Gordon Hennell

YEAR OF CALL 1982

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AREAS OF EXPERTISE

Criminal



Criminal CV

Specialist Areas of Practice

Criminal Law

Profile

Hugely experienced yet extremely approachable, Gordon Hennell is a formidable jury advocate, who brings great expertise and enthusiasm to every case he prosecutes or defends.

Awarded the Prince Lee Scholarship to read History at Trinity College, Cambridge, he served as President of the College Students' Union, before changing to read Law.

He began his legal career at 43 King Street, Manchester before moving with those Chambers in the early 1990s to 5 John Dalton Street, Manchester. He developed a substantial Defence practice in Chester and North Wales and in 1995/6 acted as Defence Junior in a series of lengthy historical sex abuse trials concerning events at a children's home in Congleton.

In 2001 he joined 22 Nicholas Street (now Linenhall Chambers) in Chester and practised principally on the Wales and Chester Circuit until 2014. After prosecuting Miss Nicola Gatto in a child sex abuse trial at Warrington Crown Court, he was invited to apply to 9 St John Street, and joined Chambers in December 2014.

Gordon Hennell has prosecuted and defended all types of serious crime including Murder (with and without a leader), Manslaughter, Causing Explosions likely to Endanger Life, large scale Drugs Conspiracies, Armed Robbery, Rape and Fraud. He has appeared at Courts throughout England and Wales from Carlisle and Caernarfon to Exeter and Canterbury.

Notable Cases

- R v A (2011) EWCA Crim 2913 LCJ (Mold Crown Court and the Court of Appeal)

Defended a young woman due to plead guilty to perverting the course of justice, by making a false allegation of marital rape. Mr Hennell ascertained in conference that she had been raped and so advised an ouster application re the husband plus a further police interview, in which she admitted false retraction, to which she pleaded. Subsequently secured a Court of Appeal hearing and the substitution of a community order, within 18 days of a Crown Court sentence of immediate imprisonment.

- R v Bebbington and Others (reported with Boness) 2006 1 Cr App R(S) 120; (2006) Crim LR 160 (2006) ACD 5 (Chester Crown Court and the Court of Appeal)

Successfully represented ten Appellants in overturning a series of ASBOS in what has become one of the leading cases on the necessity for and the ambit of, what are now Criminal Behaviour Orders.

- R v Larsen (Caernarfon Crown Court)

Defended during a four week trial, "the Denbigh Bomber", a former Mayor of the town, charged with causing a series of explosions likely to endanger life.

- R v Majola (Warrington Crown Court)

Prosecuted a Murder (as a Junior without a Leader) involving a 17 year old lad who had stabbed another youth in the head with a screwdriver. The issues were identification, racial provocation, drink and intent. Mr Hennell was instructed early on and advised closely as to both the presentation of evidence and the proper disclosure of unused material. The Defendant, who was represented by Leading and Junior Counsel, pleaded guilty to Murder at the PCMH.

- R v Murphy (Sheffield Crown Court)

Secured the acquittal of the alleged UK organiser or 'Ringmaster' of a conspiracy to evade excise duty of £2 million on imported cigarettes, in which his phones were at the centre of a damning prosecution document showing numerous calls between the importer (his co-defendant who was convicted), the various small fry (who all pleaded guilty) and him. Mr Hennell countered this by producing a defence document in the exact same format, detailing others who had access to his phones and so could have made the calls concerned.

- R v Walton (Chester Crown Court)

Defended a teenager who lost control of his car and killed a blameless pedestrian but who refused to accept any culpability. Mr Hennell opened the defence case to the jury successfully inviting them (despite the client's reluctance and much judicial opposition) to convict of simple careless driving.

- R v Williams and Others (Warrington Crown Court)

Prosecuted a multi handed armed robbery, in which the principal defendant (in support of an alibi) deliberately got himself caught on a shop CCTV near his home, before being driven several miles at high speed on camera free back roads to rob a Post Office. Detailed study of the locality (including driving all the various possible routes) and precise analysis and presentation of the camera footage available, secured convictions all round.

Cases in 2015

- *R v White* Caernarfon Crown Court February/March 2015. Instructed by Elwyn Jones Solicitors of Bangor, Gwynedd. Defended during a 6 week trial, one of the principal Defendants in a substantial Class A Drugs Conspiracy (Operation Yonside) involving the supply and distribution of cocaine from Liverpool and Manchester into North Wales.
- *R v Walsh* Minshull Street Crown Court July 2015. Instructed by Gruber Garratt Solicitors of Oldham. Successfully defended a youth accused of two separate serious sexual assaults, allegedly committed against a younger girl, on week days unknown, during a particular month, a year before the trial. The Defendant, who knew the Complainant, but denied any sexual impropriety with her could not remember his movements on the potential mornings in question, save to say he thought he would have been travelling to school. Mr Hennell directed detailed research of the Defendant's school attendance records and the bus timetables for the relevant periods. He personally walked and timed the routes the Complainant said she and the Defendant had followed, from the bus station to the scene of the alleged attacks and had comprehensive photograph albums prepared. At trial, careful cross-examination of the Complainant as to the exact timing of events and robust questioning of the officer in the case, proved that at the precise time one of the attacks was said to have occurred, whichever of the possible days alleged, the Defendant could not possibly have been there. He was duly acquitted of both offences.
- R v McGeough Preston Crown Court, September 2015. Instructed by Forbes Solicitors of Preston Successfully submitted "No Case to Answer" on behalf of one of the four Defendants accused of kidnap and robbery of a Complainant who had been driven off, in his own vehicle, and roughed up and intimidated, into giving information

about his debit card details. Although the Defendant's blood had been recovered from inside the vehicle, Mr Hennell successfully argued that this forensic link was fatally undermined by various inconsistencies in the identification and description evidence. The Defendant was duly discharged and the trial proceeded against the remaining three accused.

- R v Begum - Preston Crown Court October 2015. Instructed by the CPS Complex Crime Unit and leading Mr Alex Langhorn.

Prosecuted to a successful conclusion a charity funding fraud. The principal Defendant pleaded guilty to substantive charges of fraud and furnishing false information, part way through the trial.

Quotes

"An exceptionally persuasive advocate

- Lord Carlile of Berriew QC