Eastern Circuit's first Men's Wellbeing Event, in conjunction with the North Eastern Circuit's Wellbeing Committee, where we were joined by stress management and resilience experts who shared their thoughts on how to assist, support and look after our male family members, friends and colleagues in an increasingly complex world.

Chambers Black-Tie Dinner

Our annual Chambers Black Tie Dinner returned in September giving us an opportunity to celebrate, reacquaint and of course remember.

The dinner was held in the historic Merchant Taylors' Hall in York where we were joined by a number of very special guests; all of whom were former Members of Chambers who had either moved to the judiciary or since retired.

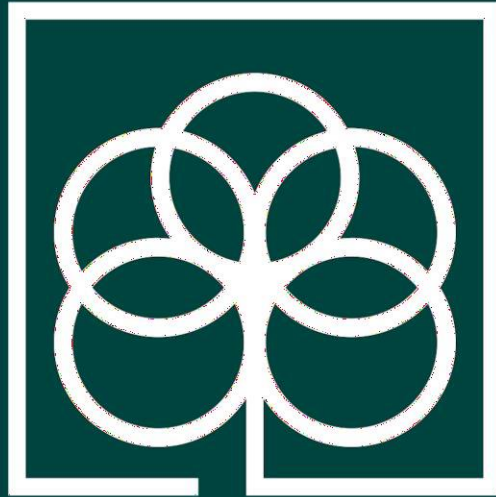
With an opening address by Sharon Beattie KC and a closing speech by Nick Lumley KC, our Joint Heads of Chambers, a wonderful evening was had by all.



Tim Hartley: Celebrating 50 years in Chambers

The Chambers Black Tie Dinner also presented us with an opportunity to pay tribute to Tim Hartley who, after a career spanning more than five decades in Chambers, retired on 31 October 2023; a colossal achievement. A highly regarded Civil practitioner, Tim was a delight to clerk and a dear friend to generations of Members and Staff alike.

We wish Tim and Jacqueline the very best for the future which will no doubt be influenced by fine wine (both in terms of business and pleasure).



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