

Gemma White

Year of Call: 2009

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Overview

Gemma practices in all aspects of general and regulatory crime, particularly across the Western and Southeastern Circuits.

Gemma's practice is split equally between Prosecution and Defence, with a particular emphasis on cases involving the presentation of complex evidence or vulnerable witnesses and defendants. She is a Grade 4 RASSO specialist and Treasury Counsel Monitoree and Circuit advocacy trainer.

Recommendations

'Gemma is highly intelligent, exceptionally diligent in preparation and has an effective laconic style of advocacy.'

Legal 500 2026/Crime (General and Fraud)/ Leading Juniors/ Western Circuit

Gemma White – 3PB 'Gemma is extremely hard-working. Her case presentation skills are second-to-none, and she is a stand-out cross-examiner who has a particular ability to gently undermine the evidence of any witness in a case without appearing overbearing.'

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

'particular strength lies in the cross-examination of young or vulnerable witnesses'

'Whether prosecuting or defending, she is particularly adept at dealing with cases of the utmost sensitivity. She is always on top of her brief and combines intellect with a common sense approach.'

Legal 500 2024/Crime (General and Fraud)/ Leading Juniors/ Western Circuit

'Gemma is determined, focused, committed, always fully prepared and highly professional. She is an assured and proficient advocate, confident in court with all judges.'

Legal 500 2023/Crime (General and Fraud)/Leading Juniors/Western Circuit

Academic qualifications

- LLB Law with French (Hons) 2.1 – University of the West of England, Bristol
- Certificate in European Political Studies – Université de Robert Schuman, Strasbourg
- Bar Vocational Course (Very Competent) BPP Holborn
- LLM Sports Law and Practice (Distinction) – De Montfort University Leicester

Professional qualifications & appointments

- Grade 4 Prosecutor
- Rape and Serious Sexual Offences Specialist
- Deputy District Judge (Magistrates Court) 2021
- Fee-Paid Judge of the Mental Health Tribunal 2023
- Recorder (Crime) 2023
- Treasury Counsel Monitoree 2024

Professional bodies

- Criminal Bar Association
- Western Circuit
- Inn: Inner Temple

Expertise

Crime and Regulatory Crime

Gemma has been practising in general crime across the Western Circuit since 2007 when she worked as an advocate for the CPS. She completed pupillage with the Crown Prosecution Service before leaving in 2013 to come to the independent bar where she now has a well-balanced mixed prosecution and defence practice.

Prior to qualification, Gemma worked for a Local Authority in child protection, and as such has a particularly good rapport with young and vulnerable people, which she uses to ensure witnesses give their best evidence, and to make them feel as comfortable as possible with the court process. Given the current emphasis on handling young and vulnerable witnesses these skills ensure Gemma is able to deal with the most sensitive of cases; she has successfully completed the vulnerable witness training programme, and a significant proportion of her practice is devoted to defending the most vulnerable in society or prosecuting cases with very young witnesses.

Gemma has a deep understanding of criminal procedure and her practice encompasses the full range of offences with particular emphasis on complex multi-defendant drug conspiracies, serious sexual offences, dishonesty including fraud and POCA/money laundering, murder, serious violence and public order. Her practice has particular emphasis on cases with young or vulnerable witnesses or defendants, and she is regularly instructed to represent those with neurodiversity or complex learning or mental health difficulties.

Gemma has experience of dealing with complex and sensitive disclosure issues including Public Interest Immunity and is regularly instructed in cases involving Confiscation under the Proceeds of Crime Act.

Recent Cases of Note: Drugs

- R v Hibbert [2018] EWCA Crim 2047
- Approved Counsel for Operation Venetic (Encrochat):
 - Operation Yealm [2025] Winchester Crown Court
 - Operation Scowl [2024] Southampton Crown Court
 - Operation Paperweight [2023] Bournemouth Crown Court
- Operation Highwood (2021) Portsmouth Crown Court - led by Jodie Mittell - 9 handed conspiracy to supply Class A drugs, county lines from London to Sussex. Main defendant unfit to plead, complex disclosure matters. National Press Report [here](#).
- Operation Origin (2019) Prosecution Counsel 10 defendant Class A drug conspiracy - county lines
- R v G (2018) Southampton Crown Court. Taking Drugs into prison - community order imposed
- Operation Operative (2017) - Multi-handed drugs conspiracy involving the supply of an estimated £4.5 million of import grade cocaine. Press Reports [here](#).
- Operation Pretty (2016-2017):
 - Magic Network - prosecuting Counsel multi-handed conspiracy to supply Class A drugs and associated Money Laundering Offences
 - Kane Network - prosecuting Counsel supply Class A drugs
 - Scouse Network - Junior Prosecuting Counsel (led by Jodie Mittell) 8 handed conspiracy to supply Class A drugs and associated Money Laundering. Local Press Report for Op Pretty [here](#).

Fatal and non-fatal Violence/Public Order

- R v Martin [2017] EWCA Crim 648 - appeal against sentence to Court Martial Appeals Court
- R v Gover (unreported) successful appeal against extended sentence.

Non-Fatal Violence

- R v Drew [2024] EWCA Crim 1537 - AG Ref
- R v Marks [2024] EWCA Crim 1326 - AG Ref firearms offences
- R v T [2023] EWCA Crim 41 - appeal against sentence
- R v Martin [2017] EWCA Crim 648 - appeal against sentence to Court Martial Appeals Court
- R v CL [2024] Southampton Crown Court. Defending mother charged with allowing 4 month old baby to be caused serious injury (multiple fractures). Significant disclosure failures argued which led to case being discontinued pre-trial
- R v NP [2022] Southampton Crown Court. Defence Counsel for s18 where victim sustained brain injury following sustained domestic assault. Significant volume of bad character evidence successfully opposed
- Operation Swallowtail Hove Crown Court [2022] leading Thomas Acworth - Prosecution of 3 youths for s18 which left victim with life altering brain injuries. Press reports [here](#)
- R v H [2021] Winchester Crown Court. False imprisonment, possession of a firearm with intent, threats to kill and robbery. Press report [here](#)
- R v S (2020) Southampton Crown Court. Wounding with intent x 2 (s.18 OAPA) Defence Trial Counsel for vulnerable Defendant suffering with severe bi-polar disorder. Local Press report [here](#)
- R v L (2020) Southampton Crown Court. Defence Counsel for Defendant fit to plead but subject to Hospital Order with Restrictions for assault on worker at psychiatric unit where he resided
- R v H (2020) Bournemouth Crown Court. Prosecution Counsel in arson where Defendant unfit and then fit to plead. Multiple previous offences for arson
- R v G (2019) Southampton Crown Court. Defence Trial Counsel for allegation of wounding with intent. Acquitted after trial but guilty plea entered to s20 unlawful wounding. Sentence of 4 with extended licence years successfully appealed to Court of Appeal as manifestly excessive
- R v D (2019) Portsmouth Crown Court. Defence Counsel for mother accused of false imprisonment, child cruelty and assault in relation to teenage son. Prosecution offered no evidence after submissions in relation to undermining unused material
- R v H (2019) Portsmouth Crown Court. Defence Counsel for Defendant who was unfit to plead charged with intentionally/recklessly endangering life through arson. As a result of psychiatric evidence obtained Crown accepted plea to simple arson
- R v H (2019) Southampton Crown Court. Multiple Assaults on 3 year old child by father
- R v R (2019) Southampton Crown Court. Child Cruelty. Defence Counsel in case involving allegations of child cruelty and assault by father and mother on two teenage daughters. Case required careful cross examination of girls, particularly given English was not their first language and one child had the assistance of an intermediary
- R v C and H (2019) Southampton Crown Court. Prosecuting Counsel in multi-handed s.18 unlawful wounding case where victims sustained significant knife injuries including slash marks to the face. Local Press report [here](#)
- R v G (2018) Bournemouth Crown Court. Defence Counsel in allegation of unlawful wounding with intent where Defendant had previously sustained Traumatic Brain Injury. CCTV showed Defendant snap pool cue in half and hit victim around the head. As a result of expert medical evidence obtained the Prosecution accepted a plea to a lesser offence and a suspended sentence was imposed
- R v T (2018) Winchester Crown Court. Prosecuting Counsel in case involving allegations of domestic violence and coercive and controlling behaviour alleged against a serving police sergeant by a serving police constable. Sensitive and evidentially complex case. Local Press report [here](#)
- R v W (2017) Southampton Crown Court. Child Cruelty and Assault - Allegation over sustained period of time. Involved cross examination of vulnerable complainant - Defence Trial Counsel Secured Acquittal.

Dishonesty

- R v H (2020) Southampton Crown Court. Defence Counsel in two handed Aggravated Burglary involving multiple weapons
- R v C (2020) Southampton Crown Court. Defence Counsel in Robbery. Issues of Abuse of Process because of delay in bringing case raised- Defendant was 15 at time of alleged offence and an adult at date of charge. Prosecution Offered no evidence
- R v W (2020) Southampton Crown Court. Defence Counsel in robbery of 83 year old pensioner. Local news report [here](#)
- R v M and others (2020) Portsmouth Crown Court. Trial defence counsel in three handed multiple allegations of robbery. One count dismissed following successful half time submission
- R v G and others (2019) Winchester Crown Court- 5 handed aggravated burglary involving firearm.

Sexual offences

Gemma's practice encompasses the full range of sexual offences. She is most often instructed in cases involving vulnerable witnesses or defendants; either because of age or mental health difficulties.

Recent cases of note

- R v Cookson (unreported). Defence counsel AG Ref, sentence for rape not unduly lenient
- R v JS [2025] Winchester Crown Court, prosecuting counsel in rape alleged against serving police officer
- R v BJ [2024] Southampton Crown Court. Defence Counsel representing father in trial of multiple rapes alleged by one daughter and sexual assault by adult daughter. Additional child victim. Case required sensitive handling of vulnerable witnesses
- R v PM [2024] Southampton Crown Court. Defence Counsel representing former teacher charged with historic offences alleging abuse of position, acquitted following re-trial
- R v GB [2023] Bournemouth Crown Court. Prosecuting Counsel- anal rape of care worker. Conviction and extended sentence upheld on appeal
- R v FM [2023] Isleworth Crown Court. Leading Brad Lawlor, 3TG in defence of vulnerable defendant with significant brain injury) in gang rape case with 17 year old complainant and challenge to complex forensic evidence)
- R v E (2022) Bournemouth Crown Court. Prosecuting Counsel, multiple historic allegations of rape and sexual assault by cousin
- R v B (2022) Portsmouth Crown Court. Defence Counsel, allegation of stranger rape
- R v C (2022) Southampton Youth Court. Defence Counsel representing 17-year-old charged with anal rape of 14-year-old girl. Sensitive cross examination. Conviction overturned on appeal
- R v C (2022) Bournemouth Crown Court. Prosecuting Counsel, multiple rapes in context of domestic violence
- R v H (2021) Portsmouth Crown Court. Defence Counsel, allegations of abuse by (then) 2-year-old against brother in early 1970s. Expert evidence in respect of memory formation
- R v J (2021) Bristol Youth Court. Defence counsel representing 16-year-old charged with inciting 10 year old sister into sexual activity. Sensitive cross examination via intermediary
- R v F (2021) Southampton Crown Court. Defence Counsel, representing 17-year-old with mental health difficulties on charges of rape of a child under 12
- R v C (2021) Southampton Crown Court. Defence Counsel, rape. Sentence referred to Court of Appeal by Attorney General but successfully defended and therefore not increased. Local Press Report [here](#)
- R v A (2021) Bournemouth Crown Court. Prosecution Counsel, allegations of sexual assault by (then) 5-year-old against sister' boyfriend in early 1990s
- R v B (2020) Winchester Crown Court. Prosecution Trial Counsel- inciting a child into sexual activity. National Press coverage [here](#)

- R v D (2019) Southampton Crown Court. Instructed trial counsel for defendant with severe autism and not fit to plead in allegations of sexual assault made by sister. Case required sensitive handling of client
- R v W (2019) Southampton Crown Court. Instructed trial counsel for defendant with severe learning difficulties charged with sexual assault on a stranger
- R v N (2019) Southampton Crown Court. Appeal against the making of a SHPO for a defendant with severe mental health and learning difficulties. SHPO had been made in lower court without any opportunity for the Defendant to be represented or participate in proceedings due to his mental health difficulties. The Order made was severely draconian, required him to notify the police in advance of any sexual activity and imposed a curfew that lasted for 4 years. Appeal against these terms successful. National Reporting [here](#)
- R v R (2019) Southampton Crown Court. Prosecution Counsel- allegations of historic indecent assault and recent sexual assault by a grandfather in his granddaughters, one of whom aged 5 years old. National Reporting [here](#)
- R v P (2019) Southampton Crown Court. Defence Counsel- attempted sexual communication with a child and inciting a child into sexual activity
- R v K (2019) Winchester Crown Court. Junior Prosecution Counsel in multiple recent and historic rape and indecent assault allegations (led by Timothy Bradbury) in relation to the Defendant's daughters, step-daughters and sister. Complex third party material and disclosure exercise and hostile witness. Local Reporting [here](#)
- R v R (2019) Portsmouth Crown Court. Defence Counsel Allegation of domestic violence sexual assault. Prosecution Offered no evidence
- R v O (2018) Portsmouth Crown Court. Prosecution Counsel in knifepoint rape. 18 year sentence imposed. Local news report [here](#)
- R v E (2018) Portsmouth Crown Court. Allegations of attempted Rape and Sexual Assault by an uncle on his niece. Case stopped following successful submission of no case to answer
- Operation Mesphore R v M (2018) Southampton Crown Court. 17 year old defendant charged with gang rape together with three others. Several counts dismissed at half time and acquittal secured
- R v K (2018) Portsmouth Youth Court. 12 year old charged with inciting 5 year-old sibling into sexual activity. Prosecution offered no evidence following legal arguments on admissibility of evidence.

Homicide (Murder and Manslaughter)

Recent cases of note

- R v CC (2025 ongoing) unlawful act manslaughter/ wanton and furious driving. Elderly Pedestrian knocked over by cyclist on the pavement, died as result of injuries
- Op Gateford (2024 ongoing) Murder/ bladed article (ongoing)
- Operation Amaryllis [2024] Murder allegation, Newport (IOW) Crown Court - Led by Jo Martin KC. Murder
- Operation Bridport [2023] Lewes Crown Court. Led by Caroline Carberry KC - 3 handed murder
- R v BM [2021] representing 14-year-old charged with attempt murder. Acquitted
- Operation Login [2019-2020] Junior counsel in high profile multi-handed complex murder, assisting and offender and conspiracy to supply Class A
- Operation Rosette [2019] Winchester Crown Court. Junior counsel in murder committed by two brothers (led by Adam Feest QC). BBC report [here](#)
- Operation Manner [2019] Bristol Crown Court junior counsel (led by Adam Feest QC) in hit and run manslaughter. Case involved complex disclosure exercise and lengthy abuse of process arguments. BBC report [here](#).
- Operation River [2017] Second led junior (led by Nigel Lickley QC and Jodie Mittell) in multi-handed murder and aggravated burglary following a botched burglary where victim shot. National press coverage [here](#).

Sports

Gemma has a developing practice in this niche area. She holds a Masters Degree with Distinction in Sports Law and Practice at De Montfort University, and is a member of the British Association of Sport and the Law. She therefore has a broad and deep understanding of sports regulation and ethical matters such as anti-doping. Gemma is regularly invited to contribute articles on sporting matters for LawinSport.

She has particular experience in disciplinary matters and has advised governing bodies; she has advised a local FA on diverse Equality Act matters, including ethics, safeguarding and transgender policy.

She has experience of anti-doping and has appeared before the UK national anti-doping Tribunal; she acted pro bono on behalf of an athlete in the first contested anti-doping case under the revised UK anti-doping rules from the 2015 WADA Code, a case which brought up interesting technical arguments relating to the retrospective applicability of the rules. More recently Gemma has advised in a case brought by the International Athletics Association

Gemma has appeared before the FA Disciplinary tribunal representing both player and club in relation to allegations of racist conduct; following a contested hearing both the sportsman and club were cleared of all alleged charges. She has also appeared before the Safeguarding Review Appeal Panel of the FA representing a young coach who was accused of purchasing alcohol for her players.

Gemma has acted on behalf of Football Law Associates in representing a young football fan accused of encroachment during a high profile game and successfully resisted an application for a banning order that would have prevented the young fan from attending any national or international matches.

Gemma has sat on the Appeal Tribunal for British Gymnastics and was a member of the Panel that heard the appeal against sanction by the Olympic Gymnast Louis Smith in 2016.

Gemma was recently instructed to represent a rugby club in the first disciplinary case brought by the RFU in respect of financial reporting regulations.

Gemma is keen to continue to develop her practice in all areas of sports law and accepts instructions across the board in regulatory and commercial cases.

Public and Administrative Law

Trading Standards

Gemma has significant experience defending and prosecuting trading standards cases. Gemma enjoys the variety that comes with niche regulatory criminal matters, and accepts instructions across all areas of regulatory offences. Her meticulous and analytical approach provides a solid foundation for dealing with all complex and technical criminal offences alleged against individuals and corporate bodies. Her particular areas of expertise include:

- Fraud
- Consumer Protection from Unfair Trading Regulations
- Planning Prosecutions including Environmental, Town and Country Planning and Housing Act offences
- Animal Welfare
- Trademarks
- Health and Safety including Fire Safety
- Food Hygiene
- Product Safety.

Recent Cases of Note:

- R (Wealdan DC) v C [2020] Prosecution Counsel allegations of benefit fraud alleged against serving police officer
- TM Eye Ltd v P [2020] Defence Counsel in private prosecution relating to breach of Trademarks
- R (Dorset County Council) v Reynolds [2019] Prosecution Counsel in relation to breach of Environment Act
- R (Devon County Council) v Haste [2019] Defence Counsel in Prosecution of farmer in respect of animal welfare legislation and fitness to travel regulations
- R (Oxfordshire County Council) v Blake, Blake & Marques [2018] - Prosecution of farm shop owners for unlawful slaughter and failing to keep appropriate records of medicines administered to livestock. Local news report [here](#)
- R (Oxfordshire County Council) v M, S & RAD Trading Ltd [2017] Oxford Crown Court - Led by Nigel Lickley QC in the prosecution of an owner of multiple Legal High shops for selling dangerous psychoactive substances. BBC report [here](#)
- R (Oxfordshire County Council) v Toys of Wood Ltd [2017] - Product Safety - prosecution of online company selling dangerous toys for children
- Dorset County Council v National Drainage Ltd, Elswood and Radcliffe [2017] Bournemouth Crown Court Prosecution of company and its Directors in relation to offences under CPUTRs for inflating prices and charging for unnecessary work at the homes of elderly complainants. Local press report [here](#)
- Hart District Council v Farm Catering Ltd [2017] Winchester Crown Court - Acted for the appellant in appeal against sentence in relation to fines imposed for breach of food hygiene regulations
- R (Hampshire County Council) v Connors [2016] Southampton Crown Court - Prosecution Counsel in 'rogue trader' 'dodgy driveways' case involving defendant targeting vulnerable consumer's at their home addresses. Multiple offences of fraud and breach of consumer protection regulations on the indictment
- R (Wiltshire County Council) v Ward [2015] Swindon Crown Court - Defence Counsel in 'rogue trader' 'dodgy driveways' case where the Defendant faced an indictment alleging fraud and breach of consumer protection regulations against vulnerable elderly victims- Defendant pleaded guilty to lesser offences upon advice and received a sentence that did not involve immediate imprisonment
- R (Crawley Borough Council) v Wiltshire & Rowe [2015] Chichester Crown Court - Prosecution Counsel in breach of Tree Preservation Order prosecution, where numerous large trees were cut down by the owner's and planning agents so as to facilitate large scale housing development which increased the value of the land by hundreds of thousands of pounds
- R (West Sussex County Council) v Dixey, Future Homes Energy Ltd and Nationwide Renewables Ltd [2015] Lewes Crown Court Prosecution counsel in a nationwide fraud involving 100+ consumers, many of which were vulnerable. The case involved linked investigations between the police and the Trading Standards department, with 3 indictments spanning 30 counts of fraud and breach of consumer protection regulations and a Confiscation figure of three quarters of a million pound. Local press report [here](#)
- R (Portsmouth City Council) v R [2014] Portsmouth Crown Court: Prosecuting Counsel in prosecution of unlicensed tattoo artist for tattooing a 13 year old; convicted of Assault occasioning Actual Bodily harm and sentenced to a suspended sentence; the case was widely reported in the press locally, nationally in the Mirror and internationally in the New York Daily News. BBC report [here](#).

Sports law

Gemma is passionate about sport and has begun to develop her practice in this niche area. She holds a Masters Degree with Distinction in Sports Law and Practice at De Montfort University, and is a member of the British Association of Sport and the Law. Gemma is regularly invited to contribute articles on sporting matters for LawinSport.

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Articles

The Best of intentions: what Best v. BHA has taught us about appearance of bias & sufficiency of reasons by Gemma White

[View Article](#)