

## FINAL

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# “Mr Loophole” most high profile lawyer over the last year

- Bloody Sunday Inquiry (estimated cost approximately £200 million) highly influential on rankings for the most mentioned barrister and member of the judiciary

Celebrity defence lawyer Nick Freeman – (commonly referred to in the media as “Mr Loophole”) – is this year’s most high profile solicitor, featuring in 120 UK national press articles according to Sweet & Maxwell, the leading legal information provider.\*

According to Sweet & Maxwell, a Thomson Reuters company, Freeman received over twice as much press attention as last year’s highest profile solicitor – Fiona Shackleton. Over the last year Shackleton 56 mentions in the UK national press (see full results below).

Freeman began his career as a prosecutor for Greater Manchester Police before switching to defendant work. He rose to fame when he successfully defended Sir Alex Ferguson when he was accused of driving illegally on the hard shoulder of a motorway. Freeman is the owner of Freeman & co, a Manchester based law firm and has also trade marked the name “Mr Loophole” to avoid other legal advisers using it.

Other celebrity clients of Freeman include:

- Colin Montgomerie  
*Had a driving ban for alleged speeding overturned when Freeman argued against the reliability of the speed gun used.*
- Jimmy Carr  
*Accused of talking on the phone whilst driving but Freeman argued that Carr was using his phone as a Dictaphone*
- David Beckham  
*Cleared of a speeding allegation after Freeman said he was trying to escape paparazzi.*
- Jeremy Clarkson  
*An alleged offence took place when Clarkson was test driving a car.*
- Andrew Flintoff  
*Accused of speeding but Freeman successfully argued that the speeding notice was sent out two days later than the law allows.*

Freeman also represented the following celebrities – who contested motoring charges but were less successful:

- Caprice  
*Banned from driving for one year and fined for drink-driving*
- Chris Tarrant  
*Given six points on his license and fined for speeding twice in 21 minutes on the same stretch of road*

Fiona Shackleton – nicknamed “Steel Magnolia” due to her astute negotiating skills – has most recently represented John Cleese’s ex-wife Alyce Faye Eichelberger in their divorce and has slipped from last year’s number one to the fifth most mentioned high profile solicitor. Shackleton has previously acted for Prince Charles and Sir Paul McCartney in their respective divorces.

Bloody Sunday inquiry propels Michael Mansfield QC and Lord Saville to the most mentioned in their respective fields

Sweet & Maxwell says that Lord Saville is this year’s most high profile member of the judiciary, followed by Baron Judge.

Lord Saville chaired the Bloody Sunday inquiry and received 412 mentions in the UK national press over the last year. Baron Judge received 386 mentions.

Michael Mansfield QC represented several clients in the Bloody Sunday inquiry, which received widespread criticism for the time taken and costs involved.

The inquiry took 12 years to complete, cost £200 million and involved 4,000 witnesses, more than 400 days of hearings and 14,000 pages of submissions from interested parties.

Senior / Managing Partners of Top 100 UK commercial law firms absent from the list

Sweet & Maxwell also note that there are no partners listed from Top 100 UK commercial law firms.

Sweet & Maxwell point out that members of the Judiciary historically have received far more press attention than solicitors or barristers. On average the amount of press coverage received by the Top 10 most high profile:

- Members of the judiciary – an average 233 items of press coverage each
- Barrister – an average 70.5 items of press coverage
- Solicitors – an average 55 items of press coverage

Most frequently cited solicitors in UK newspapers

	<b>Press coverage July 2009 – June 2010</b>	<b>Area of expertise / recent cases</b>
1) Nick Freeman	120	“Mr Loophole”
2) Bruce Buck	87	Chelsea FC chairman, Partner and Head of European Practice at Skadden
3) Karen Todner	67	represented Gary McKinnon, the British hacker the US are trying to extradite
4) Giovanni di Stefano	62	Ian Brady & Ronnie Biggs' lawyer
5) Fiona Shackleton	56	John Cleese divorce case
6) Mark Stephens	50	Media lawyer who commented frequently on the John Terry super injunction
7) Julian Young	39	DNA test freed Sean Hodgson, incorrectly convicted of murder in 1982
8) Phil Shiner	38	Represents anti-war activist Maya Evans
9) Stefan Cross	20	Represented staff suing Birmingham City Council over pay discrimination
10) Martyn Day	15	Represented claimants following the alleged dumping of toxic waste in the Ivory Coast

Most frequently cited barristers in UK newspapers

	<b>Press coverage July 2009 – June 2010</b>	<b>Area of expertise / recent cases</b>
1) Michael Mansfield QC	126	Represented a number of clients in the Bloody Sunday inquiry, plus Ali Dizaei (met commander jailed for corruption)
2) Geoffrey Robertson QC	100	Voting chaos, plus commented regularly on Gary McKinnon extradition
3) Cherie Booth QC	97	Care homes scandal, religious bias in decision over assault
4) Helena Kennedy QC	75	Defended wife of suspected terrorist

5) Jonathan Sumption QC	65	Main Government lawyer in Guantanamo torture claims
	<b>Press coverage July 2009 – June 2010</b>	<b>Area of expertise / recent cases</b>
6) Julian Knowles	59	Legal aid to expenses MP
7) John Kelsey-Fry QC	57	Mike Ashley fraud case, Steven Gerrard assault
8) Lord Lester QC	50	Libel law reform
9) Rabinder Singh QC	39	Iraqi abuse case, Tesco V Sainsbury case, Devon
10) Gavin Millar QC	37	John Venables / child abuse images, assisted suicide case

Most frequently cited members of the judiciary in UK newspapers

	<b>Press coverage July 2009 – June 2010</b>	<b>Are of expertise / recent cases</b>
1) Lord Saville	412	Chaired the Bloody Sunday inquiry
2) Baron Judge	386	Lord Chief Justice
3) Keir Starmer QC	260	Director of Public Prosecutions, reviewed the decision not to prosecute Pc Simon Harwood over the death of Ian Tomlinson
4) Lord Neuberger	229	Master of the Rolls, investigating alledged torture by MI5 of terrorist suspects
5) Justice Eady	204	Libel hearings, including Abramovich and claims over Litvinenko murder
6) Justice Bean	180	Jamie Bulger killer / child abuse images, assisted suicide case
7) Lord Carlile of Berriew	177	Conducted an independent review of terrorism legislation
8) Justice Treacy	172	Menzies world cargo / Heathrow warehouse raid
9) Justice Royce	163	Vanessa George (Plymouth nursery worker / child abuse case)
10) Justice	151	Eight year old girl / false rape case against

Saunders	two ten year old boys
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\* Coverage based on mentions in Sweet & Maxwell's Westlaw UK's online UK news database for the year to June 30 2010. Sweet & Maxwell would welcome suggestions of lawyers who should be included in future reviews – please email [nc@mattison.co.uk](mailto:nc@mattison.co.uk)

**ENDS**

### **Notes to Editors:**

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