



# Helen Chapman

Year of call 2006



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Helen Chapman was called to the bar in 2006. She completed pupillage and her first five years of practice in London before moving to the North Eastern Circuit in 2012. She joined New Park Court chambers in March 2025.

Helen practises predominantly in serious violence, including murder and manslaughter and sex cases, though cases concerning fraud, firearms and drug supply are also significant parts of her practice. She prosecutes and defends in equal measure.

She is known for her ability to get to the nub of a case quickly, for her reassuring manner and for her engaging style with juries. She is an effective leading advocate and is also a popular choice as a junior counsel to be led by King's Counsel.

She is often instructed privately to defend in sex cases. She accepts national instructions for this work and is able to advise and conduct cases in the most sensitive of circumstances. She is also often sought to advise on appeal and has successfully achieved the quashing of convictions before the Court of Appeal.

Helen is a Grade 4 prosecutor and appears on the Counter Terrorism Panel as well as the Rape and Serious Sexual Offences Panel. She is also on the Attorney General's list of Regulatory Advocates.

Helen received two judicial appointments in five years. She was appointed a Deputy District Judge (Magistrates Court) in 2019 and a Recorder in 2025. She sits in Magistrates Courts and Crown Courts across the Northern and North-Eastern Circuits.

## Expertise

### Murder and Serious Violence

#### Notable Murder and Serious Violence cases

R v TH (Hull Crown Court)

#### Leeds

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Led by [Jason Pitter KC](#) defending a woman who had stabbed her husband to death in the course of an argument over Christmas 2022. She was 54, there had been a long and happy marriage and her adult children were supporting her. The first jury could not decide on either murder or manslaughter. In the re-trial she was convicted of murder. The case was the subject of local media interest and comment. The minimum term of 9 years imprisonment was considered for reference to the Court of Appeal by the Prosecution but rejected.

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R v MK and others (Bradford Crown Court)

Leading Junior prosecuting 21 defendants for their parts in two violent disorders, a conspiracy to commit the second violent disorder and s18 assaults. 18 defendants were prosecuted in 2025 and there are three others to be tried in 2027. In the course of the violence one victim almost lost his hand after he was attacked with a machete. There was voluminous telephone evidence and a careful strategy had to be in place to manage so many defendants within one case.

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R v GK (Leeds Crown Court)

Junior Counsel led by a KC prosecuting a defendant alleged to have shaken the infant child of his partner. The medical evidence was complex and there was third party material from various sources that Helen was tasked with navigating disclosure as well as considering a complicated picture as to character.

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R v MSJ (Bradford Crown Court)

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Defended a young father in a s18 “baby shaking” case. Expert evidence called by both sides as to medical evidence and causation. Helen successfully argued that there was no case to answer in respect of the most serious charge of s18 and that count was withdrawn from the jury by the trial judge.

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R v ER (Hull Crown Court)

Representing a 16 year old Defendant accused of the attempted murder of another teenager. The evidence included TikTok material and evidence of organised crime. The Defendant was found Not Guilty of Attempted Murder.

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## Sexual Violence

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### Notable Sexual Violence cases

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R v JF (Court of Appeal)

The Defendant had been convicted at trial of rape following a sexual encounter with a woman he met in a pub. The Defence case had been that the Complainant had made the allegations up because she had a boyfriend. The jury had not accepted that and had convicted him unanimously.

Helen was instructed privately to advise a year post-sentence on documents that had been provided by the Prosecution. Those documents included a copy of a the Complainant’s notebook where she referred to herself as a compulsive liar. Helen successfully brought an appeal against the convictions on the basis of this fresh evidence. The Court of Appeal quashed the convictions.

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R v BS (Court of Appeal)

The Defendant was convicted of trial of rape and behaving in a controlling and coercive behaviour towards two previous partners.

Helen was instructed privately post-conviction to advise on appeal.

Helen successfully overturned the convictions by arguing that the direction on cross-admissibility was deficient in several ways. The Court of Appeal quashed the convictions.

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R v JSG (Manchester Crown Court)

Leading Counsel for Defendant in Rochdale Grooming Gang trial. Two complainants had made allegations against 50 men and this trial was the first tranche of what is the largest Grooming Gang trial in the United Kingdom.

The client was the older brother of the First Defendant – who was represented by a KC and junior in this case. There was a cut-throat defence being run by the First Defendant.

Helen and her junior were the only team to secure acquittals on all offences of rape against their client. They won several significant legal arguments in order to do so.

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R v PT - (Leeds Crown Court)

Leading Counsel for Prosecution in a seven-complainant case. Defendant (who already had two sets of convictions for like offences in 1986 and 2016) was alleged to have sexually abused seven children. The timeline was complex, the allegations ranging from 1971 through to 1996. There was voluminous unused material from several sources. The investigation had commenced as three separate investigations from three different police forces across the United Kingdom.

Helen and her junior navigated the case from charge to conclusion. The Defendant faced 32 counts on the indictment and was unanimously convicted of all counts.

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R v CJ – (Durham Crown Court)

Privately instructed to represent a former District Crown Prosecutor accused of making an arrangement to commit serious sexual offences against a 7 year old girl. The Defendant was caught in a sting operation by undercover police officers. The case was sensitive due to the Defendant's former profession and was heard out of area. Helen cross-examined the officer who was granted anonymity for the duration of the proceedings.

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R v DS (Sheffield Crown Court)

Privately instructed to represent a Defendant following an investigation by the National Crime Agency. 10 complainants alleged that the Defendant had raped and sexually assaulted them in the back of limousines. The case lasted for 8 weeks and drew press attention and was the subject of a podcast by the National Crime Agency.

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R v LJ (Grimsby Crown Court)

Defending a 16 year old accused of sexual offences against younger family members. The Defendant was extremely vulnerable and was in local authority detention. Helen persuaded the Crown Court to remit the case back to the Youth Court after some guilty

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pleas were entered. Helen appeared in the Youth Court and was able to secure a Referral Order with appropriate support.

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## Firearms and Explosives

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### Notable Firearms and Explosives cases

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R v IC and LC (Sheffield Crown Court)

Leading Junior for the Prosecution – Police had attended the Defendant’s address and discovered many and varied weapons and explosive devices. That led to a large area being cordoned off and evacuated whilst the properties were made safe. It transpired that the devices were being used to ward off intruders from interfering in a significant quantity of drugs and over £40,000 in cash. There was expert evidence called on both sides in respect of the explosives, firearms and drugs.

The Defendants were both convicted on all counts after a 12 day trial.

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R v CM (Leeds Crown Court)

Defending in multi-handed firearms case following three drive-by shootings in Wakefield with Uzi machine guns. The evidence comprised cell-site and radio frequency evidence of a phone where attribution was disputed.

Helen successfully led the arguments on behalf of all defendants in respect of the admissibility of bad character evidence as to a non-defendant who was said to have possibly provided ammunition for the shootings.

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R v JS (Sheffield Crown Court)

Defending in two handed firearms case following a shooting on an estate in Sheffield. The evidence comprised forensic evidence, cell site material and enhanced CCTV footage. Helen successfully argued that two counts on the indictment should be removed and secured a determinate sentence.

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## Fraud and Financial Crime

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### Notable Fraud and Financial Crime cases

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R v LC (Leeds Crown Court)

Instructed for second defendant in multi-handed credit fraud. The case was paper heavy with reams of telephone records disclosed mid-way through the case. Helen’s client was the only defendant to be acquitted.

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R v CE (Hull Crown Court)

Instructed for first defendant in multi-handed NHS fraud. The case featured two QE witnesses, heavy volumes of invoices and financial documentation and cut-throat defences from several of the co-accused.

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### R v B & S (Sheffield Crown Court)

Instructed as a led junior prosecuting a substantial care-home fraud. Helen conducted advocacy in respect of the regulatory aspects of the case, drafting and resisting the abuse of process arguments. The case was an NHS investigation and Police investigation, ultimately prosecuted by the CPS resulting in disclosure difficulties.

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### R v ST (Leeds Crown Court)

Instructed as a led junior for a financial advisor prosecuted for regulatory offences under FSMA 2000 and a multi-handed fraud amounting to over £1m. Helen prepared legal arguments about the correct application of the relevant statutory instrument. She conducted advocacy throughout the trial in conjunction, including cross examination of a forensic accountant.

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## Appointments

- Grade 4 General Crime
- Grade 3 Counter Terrorist Division Prosecution Panel
- RASSO Panel
- AG/HSE Panel C
- Deputy District Judge (2019)
- Advocacy Trainer, Middle Temple
- Pupil Supervisor

## Memberships

- Criminal Bar Association

## Directory Quotes

“Recommended for Crime (Leading Juniors)”

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*Legal 500 2026*

“Helen Chapman is “very poised” and “a great trial tactician’... ‘She is both tactically astute and hugely effective when cross-examining, even on the most sensitive of trials’... ‘She is an outstanding advocate ”

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*Legal 500 2025*

“You were consistently ace throughout. Your calm approach, clear thinking, and ability to cut through the detail made a real

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difference, particularly when things threatened to become more complicated than they needed to be. Having someone so steady and capable in my corner was genuinely reassuring. ”

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*Mr C – (Fraud case, acquitted) December 2025*

“A highly capable and eloquent advocate”...“persuasive and engaging with courts and juries”...“consistently provides a top drawer performance” ”

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*Legal 500 2024*

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