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## Practice Profile

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***Charlotte prosecutes and defends serious and organised crime, often with an international element, for which she has received commendations from Europol and the Metropolitan Police. Charlotte was appointed Treasury Counsel Monitree in April 2024.***

She quickly earns the trust of vulnerable clients and scared or reluctant witnesses, as well as the confidence of instructing lawyers and police officers, including those from other jurisdictions, and has been praised by the National Crime Agency for her guidance offered to case teams, particularly those including less-experienced officers.

Charlotte has expertise in the management of complex disclosure across paper-heavy frauds and sensitive matters, and has delivered training to the CPS on "Prosecuting International and Organised Crime: Pitfalls and Protocols in Disclosure".

Recently she has specialised in 'romance' frauds, involving the use of false identities on dating apps to target vulnerable victims, who are often reluctant to support a prosecution due to shame or embarrassment, and the laundering of significant sums of money in multiple countries.

Charlotte has a particular interest in cases involving complex scientific evidence, holding a Diploma in Forensic Medical Sciences.

Current instructions include: investigations by the Flying Squad and the NCA, and cases prosecuted by the CPS Complex Casework Unit, Homicide Unit, and Serious Economic, Organised Crime and International Directorate (SEOCID), as well as private instructions to defend in cases of sexual assault and stalking.

Charlotte's Privacy Policy can be downloaded [here](#).

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## Areas of Practice

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- General Crime
- Regulatory & Professional Discipline
- Prosecution
- Confiscation, Civil Recovery & Asset Forfeiture
- Road Traffic
- Serious & Organised Crime
- Sexual Offences
- Public Access
- Homicide

## Memberships

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- The Criminal Bar Association
- The South Eastern Circuit

## Appointments

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- Treasury Counsel Monitree
- CPS Advocate Panel for General Crime at Grade 4
- CPS Specialist Panel - Fraud Level 3
- CPS Specialist Panel - Serious Crime Level 4
- Pupil Supervisor

## Education

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- Diploma in Forensic Medical Sciences (forensic medicine, forensic science, and the law as applicable to the forensic sciences), Worshipful Society of Apothecaries (2019). Dissertation: "The medico-legal investigation of the death of persons deprived of their liberty by the state".
- Bar Vocational Course, City University (2009); British Academy of Forensic Sciences Prize
- Graduate Diploma in Law (2007)
- BA Literae Humaniores, University of Oxford (2004, MA (Oxon) 2009)

## News

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### Appointments to Treasury Counsel Monitree

12 March 2024

Chambers is delighted to announce that Charlotte Hole and Frederick Hookway have been appointed by Robert Courts KC MP HM Solicitor General, to the Treasury Counsel Monitree scheme from 1st April 2024, for a period of 3 years.

Chambers congratulate them both on the professional achievement that this appointment represents.

### OCG who Acquired a Gun to Protect their Class A Drug Dealing Business Convicted

19 February 2024

Charlotte Hole, leading Anna Dutka, secured convictions against all 5 defendants in this conspiracy to supply Class A drugs. The defendants were members of an Organised Crime Group running a drug line which supplied heroin and crack cocaine across Tower Hamlets, and had agreed to possess a firearm and ammunition to protect their drug dealing business.

Instructed by Harinder Cheema of CPS London North East Crown Court Unit.

### Containers filled with 270kg of cocaine, 2,500kg of cannabis and 18.6m cigarettes

15 December 2023

Charlotte Hole and Sam Willis prosecuted two importers for bringing into the UK 270 kilograms of cocaine, 2.5 tonnes of cannabis and 18.6 million duty-free cigarettes, all hidden inside shipping containers. Valued at £24m, the

drugs had been vacuum-packed and then secreted inside crates of animal feed, yams and oranges. The cigarettes were concealed in a similar manner, hidden inside crates of snack food, coconut fibre and biscuits - the tax that should have been paid on them if imported lawfully totalled just over £9m.

The case followed an extensive investigation by the South West Regional Organised Crime Unit, who became involved when a farmer discovered 189kg of cocaine in a shipping container full of animal feed. The defendants had unsuccessfully tried to divert the container to their warehouse in London so that the drugs could be removed before the container reached the farm.

During the 16-week trial, the conspiracy was evidenced using material from numerous encrypted communications services. The jury heard technical evidence involving cell site analysis, VPN services, and IP address resolution.

Charlotte and Sam were instructed by the CPS Serious Economic, Organised Crime and International Directorate (SEOCID).

<https://www.cps.gov.uk/cps/news/drug-smugglers-foiled-farmer-jailed-over-ps29-million-plot>

<https://www.avonandsomerset.police.uk/news/2023/12/importers-of-vast-amounts-of-illegal-drugs-and-cigarettes-jailed/>

<https://www.swrocu.police.uk/news/2023/12/importers-of-vast-amounts-of-illegal-drugs-and-cigarettes-jailed/>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-somerset-67733286>

<https://www.itv.com/news/westcountry/2023-12-16/pair-jailed-after-15m-of-drugs-hidden-in-animal-feed-delivered-to-farm>

## **OCG prosecuted for spree of commercial burglaries**

22 June 2023

Following an eight-week trial at Croydon Crown Court, eight members of an organised crime group have been sentenced for their involvement in a spree of commercial burglaries across London. Prosecuted by Charlotte Hole and Sam Willis, the group targeted bookmakers and other shops, typically breaking in during the night using sledgehammers. In total they carried out 12 burglaries of commercial premises, and a robbery at a cash and carry, over a period of 4 years. They stole tens of thousands of pounds in cash, and caused hundreds of thousands of pounds worth of damage to buildings, security systems, and businesses. The robbery involved a staff member of the cash and carry being assaulted and then bound hand and foot with cable ties whilst others sought to enter the building.

Ladders and tools were used to scale walls and breach roofs or walls of premises to gain access to the area where a safe was located. They then either removed or broke into the safe to steal cash, using hand tools and angle grinders. CCTV cameras were destroyed or blacked out, or the hard drives removed altogether as forensic countermeasures, and alarm systems were destroyed or the cables and power supply were cut, in an attempt to avoid detection.

Investigated by the Flying Squad, the evidence against the eight defendants included CCTV, covert surveillance, forensics, mobile telephone downloads, and cell site mapping.

Charlotte and Sam were instructed by the CPS Complex Casework Unit.

<https://www.standard.co.uk/news/crime/croydon-burglary-gang-jailed-met-flying-squad-b1088840.html>

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-12213239/Gang-masked-bookie-burglars-stole-50k-string-raids-jailed.html>

## Romance Fraudsters Jailed at Guildford Crown Court

4 January 2023

Charlotte Hole, leading Anna Dutka, and instructed by the Serious Economic, Organised Crime and International Directorate (SEOCID) of the CPS, prosecuted this case of romance fraud, where vulnerable victims were defrauded of £426,311.68. Victims were targeted based on their sexuality, age and poor health, with the defendants posing as younger men seeking romantic relationships to gain trust. Over 80 victims were identified. The defendants were sentenced to 8 years and 3 years 9 months' imprisonment respectively."

### News articles:

<https://www.cps.gov.uk/cps/news/romance-fraudster-who-scammed-over-ps400000-victims-jailed>

<https://www.getsurrey.co.uk/news/surrey-news/surrey-singleton-conned-fraudsters-who-25828717>

[https://www.newstatesman.com/long-reads/2023/12/catch-catfish-boyfriend-fraud?ECID=social\\_insta\\_traffacq\\_bau\\_ac](https://www.newstatesman.com/long-reads/2023/12/catch-catfish-boyfriend-fraud?ECID=social_insta_traffacq_bau_ac)

## Recent Cases

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### Op Tamora [Isleworth] 2023

Containers filled with 270kg of cocaine, 2,500kg of cannabis and 18.6m cigarettes

Charlotte Hole and Sam Willis prosecuted two importers for bringing into the UK 270 kilograms of cocaine, 2.5 tonnes of cannabis and 18.6 million duty-free cigarettes, all hidden inside shipping containers. Valued at £24m, the drugs had been vacuum-packed and then secreted inside crates of animal feed, yams and oranges. The cigarettes were concealed in a similar manner, hidden inside crates of snack food, coconut fibre and biscuits - the tax that should have been paid on them if imported lawfully totalled just over £9m.

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<https://www.avonandsomerset.police.uk/news/2023/12/importers-of-vast-amounts-of-illegal-drugs-and-cigarettes-jailed/>

<https://www.swrocu.police.uk/news/2023/12/importers-of-vast-amounts-of-illegal-drugs-and-cigarettes-jailed/>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-somerset-67733286>

<https://www.itv.com/news/westcountry/2023-12-16/pair-jailed-after-15m-of-drugs-hidden-in-animal-feed-delivered-to-farm>

### **R v FD & RJ [Guildford] 2022 2022**

Romance Fraud

Leading Anna Dutka, and instructed by the Serious Economic, Organised Crime and International Directorate (SEOCID) of the CPS, prosecuted this case of romance fraud, where vulnerable victims were defrauded of £426,311.68. Victims were targeted based on their sexuality, age and poor health, with the defendants posing as younger men seeking romantic relationships to gain trust. Over 80 victims were identified. The defendants were sentenced to 8 years and 3 years 9 months' imprisonment respectively.

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<https://www.cps.gov.uk/cps/news/romance-fraudster-who-scammed-over-ps400000-victims-jailed>

<https://www.getsurrey.co.uk/news/surrey-news/surrey-singleton-conned-fraudsters-who-25828717>

### **R v S, B, P, Q, R [Snaresbrook] 2022**

Conspiracy to Supply Class A Drugs

Leading Dominic Hockley, 2HB – prosecution of an organised crime group identified through Operation Venetic, involving Encrochat and SkyECC material. The group had conspired to supply wholesale quantities of Class A drugs, and weapons including a Skorpion machine pistol and handguns.

### **R v BS [Basildon] 2022**

Attempted Murder

Instructed as junior alone to prosecute a 15 year old for the attempted murder by stabbing of another teenage boy.

### **R v AA [CCC] 2021**

Attempted Murder

Led by Rupert Kent, prosecuting a father charged with attempting to murder his young daughter by stabbing. Trial was before by a High Court judge, and issues relating to mental health, capacity, and the admissibility of confessions to medical professionals arose.

### **R v D, H, H, M, D, L-F [Guildford Crown Court] 2021**

Conspiracy to Convey Drugs into Prison

Instructed as junior alone to prosecute a multihanded conspiracy to convey drugs into prison, involving admissibility of intercepted telephone calls.

### **R v CU & others [Kingston] 2020**

Commercial Burglary

Prosecution of twelve defendants in relation to a string of high value commercial burglaries involving the theft of rare and precious books. Led by Catherine Farrelly.

News reports:

<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2020/sep/18/rare-books-stolen-london-heist-found-floor-romania>

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2020/09/18/rare-books-stolen-romanian-gang-recovered-joint-uk-eu-police/>

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-8747023/2-5million-trove-books-stolen-London-warehouse-Romania.html>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-54209366>

### **R v CU & Ors [Kingston] 2020**

The Feltham Book Heist

Leading Charlotte Hole. The prosecution of 12 defendants for a number of high-value commercial burglaries, including the theft of rare books by Isaac Newton & Francisco Goya. The prosecution arose out of a JIT (Joint Investigation Team) with Romanian and Italian law enforcement and concerned legal issues in relation to the admissibility of extraterritorial evidence and the presentation of a significant amount of telephone and cell-site evidence. The case attracted considerable interest in the national and international press.

<https://www.theguardian.com/books/2020/dec/13/tome-raiders-solving-the-great-book-heist>

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/crime/heist-isaac-newton-galileo-romania-clampanu-b748240.html>

### **R v PS & MO [Woolwich] 2020**

Confiscation following conviction for conspiracy to supply drugs

£384k confiscated from drug dealers following convictions for conspiracy to supply drugs with a street value of over £10m, after 951kg of cannabis was found in a lorry load of rabbit hay. Junior alone. (R v Seabrook & ors [Woolwich] 2018)

### **R v LV [Guildford] 2019**

Armed Robbery

Prosecution of an armed robbery of a Post Office by a defendant armed with a handgun. Junior alone.

News report:

<https://www.getsurrey.co.uk/news/surrey-news/robber-brandishing-handgun-who-burst-16308125>

### **R v H [Maidstone] 2019**

Assault

Defence of a man with paranoid schizophrenia who attempted to stab a police officer whilst intoxicated and during an acute psychotic episode. Junior alone.

### **R v BH & 3 others [Blackfriars] 2018**

Internet Banking Fraud

£500k internet banking fraud against elderly victims by bank employees. Catherine Farrelly led Charlotte Hole, instructed by the CPS International Justice and Organised Crime unit, prosecuting 4 defendants following an investigation by the National Crime Agency Cyber Crime Unit. The case centred around the activities of two men who worked at high street banks who assisted another in creating a significant number of sham bank accounts for the use in a transfer fraud, raising legal issues about the definition of 'criminal property' under s.340 POCA 2002.

### **R v. H [Kingston] 2018**

Historic rape, buggery and sexual assault

Paul Jackson Led Charlotte Hole for the Defence of male charged with the historic rape, buggery and sexual assault of eight males over three decades. This trial involved an application to stay a count as an abuse of process, the analysis of volumes of third party material, section 41 applications, section 100 and 101 applications and submissions of no case. Instructed by TS Law.

### **R v TK [Kingston] 2018**

Operation Trident- Possession of live ammunition

Charlotte Hole defended a 21 year old social worker in an Operation Trident case, after live ammunition was found in her bedroom. The defendant faced a mandatory minimum sentence of 5 years, but was acquitted after trial.

### **R v SB [Southwark] 2018**

Assault on partner

Charlotte Hole defended an 84 year old man with Alzheimer's disease who was charged with assaulting his elderly partner, causing her significant facial injuries. The complainant was unable to attend Court, raising issues of hearsay, and the defendant was unfit to plead.

### **R v Seabrook & ors [Woolwich] 2018**

Conspiracy to supply drugs

Charlotte Hole, instructed by the CPS SE Complex Casework Unit, was led by Martin Yale, Senior Crown Advocate, in a 5 week prosecution of 5 defendants charged with conspiracy to supply drugs with a street value of over £10m, after 951kg of cannabis was found in a lorry load of rabbit hay. The case involved large volumes of telephone records, cell site evidence, and disputed evidence of co-location.

News report here

### **R v SC [Westminster] 2017**

Police officer assault on two teenagers

Charlotte Hole, instructed by the CPS Complex Casework Unit, prosecuted a serving police officer charged with assaulting two teenagers when called to a domestic dispute.

### **R v AA [Central Criminal Court] 2017**

Malicious communication to the police

Charlotte Hole defended a 25 year old with autism and learning difficulties, charged with malicious communications offences relating to threatening calls he made to the police. He was found unfit to plead, acquitted of one of the counts, and admitted to the National Autism Unit, a course the Probation Service had been unsuccessfully recommending for a number of years.

### **R v. Akhtar [Southwark & C.O.A.] 2016, R v. Akhtar [2016] EWCA Crim 390 2016**

Appeal against a decision to stay proceedings

Successfully defended a prosecution appeal against a decision to stay proceedings involving a vulnerable defendant where special measures were essential for a fair trial, but had not been put in place by the Court.

## **Notable Cases**

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### **R v. Akhtar [Southwark & C.O.A.] 2016, R v. Akhtar [2016] EWCA Crim 390 2016**

Appeal against a decision to stay proceedings

Successfully defended a prosecution appeal against a decision to stay proceedings involving a vulnerable defendant where special measures were essential for a fair trial, but had not been put in place by the Court.