



Estelle Thornber

Year of call: 2012

Year of silk:

About

Estelle is a measured and effective advocate, regularly appearing in both the Crown Court and the Magistrates Court. Estelle's friendly and compassionate approach with clients, teamed with her robust and fearless style in the courtroom has allowed her to develop an impressive criminal junior practice. Estelle recently completed a 9-week trial as junior counsel acting for 1 of 6 defendants indicted in a multi-million pound class A, B and C sophisticated drugs conspiracy and money laundering matter at Inner London Crown Court [January 2019 March 2019]. In the Summer of 2018, Estelle was instructed as Independent Disclosure Counsel for HMRC as part of a large scale investigation involving an alleged tax fraud connected with football transfer fees [April 2018 August 2019]. Estelle also acted as junior defence counsel in an 8-week trial at Leicester Crown Court which involved 12 defendants accused of conspiring to commit violent disorder, culminating in an attempted murder [February 2018 April 2018]. Prior to commencing her pupillage, Estelle worked as a paralegal in the Crown Court Department of a busy criminal defence firm in central London and in the Catastrophic Injury Team of a leading City Law Firm; Estelle appreciates the demands placed upon instructing solicitors in modern-day practice and the importance of clear communication and impeccable client-care. Reported Cases [2018]: Regina v Kay Strugnall [2018] EWCA Crim 2895 Estelle appeared on behalf of the defendant at the initial Sentencing Hearing in the Crown Court and the subsequent Attorney Generals Reference Hearing at the Court of Appeal in November 2018. This Judgment highlights the restrictions on the imposition of Drug Rehabilitation Requirements attached to Community Orders in place of short to moderate custodial sentences. The Judgment can be found here: [Full Court Transcript of Regina v Kay Strugnall\[2018\] EWCA Crim 2895](#) Andrew Randell v DPP [2018] EWHC 1048 (Admin) Estelle successfully stated a case for the Opinion of the High Court following the outcome of a Magistrates Court trial. The clients convictions for Arson and Theft were subsequently quashed at the High Court and no re-trial was ordered; this case reaffirmed the principle that a witness best evidence is given live, where it can be open to challenge. This case further confirmed that statutory provisions, not the Criminal Procedure Rules, determine the admissibility of Hearsay Evidence. A short commentary on the case by UK Practical Law is available here: [UK PLC Case Comment on Andrew Randell v DPP\[2018\] EWHC 1048 \(Admin\)](#)

Inner Temple Otto & Sadie Rix Prize 2016

Inner Temple Trans-Pennine Mooting Competition Winner 2012

BPP Leeds: BPTC Very Competent

Newcastle University: LLB 2.1

ADR Accredited Civil and Commercial Mediator

Modern Hebrew (Fluent)

French (Basic)

Cases of note

R v G [June 2018]

Croydon Magistrates Court: Estelles client was acquitted of two charges involving assault, including an alleged assault upon his child. The evidence against the Defendant included body worn footage of injuries to the Complainant and the child immediately following the alleged assault.

R v H [January 2018]

Luton Magistrates Court: The Defendant was acquitted in respect of one charge of Causing Unnecessary Suffering to an Animal, contrary to s.4(1) of the Animal Welfare Act 2006. The trial involved independent witnesses for the Crown and legal submissions on behalf of the Defence.

R v N (A Youth) [December 2018]

Croydon Youth Court: Successful application inviting the recusal of a District Judge following a two-day youth trial. This application was made by Estelle after her 12-year-old clients previous convictions were introduced by the Co-Defendants representative without notice. The matter was listed for legal arguments to be heard; despite the usual position that as Judges of fact and law, District Judges are able to put hearsay and bad character out of their minds, the Judge accepted Estelles submissions and recused himself.

R v S [October 2017]

Bromley Magistrates Court: Estelle successfully argued mitigating circumstances (Exceptional Hardship), allowing her client to avoid mandatory disqualification and to continue driving with 15 points on their licence.

R v O and Others [February 2018 May 2018]

Leicester Crown Court: Estelle acted as Junior Counsel in this 9-week trial involving 12 Defendants accused of charges ranging from Attempted Murder to multiple Conspiracies to Commit Violent Disorder.

R v I [February 2018]

Luton Crown Court: Estelles client was unanimously acquitted of a knifepoint robbery following a 4-day trial.

R v C [January 2018]

Cambridge Crown Court: A custodial sentence imposed in respect of Possession with Intent to Supply Class A Drugs (MDMA) was suspended following mitigation; the Judge accepted the Defences submissions that the case fell outside the usual applicable bracket of the Sentencing Guidelines.

R v CU [November 2017]

Stafford Crown Court: Not guilty verdicts recorded following a two-day trial in respect of one Count of section 18 Grievous Bodily Harm with intent, contrary to the Offences Against the Person Act 1861. The allegation involved a stabbing using improvised weapons and pouring of boiling water over the victim.

R v CO [August 2017]

Wolverhampton Crown Court: Client unanimously acquitted by a jury following a trial in respect of two Counts of dwelling burglary.

R v H [Inner London Crown Court]

Privately instructed Counsel in Possession with Intent to Supply Class A matter (36 wraps of cocaine); matter was discontinued post PTPH following successful representations made to the CPS by Counsel.

R v D [Central Criminal Court]

Privately instructed Defence Counsel in Possession with Intent to Supply Class A and False ID with Intent matter.

R v A [Croydon Crown Court]

Secured not guilty verdict in Category 1 Assault Occasioning Actual Bodily Harm allegation involving weapon; Jury deliberated for less than 40 minutes.

R v I [Camberwell Magistrates Court]

Matter of Assault involved cross-examination of 8-year-old child in Court.

R v R [Bromley Youth Court]

Secured acquittal after trial in alleged Assault upon Store Manager by youth Defendant.