

Philippa Southwell Managing Director



Practice & Background

Philippa is Managing Director of Southwell & Partners. She was called to the bar of England and Wales in 2009 as a Barrister, having cross qualified she practices as a Solicitor Advocate. Prior to founding Southwell and Partners she set up and headed the human trafficking and modern slavery department at leading criminal firm Birds Solicitors. Philippa is also Managing Director of the Human Trafficking & Modern Slavery Expert Directory. She is a published author and co-author of Human Trafficking and Modern Slavery Law and Practice (Bloomsbury 1st and 2nd Edition), Co Author of “Does the new Slavery Defence Offer Victims any Greater Protection” (Archbold Review 9th November 2015 issue 9).

Philippa is an award-winning and internationally recognised lawyer in the field of modern slavery law. She lectures extensively both domestically, throughout the Middle East and Europe. She was called to give evidence as a legal expert in the Home Affairs Committee Modern Slavery Inquiry, she provided both oral and written evidence during the inquiry.

Philippa has a very busy criminal practice which encompasses a whole spectrum of serious criminal work, including violent and sexual offences, false imprisonment, kidnap, robbery, drugs, fraud, murder, firearms, corruption, human trafficking and modern slavery cases.

Philippa advises companies on modern slavery and human rights due diligence and provides training to both the private and public sector. Philippa regularly lectures on all many aspects of modern slavery law, compliance, forced criminality and child criminal exploitation and has been invited as guest lecturer at numerous Universities.

Philippa drafted the Law Society practice notes on human trafficking and was advisor to the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) in relation to the UK’s Modern Slavery Act 2015. Philippa has acted in most of the significant and leading cases involving victims of modern slavery and forced criminality of the last decade, including R v L & Ors [2013] EWCA Crim 991 and representing five of the six applicants in the specially convened victims of trafficking court before the Lord Chief Justice R v VSJ et al [2017] EWCA Crim 36.

Philippa acted in the landmark European Court of Human Rights case V.C.L. AND A.N. v. the United Kingdom (applications nos. 77587/12 and 74603/12). The case has far reaching impact for victims of human trafficking in relation to Article 4 and 6 violations.

She has acted at all levels, representing the interests of victims of trafficking, including during police station investigation stage, as well as in the Magistrates Court, Crown Court, Court of Appeal, Supreme Court and European Court of Human Rights. Philippa also represents victims of human trafficking in statutory compensation claims via the Miscarriage of Justice Application Scheme. Where victims have been wrongly convicted and punished pursuant to the Criminal Justice Act 1988. She secured the first landmark compensation in 2017 for a victim of trafficking under this scheme.

Philippa has a particular interest in child criminal exploitation and regularly defends both British and foreign national children prosecuted for forced criminality offences, she was one of the first lawyers in the country to raise a s45 Modern Slavery Defence. She is regularly instructed on county lines exploitation cases.

She also has a large appellate case load and regularly advises on appeals against conviction and sentence in relation to applications to both the Court of Appeal and the Criminal Cases Review Commission. She was highly commended in the Law Society Excellence Awards for her modern slavery work and is recognised by the Law Society as the leading lawyer in this field. They have described her as ‘a fierce criminal defence solicitor, who specialises in defending and representing victims of human trafficking who have been prosecuted for criminal offences. She is a leading criminal solicitor in this field’.

Philippa sits on various advisory boards; she is advisory member for working group on Children and Young People in the Justice System for the Inns of Court College of Advocacy Grays Inn. She is advisory member of the Unaccompanied Migrant Children's Court Steering Group- for unaccompanied asylum-seeking children and child victims of human trafficking. She is also an advisory board member for Tackling Child Exploitation and board member of the Criminal Appeals Lawyers Association.

Philippa has provided data, legal commentary and recommendations for numerous reports and publications including publications for Bloomsbury, Archbold and LexisNexis. Philippa is also involved in international criminal law work, involving war crimes and child soldiers and is on the List of Assistants to Counsel at the International Criminal Court. Philippa is regularly consulted by many of the world's leading media organisations for legal commentary on human rights and modern slavery law. She has also appeared in numerous documentaries and news channels.

Notable cases

- R v VSJ et al [2017] EWCA Crim 36 - represented five of the six applicants in the specially convened victims of trafficking court before the Lord Chief Justice
- R v L & Ors [2013] EWCA Crim 991; [2013] 2 Cr App R 23 - Successfully represented an appellant on appeal against conviction for cannabis cultivation. This judgment set out important guidelines on the approach of the criminal courts to identifying victims of trafficking whose criminal liability is a manifestation of their exploitation. This case received significant national media coverage.
- R v D - Successfully represented a human trafficking victim, convicted of cannabis cultivation on appeal via the Criminal Cases Review Commission.
- R v TAK & Others Represented a victim of human trafficking on appeal against conviction for cannabis cultivation.
- R v R et al – Joint enterprise gangland murder
- R v D & N Represented both victim appellants on appeal, this case set out important principles regarding anonymity for victims of human trafficking in CACD.
- R v F – Represented on appeal a Nigerian victim of human trafficking convicted of controlling prostitution for gain and human trafficking offences, this case involved Juju rituals as control mechanism.
- R v R – Successfully represented British minor prosecuted for county lines drug offences who was a victim of modern slavery.
- R v TT - Successfully represented a child human trafficking victim, convicted of cannabis cultivation, making a successful application to re-open the case and representations to discontinue the proceedings.
- R v TN Successfully represented a child human trafficking victim, convicted of cannabis cultivation on appeal via the Criminal Cases Review Commission.
- R v S - Represented Nigerian victim of human trafficking convicted of fraud offence, the case involved the use of juju rituals as a control mechanism.
- R v OI - Successfully represented a human trafficking victim convicted of possession of identity documents. The Court of Appeal quashed this conviction in under 10 minutes.
- R v C- Successfully represented British minor prosecuted for county lines drug offences who was a victim of modern slavery.
- R v Y - Successfully represented a female human trafficking victim in the Court of Appeal, who had been convicted of possession of false identity documents. The Court of Appeal commended the quality and quantity of the work that Philippa provided to the Appellant.
- R v KV - Successfully represented a victim of human trafficking who had been convicted of road trafficking offences.
- R v L, J, K & Others - Defended three of nine defendants in a very high profile conspiracy to rob Graff Jewellers, an exclusive diamond jewellers in Mayfair. Losses amounted to £40 million, making this the UK's largest robbery heist. The case received significant national media coverage.
- R v W Represented Britain's most prolific youth offender in an appeal against sentence, for the knife point rape of a 58 year old (the defendant was 14 years old at the time of the offence).
- R v R - Successfully appealed an unlawful sentence of a youth in the Court of Appeal, for actual bodily harm, resulting in the immediate release of the Appellant.
- R v L - Represented a defendant charged with 25 counts, including grooming, rape, possession of indecent images and extreme pornography.
- R v C - Represented a defendant for possession of firearms and drug offences. Successfully argued exceptional circumstances on a Newton hearing avoiding the statutory minimum sentence.
- R v M -Successfully represented a defendant convicted of the rape of a young deaf complainant. The appeal was successful and the client acquitted at re-trial.
- R v G - Represented a defendant on appeal against conviction for murder and dismemberment of the corpse.
- R v K - Represented male defendant charged with sexual assault on 5 year old minor.
- R v R - Successfully represented a female defendant charged with sexual assault on a minor.

Further notable and leading modern slavery cases

- R v HTP [2016] EWCA Crim 1959
- R v VSJ and Others [2017] EWCA Crim 36
- R v N [2019] EWCA Crim 191
- R v H [2018] EWCA Crim 2678
- R v L [2013] EWCA Crim 991 (THN)
- R v JXP [2019] EWCA Crim 1280
- R v N, R v L [2017] EWCA Crim 2129
- R v VSJ and Others [2017] EWCA Crim 36
- R v Y [2015] EWCA Crim 123
- R v N, R v L [2017] EWCA Crim 2129
- R v D [2018] EWCA Crim 2995
- R v N & O [2019] EWCA Crim 752
- R v N [2019] EWCA Crim 984
- R v O [2019] EWCA Crim 1389
- R v T(N) EWCA Crim 1569
- R v V(T) [2019] EWCA Crim 1223
- R v O [2019] EWCA Crim 1389
- R v N [2019] EWCA Crim 984
- R v T [2019] EWCA Crim 2151
- R v DD [2019] EWCA Crim 2099
- R v V (T) [2019] EWCA Crim 1223
- R v MD [2020] EWCA Crim 1650

- R v PBL [2020] EWCA Crim 1447
- R v TT [2020] EWCA Crim 1763
- R v AAJ [2021] EWCA Crim 1278
- R v DKN [2021] EWCA Crim 353
- R v BVL [2022] EWCA Crim 1009
- R v AAD, AAH, AAI [2022] EWCA Crim 106
- R v A.Z.E. [2022] EWCA Crim 1008
- R v AGM [2022] EWCA Crim 920
- R v BXR [2022] EWCA Crim 1483
- R v AFU [2023] EWCA Crim 23
- R v BYA [2022] EWCA Crim 1326
- R v AJW [2023] EWCA Crim 803
- R v BWM [2022] EWCA Crim 924

Publications, Press and Associated Legal Work

- Co- Author of the Human trafficking and modern slavery law and practice, published by Bloomsbury Professional. <https://www.bloomsburyprofessional.com/uk/human-trafficking-and-modern-slavery-law-and-practice-9781784519339/> 1st and 2nd Edition
- Co -Author of “Does the new Slavery Defence Offer Victims any Greater Protection” published by Archbold
- Called to as a legal expert to give evidence at the Home Affairs Select Committee Modern Slavery Inquiry. <https://www.parliament.uk/business/committees/committees-a-z/commons-select/home-affairs-committee/inquiries/parliament-2017/modern-slavery-inquiry-17-19/>
- Training Omani Judges, prosecutors and police in Muscat Prosecutors office on the Implementation of Human Trafficking Legislation. Awarded certificate of appreciation by the Omani Attorney General of Nasr Khamis AL - Sawaai
- Guest lecture with Felicity Gerry QC on defending trafficked persons who commit crime, terror and war crimes
- Guest Lecturer for European Criminal Law Association and the Institute of Advanced Legal Studies on Criminal law responses to Human Trafficking in Europe.
- Training Qatari Judges and prosecutors in the office of Public Prosecutions Qatar on human trafficking law
- Interviewed and provided legal commentary for Sky News on the death of 39 foreign nationals in Essex
- Interviewed and provided legal commentary for Channel 4 news on human trafficking/smuggling death of 39 foreign nationals.
- Guest lecturer at Northumbria Law School – forced criminality and forensic analysis of anti – slavery laws
- Guest speaker at the House of Lords for the launch of the report by ECPAT and Anti Slavery ‘Precarious Journeys’ on the continued criminalisation of victims of child victims of human trafficking and modern slavery. <https://www.ecpat.org.uk/Handlers/Download.ashx?IDMF=00b7f321-ddce-4f16-b064-d65dc5c3e268>
- Advisory Board member for Parents as Partners in Exploitation Safeguarding (PIES).
- Interviewed by ITV news on child criminal exploitation and county lines. ‘County lines cases more than double to around 2,000 as police arrest 600 in crackdown on drug dealing gangs’ <https://www.itv.com/news/2019-01-29/county-lines-cases-more-than-double-to-around-2-000-as-police-arrest-600-in-crackdown-on-drug-dealing-gangs/>
- Advisory member for the working group on Children and Young People in the Justice System - Inns of Court College of Advocacy Grays Inn
- Interviewed in The Law Society gazette feature piece on modern slavery. <https://www.lawgazette.co.uk/features/roads-to-serfdom/5068912.article>
- Interviewed by Thomson Reuters for article – ‘Under fire, how can UK revamp its landmark anti-slavery law’ <http://news.trust.org/item/20181018000009-jg7nz/>
- BBC news – live interview on child trafficking - bbc.co.uk/Victoria
- The Inns of Court College of Advocacy Grays Inn – working group advisory member - Children and Young People in the Justice System
- Interviewed by IBC radio on police response to modern slavery <http://www.lbc.co.uk/news/>
- Interviewed by IBC radio on modern slavery compliance for businesses
- Interviewed by IBC radio on slavery in modern day Britain
- LexisNexis- interviewed for publication providing legal analysis on Modern slavery compliance and supply chains <http://www.lexisnexis.co.uk/products/lexis-library.html>
- Quoted in Daily Mail - on Trafficked child slaves in UK <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-5184783/Vietnamese-child-slaves-working-UK-cannabis-factories.html>
- Interviewed and quoted in The Guardian on forced criminality and slavery in the UK cannabis farms <https://www.theguardian.com/society/2017/mar/25/trafficked-enslaved-teenagers-tending-uk-cannabis-farms-vietnamese>
- Interviewed and quoted by The Independent on government overhaul on modern slavery policy. <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/slavery-policy-child-victims-national-referral-mechanism-government-overhaul-exploitation-a7998656.html>
- Provided CPD approved training for Crown Prosecution Service lawyers on ‘An Introduction to Modern Slavery & Human Trafficking | <http://www.mblseminars.com/Outline/An-Introduction-to-Modern-Slavery--Human-Trafficking-/9049/>
- Upon invitation of the Law Society addressed the Department For International Development. DFID Governance Advisers on human trafficking and modern slavery compliance.
- Forced criminality – child trafficking ECPAT Guest CPD speaker/trainer
- Human trafficking ECPAT Guest speaker Guest CPD speaker/trainer
- Defending victims of trafficking - Garden Court Chambers - Guest CPD speaker
- Victims of Trafficking & Criminal Justice System -ATLEU Guest CPD speaker/trainer
- ReACT Project-ECPAT and European Commission - Guest speaker and trainer in the Netherlands, for lawyers from Germany France, Norway, Netherlands
- Lost in migration – Child trafficking Missing children Europe - Guest speaker at the Royal Verdala Palace Malta, speaker and trainer on human trafficking and forced criminality.
- Strategic Legal Fund for vulnerable young migrants SLF –Awarded a grant to conduct research and draft a report and legal analysis on missing and re-trafficked children and young adults (<http://www.strategiclegalfund.org.uk/grants-awarded/>).
- Matrix Chambers - modern slavery round table guest speaker on forced criminality and modern slavery law

- Provided CPD approved training for Crown Prosecution Service lawyers on 'An Introduction to Modern Slavery & Human Trafficking
- Panel advisory member of the Unaccompanied Migrant Children's Court Steering Group- For Unaccompanied asylum-seeking children and child victims of human trafficking
- Guest Lecturer to MA students on Human trafficking and modern slavery law St Mary, University
- Modern slavery interview www.imafilm.com documentary film company. The documentary featured on Iranian media channels.
- Provided information and recommendations on the barriers to modern slavery prosecutions to the Cabinet Office that examines the implementation of existing government policy commissioned by No10.
- Missing People UK conference on County lines - guest speaker on child criminal exploitation and human trafficking law
- Youth Justice Summit – Guest speaker on Child Criminal Exploitation and child trafficking
- ATLeP- Anti Trafficking Legal Project Appointed special committee member. I sit on a special panel which delivers training on human trafficking and non- criminalization of trafficking victim. Contributing to giving evidence and running projects and training on human trafficking.
- Supervising Solicitor for students at BBP School of Law Pro Bono Centre (Human trafficking)
- Delivered training and workshop on human trafficking to The Children's Society on human trafficking
- Provided the official Law Society practitioners training on "Defending victims of human trafficking and slavery <https://events.lawsociety.org.uk/ClientApps/Silverbear.Web.EDMS/public/default.aspx?tabId=37&id=1215&orgId=1&guid=7ea9c9ce-5dce-4f69-ac8f-cf4fc1da1caa>
- Delivered a CPD lecture on "Human Trafficking and Modern Day Slavery: A Practical Approach to the Impact on Current Criminal Legal Practice" at Garden Court Chambers.
- Recorded a CPD podcast, via CPDcast- "Human Trafficking - Non-Criminalisation of Trafficked Victims – <http://www.cpdcast.com/contributors/philippa-southwell>
- Provided CPD lecture for Barristers at 2 Bedford Chambers on Human trafficking and modern slavery law
- Anti Trafficking Symposium –Doughty Street Chambers- guest speaker at this event, provided a CPD accredited lecture on Non- Prosecution of victims of human trafficking post enactment of the Modern Slavery Act
- Prison Reform Trust – Invited to provide specialist recommendations and evidence in relation to child victims of trafficking in the criminal justice system. My recommendations for reform were published in the final report. <http://www.prisonreformtrust.org.uk/Portals/0/Documents/In%20care%20out%20of%20trouble%20summary.pdf>
- TRACKS- Identification of Trafficked Asylum Seekers Special Needs - round table member
- RACE in Europe Project Training/guest speaker, the 1st of its kind in the UK, brought together practitioners from a variety of professions and countries across Europe to hear presentations from experts, discuss emerging trends and solutions to the obstacles in prevention and justice of this type of trafficking.
- The Trafficking Law and Policy Forum- Guest speaker at The Trafficking Law and Policy Forum, an educational think-tank on human trafficking in the UK, where she delivered a talk on criminalisation and forced criminality of human trafficking victims.
- Quoted in Daily Mail on Trafficked child slaves in UK. See publication Vietnamese-child-slaves-working-UK-cannabis-factories
- Interviewed in The Independent on government overhaul of modern slavery policy. 'Government urged to overhaul slavery policy as child victims slip back into exploitation after being rescued
- Interviewed and quoted in The Guardian on forced criminality and slavery in the UK cannabis farms- Trafficked and enslaved: the teenagers tending UK cannabis farms
- Drafted the Law Society Practice Note on Criminal Prosecution of Victims of Human Trafficking
- Appeared in an educational documentary on work as a criminal defence and human trafficking Lawyer by SAGE Productions
- Interviewed and quoted in Guardian Newspaper - Demands grow for child guardians to end shame of modern slavery
- Interviewed and quoted on BBC- People trafficking: Ordeal for those coming to UK
- Interviewed by Al- Jazeera International for a documentary on human trafficking
- Interviewed by BBC radio Inside Out on Slavery
- Interviewed by BBC radio Surrey on the trafficking and criminalisation of Vietnamese nationals
- Interviewed by Finnish Broadcasting Company Yle for documentary on human trafficking
- Interviewed by The Law Society about my legal practice in defending human trafficking and modern slavery victims
- Short listed for Junior Lawyer of the year Highly commended- Excellence Awards - <http://www.lawsociety.org.uk/representation/excellence-awards/shortlist/> <http://www.lawsociety.org.uk/representation/excellence-awards/2014-winners/juniorlawyer-of>
- The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF): Philippa advised UNICEF in relation to advising on the UK's Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking Bills (now enacted as the Modern Slavery Act 2015). She provided legal argument and legal analysis on the draft bill and recommendations.
- Interviewed by Totally Legal about work as a criminal and human trafficking Lawyer
- Interviewed for a film documentary by Thomson Reuters Foundation about her work with human trafficking victims "The Slavery Lawyer" <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bhc8seHRUi0>
- Interviewed on BBC News at Ten: People trafficking: Ordeal for those coming to UK

Professional Memberships

- The Honourable Society of Lincoln's Inn
- The General Council of the Bar of England and Wales
- The Law Society
- The Human Rights Lawyers Association
- London Criminal Courts Solicitors' Association (LCCSA)
- ATLeP – Anti Trafficking Legal Project
- Criminal Appeals Lawyers Association (CALA) - Committee member