Lyall Thompson

YEAR OF CALL 1995

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Career Overview

Lyall's career has been notable for its variety, albeit with a constant focus on jury advocacy and criminal law. Having obtained a degree in Scots Law, Lyall completed a conversion course and qualified at the English Bar. After pupillage, he built up a busy self-employed practice over 14 years prosecuting and defending roughly equally.

An opportunity then arose for Lyall to join the CPS as a senior crown advocate, working with the police on some of the most high-profile and serious prosecutions in London – including the largest case to come out of the 2011 London riots, involving 23 defendants. In 2015, Lyall joined the barristers' team at a nationwide firm of criminal defence lawyers, where he went on to defend in a number of long, multi-handed conspiracy trials, including as leading counsel in an 11-handed, 5-month child sexual exploitation trial. This breadth of experience has given Lyall a fairly unique insight into the workings and practices of both the prosecution authorities and defence solicitors.

Throughout his career, Lyall has taken on jury trials and appellate advocacy at every level. While he has extensive experience of multi-handed cases and has frequently led other advocates within them, he takes just as much satisfaction from representing defendants in shorter, less high-profile trials. Unlike many criminal barristers whose

profiles emphasise the scale or notoriety of their work, Lyall is guided by a simpler principle: every case is, for that defendant, the most important one taking place in the country – and he prepares and conducts each one accordingly, with client satisfaction always at the forefront of his priorities.

Lyall is selective about accepting instructions as a junior to another advocate, preferring to lead or to act alone wherever possible. He remains flexible, however, and is happy to travel and to take on shorter trials at short notice.

Above all, Lyall loves persuading juries that the most unlikely stories may have a grain of truth in them.

Area of Practice

- Organised crime, firearms and gang violence
- Attempted murder, kidnapping, false imprisonment and torture
- Drug offences, including large-scale importations involving Encrochat evidence.
- Rape and other serious sexual offences
- Child sexual exploitation and other child abuse and neglect
- Causing death / serious injury by dangerous driving
- People smuggling and other immigration offences (including Article 31 defences)
- Lower-level fraud / money-laundering
- Proceeds of Crime and Cash Seizure
- Road Traffic law (especially drink/drug driving and failing to provide a specimen)
- Regulatory work (especially healthcare)
- Disciplinary proceedings / Police misconduct
- Local authority prosecutions / Military Law
- Analysing cell-site evidence
- Working with intermediaries

Notable Cases

2026

- **R v NS –** Wood Green CC – £30 million drugs conspiracy – Trial outstanding (leading counsel)
- **R v MC –** Reading CC – Rape – Trial outstanding
- **R v MA –** Warwick CC – Courier fraud – Trial outstanding
- **R. v AQ** - Isleworth CC - Rape - Not Guilty verdict
- **R. v. JN** - Isleworth CC - Drug Importation - Not Guilty verdict

- **R v LH –** Oxford CC – Drug supply (Class A) – Guilty verdict
- **R v AA –** Reading CC – Attempted rape – Not Guilty verdict
- **R v DP –** Harrow CC – Assault by penetration – Not Guilty verdict
- **R v SB –** Harrow CC – Malicious communications – Not Guilty verdict
- **R v LY –** Lewes CC – Domestic rape – Not Guilty verdict
- **R v JM –** St Albans CC – Historical rape of daughter – Hung jury (private case)
- **R v OB –** Oxford CC – Rape – Not Guilty verdict
- **R v JB –** Reading CC – Rape of a child under 13 – Not Guilty verdicts

2025

- **R v JM –** Oxford CC – Serious injury by dangerous driving – Guilty verdict (absent client)
- **R v SG –** Oxford CC – Indecent exposure – Suspended sentence (transgender client)
- **R v MG –** Isleworth CC – Multiple rapes (retrial) – Mixed verdicts
- **R v DB –** Oxford CC – Domestic Rape – Guilty verdict
- **R v AK –** Court of Appeal – Dangerous driving – Appeal allowed, sentence reduced
- **R v AA –** Wood Green CC – Kidnapping – Not Guilty verdict
- **R v JH –** Leicester CC – Domestic Rape – Not Guilty verdict
- **R v MG –** Court of Appeal – Multiple rapes – Appeal allowed, convictions overturned
- **R v RF –** Croydon CC – Rape – Not Guilty verdict (intermediary)
- **R v AE –** Wood Green CC – Murder – Not Guilty verdict (led by Claire Davies KC)

2024

- **R v AC –** Oxford CC – GBH, strangulation – Not Guilty verdicts
- **R v ER-J –** Gloucester CC – Rape (private case) – Not Guilty verdict
- **R v JS –** Warwick CC – Drugs conspiracy – Guilty verdict
- **R v DM –** Reading CC – Cigarette smuggling conspiracy – Guilty verdict
- **R v PM –** Southwark CC – Gang-rape of a 13 year old child – Guilty verdicts (intermediary)
- **R v CL –** Kingston CC – Armed robbery conspiracy – Guilty plea entered during trial
- **R v JD –** St Albans CC – Assault on a 2 year old child – Not Guilty verdict
- **R v TW –** Isleworth CC – Endangering life by damaging property – Not Guilty verdict
- **R v MK –** Gloucester CC – Drugs conspiracy – Not Guilty verdict (only one of 12 defendants to go to trial)
- **R v RW –** Aylesbury CC – Rape – Not Guilty verdict

2023

- **R v SW –** Oxford CC – Rape – Not Guilty verdict
- **R v MH –** Oxford CC – Attempted murder – Prosecution offered no evidence following representations on mercy killing guidance
- **R v JP –** Oxford CC – Rape – Not Guilty verdict
- **R v TN –** Isleworth CC – Kidnap – Not Guilty verdict
- **R v LP –** St Albans CC – Sexual Assault / Burglary – Suspended sentence (transgender client)
- **R v PJ –** Oxford CC – Drugs conspiracy – Plea on a restricted basis (Encrochat case)
- **R v ED –** St Albans CC – Conspiracy to defraud, 18-handed case – Crown offered a favourable basis on the 3rd day of trial after others pleaded

Education

- High School of Glasgow
- University of Aberdeen 2:1 (Scots Law)
- City University, London
- Inns of Court School of Law

Other Information

Lyall is a pupil-supervisor and a mentor for the Inner Temple.

In his spare time, Lyall enjoys refereeing football and watching cricket and theatre. He is an Associate Member of the

MCC and a Patron of the RSC.