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John FitzGerald

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Area of expertise
Criminal Law

Professional memberships
Criminal Bar Association
Kent Bar Mess
South Eastern Circuit

Profile

Recommendations

"Well known for defending across a purview of serious criminal matters."

Legal 500 [2019]

□His direct approach helps him fight cases that look hopeless□

Legal 500 [2016]

"An advocate who justifiably inspires loyalty in clients."

Legal 500 [2015]

Appointments

Grade 4 CPS Panel Advocate (London & South East) and RASSO approved counsel.

Education

BA Hons. (London)
C.P.E (University of Westminster)
B.V.C., (College of Law, London)
Ampleforth College

Practice

John FitzGerald is an established and busy practitioner on the South Eastern Circuit. He specialises in defence work and has developed a highly successful practice encompassing all areas of serious crime. He is recommended as a Leading Junior (London Bar - Crime) in the 2015 edition of the Legal 500.

John has experience in a wide range of cases including murder, attempted murder, manslaughter, kidnapping, armed robbery, Section 18 and other offences of violence. He has also defended in cases of rape, sexual offences involving children, death by dangerous driving, large drug supply conspiracies, fraud, and other offences of dishonesty. John also has experience appearing in Courts Martial. John is also a Grade 4 prosecutor and RASSO approved counsel.

Recent examples of his work include:

R v Macdonald (2018) Junior counsel defending one of four men man charged with the murder of a homeless Romanian man who was beaten to death in parkland on the outskirts of Maidstone. There were no witnesses to the incident but the defendant's ran cut throat defences.

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R v Evans (2018) Defending one of four defendants caught by under cover filming by the BBC's Panorama programme of allegedly mistreating trainees in their charge, at a young Offender's Institute at which they worked as Security Officers. The defendants were accused of misconduct in public office in a trial that lasted 2 months.

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R v Obasa (2018) Defending a man accused of raping a child at a party. The defendant and his co-accused were foolish enough to film the event on their mobile phone and then passing it around via social media leading to prosecution for a number of offences including the rape.

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R v Thornton (2018) Defending a man accused of being in charge of a dangerous dog whilst out of control which savaged an 18 month toddler, removing the majority of her scalp.

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[R v Collier \(2018\)](#) Defending a man charged with a series of assaults with intent to commit a sexual offence. CCTV evidence, combined with cell site analysis and ANPR hits showed a pattern of the defendant driving around Canterbury late at night apparently prowling for victims. On two occasions he attacked them and assaulted them trying to remove their lower clothing. He was identified by complex DNA analysis.

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[R v Hayes \(2018\)](#) Defending a man charged with a campaign of rapes and sexual assaults on his sister when he was 17 and she was 11. By the time of his prosecution the defendant had been diagnosed with multiple sclerosis.

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[R v Reshea Bell \(2017\)](#) Defending one of four men accused of a gang land shooting and armed robbery in Birmingham. Complex CCTV analysis created a 154 page "story board" of events showing events before, during and after the shooting.

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[R v Carty \(2017\)](#) Defending a leading Birmingham gang member accused of conspiracy to supply prohibited weapons. The defendant was serving an indeterminate sentence for attempted murder with a firearm and accused of running the movement of handguns from London to Birmingham from his prison cell. His co-conspirators were gang members in Birmingham, other individuals in West London as well as other serving prisoners. The evidence was a complex web of mobile phone analysis and surveillance.

[R v Drohan \(2017\)](#) Defending a man, now 23, accused of raping his sister when he was 12 and she was 8. The back drop to the case was a miserable childhood for both involving a bitter separation of their parents and ensuing custody battle. In his interview, the defendant suggested his father may be responsible for the rapes. Disclosure revealed that social services had been involved to a great extent. The Crown relied on the sister's evidence as well as the two parties' mother, to whom the defendant had allegedly confessed to raping his sister on several occasions. The Crown also sought to rely upon the defendant's counselling notes in which he had made some graphic and startling admissions but these were successfully excluded. The evidence having closed and prosecution counsel having concluded her closing speech, a witness for the defendant came forward, which potentially undermined the evidence of admissions to the mother. Leave was given to call that further witness between counsels' speeches.

[R v Gordon \(2017\)](#) Defending a man at the top of a Kent drug dealing hierarchy. In the course of pursuing his debts, the defendant kidnapped one male and falsely imprisoned another. During the course of the day he took them to a secluded area and stuck a firearm in one of their mouths, made them take their shoes and socks off and used a hammer against their feet as well as assaulting them in other ways. He was arrested in possession of weapons, drugs and cash.

[R v Uncles \(2017\)](#) Defending a leading member of the English Democrats, accused of electoral fraud.

[R v McGlasson \(2017\)](#) Defending a man with severe OCD accused of the new offence of controlling and coercive behaviour of his wife. The defendant was accused of imposing a life of such behaviour on his wife - 19 years of their marriage and then, once granted bail, the same behaviour towards his mother.

R v Odgers (2016) Defending the leader of a gang of aggravated burglars who broke into a string of homes armed with a semi-automatic shotgun.

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R v Tappenden (2016) Defending a man charged with causing grievous bodily harm with intent who is alleged to have assaulted his partner by stamping on her stomach causing her to miscarry the child she was carrying.

R v Needham (2016) Defending a man charged with historic offences of sexual abuse for a period of 16 years against his step-daughter. The allegations included rape and indecent assault of her from the age of 9 on a near weekly basis.

R v Camplin (2016) Defending a female National Express coach driver charged with two counts of causing death by dangerous driving. Whilst driving from Victoria to Canterbury, the defendant is alleged to have veered into oncoming traffic causing a collision which led to the death of two people in another vehicle.

R v Hughes (2016) Defending a man charged with counts of historic sexual abuse of a 9 year old girl and indecent images offences.

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R v Toro (2016) Defending a lady charged with assisting an offender accused of a double murder

R v Johnston (2015) Defending a man who set colleague on fire after building site dispute.

R v Ibrahim (2015) Junior counsel defending one of three men charged with murder, conspiracy to rob, and possession of a firearm with intent to endanger life. This murder is a London drug turf revenge attack.

R v Crowley (2015) Defending a man charged with oral rape of his 7 year old step-daughter.

John lives just outside Tunbridge Wells with his wife and 3 children. He enjoys mountain biking and is a keen amateur photographer and avid rugby follower.