

Audrey Archer

Year of Call: 2004
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Overview

Audrey Archer's busy criminal practice sees her instructed in an array of interesting, challenging and notable criminal cases. She is regularly praised for the impressive working relationship she develops with her clients of all ages and backgrounds. Her characteristics of care and compassion combined with firmness, determination and focus have given rise to her successful and well established practice at the Criminal Bar.

Recommendations

Audrey Archer is ranked in the **Legal 500 2027**/Crime/Leading Juniors/Western Circuit

Audrey Archer is ranked in the **Legal 500 2026**/Crime (General and Fraud)/Leading Juniors/Western Circuit

'Audrey is an accomplished, fearless and highly effective advocate. She is meticulously well-prepared and presents with a secure grasp of all aspects of a case.'

Legal 500 2025/Crime (General and Fraud)/Leading Juniors/Western Circuit

'I have observed Audrey on a number of occasions in her capacity as a barrister for some of our cases. She is friendly and warm, and always puts young people at ease. Her manner is non-judgmental and it is clear that she takes a child-first approach to her work with children in the Criminal Justice System – that is to say she treats them as children first and foremost. Her language is clear and she takes opportunities to check in with them regarding their understanding. Her language is child-friendly so that children can understand her, without confusing jargon. She also takes the time to catch up with families and carers in advance of hearings to ensure they have a full understanding of proceedings, what to expect, possible outcomes etc. I would say her manner is realistic but reassuring, and her knowledge and experience shine through. In Court Audrey's advocacy for the children she works with is admirable. She is very thorough and it is easy to see the diligence and effort she puts into working to achieve the best outcome for the children.

On a more general note, Audrey's timely preparation and research of cases is clear, and I have noted that Judges seem happy that she has approached her cases in a meticulous manner. As a professional I have found it extremely helpful to work alongside a legal representative who is collaborative, responsive and communicative. When I share cases with Audrey is feels as though we are working as part of a team to ensure the best result for the young person as well as the public.'

Rosie Major, Youth Offending Officer, Southampton Youth Justice Service

Academic qualifications

- BVC: Very competent. (2004)
- LLB (HONS): 2.1 (2002)
- LLM (COMMERCIAL LAW) (2003)

Professional bodies

- Middle Temple
- Prisoners Education Trust
- Western Circuit
- Family Law Bar Association

Expertise

Crime and Regulatory Crime

Audrey Archer specialises in criminal defence and has been involved in a number of cases that have attracted national and international press attention.

Her first case to be reported nationally was when she was just eight months into her practice. The Sun reported on the exceptionally lenient sentence her client received, and criticised the leniency that was shown to her client by the Court. Since then, many of Audrey's cases have been nationally reported. One of her cases (resulting in her client being acquitted after a two-month trial) was televised along with her client being interviewed on national radio after her acquittal. Another of her cases was referenced in the movie 'Bridget Jones' Baby' (2016). An example of one of her recent high-profile cases (2022) attracted both national and international press attention due to her client being one of the first female defendant's to be tried for the of raping a man (the female equivalent charge). Her client was acquitted after trial - see Daily Mail article.

Audrey takes pride in thorough preparation and determined focus in the defence of her clients. In 2023 Audrey successfully appealed a sentence imposed upon a client, and was expressly commended by the Court of Appeal in their judgment for her *'terse, focused and effective written and oral submissions'*: ***R v Saurin*** **[2023] EWCA Crim 582**.

Pending Cases of note (2024)

- Defending a female defendant accused of playing a role within a large-scale conspiracy to supply of class A drugs between Liverpool and Southampton (trial listed for March 2024).
- Defending a male accused of multiple offences of rape and strangulation against four females. The defendant has been described by police as a dangerous sexual predator who specifically targets vulnerable young females in the care system: R v E (Trial listed in May 2024).
- Kidnap, Blackmail and Assault (Trial listed in July 2024): the defendant is accused of the kidnap and torture of another, along with blackmail.
- Violent Disorder (Trial listed in Autumn 2024): Defendant accused with at least 14 others, of carrying out a violent disorder following a Southampton v Tottenham football match.

Recent Crown Court cases

- Over the past year Audrey has defended a number of youths (***R v JC*** (Nov 2023), ***R v KD*** (August 2023), ***R v C*** (Oct 2023) accused of stabbings stemming from gang related violence and post code wars in the Southampton area. Audrey has established an impressive working relationship with each of these youths which has resulted in workers within the Youth Justice Service in Southampton, and defence solicitors, praising her for her ability to establish an impressive rapport with some vulnerable and troubled young defendants.
- ***R v Whitlock*** (2023): The defendant was accused of false imprisonment, strangulation and coercive and controlling behaviour against his ex-partner. At the conclusion of his 9-day trial, the Jury unanimously acquitted the defendant on all counts.
- ***R v Stanley and others*** (2023): Trial wherein Audrey's client was one of five defendants accused of a large scale operation to supply class A drugs between Liverpool and Southampton. Audrey's client was the only defendant acquitted by the Jury at the conclusion of this three-month trial.
- Successfully defended an army sergeant accused of affray and assault upon two soldiers. His not guilty verdict was reported in a number of national newspapers. For example, see Daily Mail article.
- Reported in the national papers: Defended a female accused of a vicious offence of glassing a male. Her client had seventeen previous convictions for violence towards others. She received a suspended sentence order. Achieving a suspended sentence for her client was a great accomplishment in view of the circumstances of this case, and the defendant's background. See media article.

- Defended a police officer accused of severe harassment on an ex-partner, and data protection offences. On the BBC national news and within the national papers. See BBC news item.
- Successfully defended in a heavily reported kidnap trial, where part of Audrey's cross examination of the main complainant was reported in the press: ***R v Charlotte Devaney*** - see article in the Independent.
- Instructed in a nationally reported case to defend a male charged with possession of a firearm, and grievous bodily harm with intent. Following preparatory advice from Audrey in relation to the defendant's mental health at the time of the offences, experts were instructed, and the defendant was found to be insane at the time of the offences by two psychiatrists. Insanity was therefore a live issue in this trial: see Daily Mail article and news item in the Telegraph.

Sexual Offences

Audrey has commendable expertise in defending in cases involving sexual allegations. She is regularly instructed to defend in rape cases. Since 2012 she has acted for over 20 defendants accused of rape. Her only client convicted of rape, to date, had his conviction quashed by the Court of Appeal as a result of Audrey, with the assistance of King's Counsel, successfully appealing his conviction: ***R v Beresford*** **[2020] EWCA Crim 1674**.

Sexual offences

Audrey Archer's primary area of specialism is defending persons accused of serious sexual offences. She has considerable experience in defending persons accused of the gravest allegations of sexual misconduct. She is highly regarded within this area of criminal defence. She is frequently commended for her thorough and passionate approach along with her fearless determination. She has excellent client care skills and ensures every client feels confident that 'no stone has been left unturned' by the conclusion of their case. Her results illustrate her impressive competency within this area of criminal defence.

Some of Audrey's recent cases:

R v OC (2026) : Multiple rape charges and threats to kill : D acquitted on all charges after trial.

R v PV : (2026) : Four counts of rape, sexual assault, strangulation and false imprisonment : D acquitted on all counts after trial.

R v Z (2025) : Historic rape and sexual offences : Jury hung after trial.

Audrey's only client convicted of rape had his conviction quashed by the Court of Appeal as a result of Audrey, with the assistance of King's Counsel, successfully appealing his conviction: ***R v Beresford [2020] EWCA Crim 1674.***