

Tom Horder

Year of Call: 2004

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Inquests

Tom Horder is regularly instructed in cases involving fatalities. He has represented the HSE, MCA, Local Authorities, families, private individuals and commercial organisations in inquests nationwide. His experience of defending and prosecuting high profile criminal prosecutions complements his inquest work. He is often called on to advise at the very earliest stage of cases where there is a prospect of a later prosecution.

Tom has experience of Article 2 and jury inquests as well as those involving military personnel and national security concerns. He holds current SC clearance.

Examples of recent inquests Tom has been involved in include:

- Representing a Chief Constable following the death of a vulnerable person who died following restraint and the use of CS gas. Article 2 jury inquest that focused on police techniques and guidelines, the adequacy of officer training and systems for monitoring and assessing the health of those detained.
- Advising Local Authority and Harbour Master in case involving a missing person search and drowning. The Inquest considered the division of responsibility for Harbour walls/infrastructure between the local authority, highways agency and private owners. Also in issue was the conduct of missing person searches. Tom successfully argued that there were no grounds for a Rule 43 report directed at the Local Authority.
- Acting for the family in a case involving a Hospital's failure to diagnose a pulmonary embolism. The case involved conflicting expert evidence, and the consideration of NICE guidelines. There were also arguments as to causation as the deceased had originally attended hospital with serious injuries following an RTA.
- Advising the family of a patient detained under the MHA who, due to multiple failures by the detaining authority, went on to attack and kill a fellow patient whilst floridly psychotic within 2 hours of admission.
- Representing Care Home owner following the fall from height of an elderly dementia patient. Consideration of guidelines/regulations relating to window-locks.
- Representing a Nursing Home Manager in case involving a patient falling during transfer from bed to chair. Arguments as to scope/whether Article 2 was engaged as the patient subject to DOLS.

Recommendations

Tom Horder of 3PB Barristers is well regarded for his ability to handle health and safety cases concerning serious injuries and fatalities, both on land and at sea. He advises a range of notable clients, including government agencies such as the HSE alongside corporate companies and local authorities.

Strengths: "Tom clearly spends the time getting to grips with all of the issues, including even those little, peripheral things. His preparation is generally faultless, which gives great power to his advocacy. "Tom provides quality advice which is clear and understandable. He is an excellent advocate."

Chambers UK 2025/Crime/Western Bar/Band 1

Tom Horder has a robust practice in regulatory offences which sees him instructed by a range of parties including public sector bodies, companies and private individuals. He also handles cases concerning violent crime and sexual abuse, as well as fraud and drug offences. Additionally, he has expertise in cases involving regulatory offences.

Strengths: "Tom is a great barrister and a really accomplished advocate. He knows his stuff completely." "Tom is very fair on tricky cases and he is exactly the barrister needed to take everyone through things and get to the facts."

Chambers UK 2025/Crime/Western Bar/Band 1

Strengths: "Tom is very experienced in complex, multi-handed cases." "He really is a first-class advocate." "Tom is an excellent lawyer and a robust advocate."

Chambers UK 2024/Crime/Western Bar/Band 1

Strengths: "He is a thorough, conscientious, and effective first-class advocate." "Tom is a powerful advocate who is charming yet forceful when needed."

Chambers UK 2023/Crime/Western Bar/Band 1

Strengths: "A conscientious, thorough and extremely effective advocate. He listens to his client and has a rare talent of getting the best out of everyone."

Recent work: Acted as junior defence counsel in the trial of Shane Mays for the murder of 16-year-old Louise Smith.

Chambers UK 2022/Crime/Western Bar

Strengths: "He has a really nice manner in court and very good judgement." "Mr Horder is extremely experienced in all areas of criminal defence. He takes a hand-on approach to trial preparation, which makes him a popular choice among solicitors and clients alike."

Recent work: Defended a CCTV operative who unlawfully accessed the footage of an autopsy featuring a footballer who tragically died in a well-publicised plane crash.

Chambers UK 2021/Crime/Western Bar

Strengths: "He is an extremely affable barrister who deals with difficult clients with commendable patience. He delivers calm and measured advocacy with the right amount of flair and is an exceptionally impressive trial advocate and lawyer behind the scenes."

Recent work: Defended a care worker accused of assaulting and abusing a large number of mentally and physically disabled residents at an adult care home.

Chambers UK 2020/Crime/Western Bar

"His advice is always clear and concise and precisely what is required. His client care and commitment is exceptional. His willingness to go the extra mile has been impressive."

Recent work: Prosecuted an organised criminal gang controlling the supply class A drugs across the South of England.

Chambers UK 2019/Crime/Western Bar

Strengths: "He is meticulous and tenacious, both in terms of his preparation and his conduct of cases in court." "He is smart, clever and pragmatic."

Chambers UK 2018/Crime/Western Bar

Strengths: "Very able, a rising star."

Chambers UK 2017/Crime/Western Bar

'Praised by instructing solicitors for his expertise in cases concerning fraud, drugs and other serious criminal offences.

Strengths: "He has a particular skill in dealing with extremely demanding clients. He is very committed to his work and is very accessible when it comes to seeking advice or updates."

Chambers UK 2016/Crime/Western Bar

'...covers the full range of criminal offences, and is best recognised for his expertise in regulatory criminal cases. He receives regular instructions from local authorities, government bodies and insurers in relation to cases concerning health and safety, trading standards, environmental, aviation and maritime issues.

Expertise: "His advocacy is very good and he impresses with his knowledge of legislation and case law in niche areas."

Chambers UK 2015/Crime/Western Bar

Tom Horder is a 'bright, personable and hard-working individual' who is currently handling the prosecution of an individual facing multiple allegations of child cruelty and sexual offences.

'Tom is an intelligent advocate who commands the respect of the court.'

Legal 500 2025/Crime (General and Fraud)/Western Circuit/Leading Juniors

'Tom is a concise, clear and intelligent advocate.'

Legal 500 2025/Business and regulatory crime (including health and safety)/Western Circuit

Tom Horder both has considerable expertise in relation to health and safety matters at sea.

'Tom is always very friendly, approachable and contactable. He quickly gets to the core of the issues and expresses his advice in a user-friendly manner. He has a good eye for detail and in court his submissions are well-crafted. He is also conscious of effective jury handling and decanting complex matters into the key facts in a digestible manner.'

Legal 500 2024/Business and regulatory crime (including health and safety)/Western Circuit

Tom Horder is ranked in the **Legal 500 2024/Crime (General and Fraud)/Western Circuit/Leading Juniors**

'His knowledge is exceptional. There is no case he is not able to manage. He is a capable and effective cross examiner. He pursues the right legal arguments and is totally respected by the judiciary.'

Legal 500 2023/Crime (General and Fraud)/Leading Juniors/Western Circuit - Ranked Tier 1

'Tom is very conscientious, hard working, and a top class lawyer. He is gentle and considerate with clients and a very good team player. Judges trust him, and his advocacy is highly persuasive.'

The 'thorough and methodical' Tom Horder fields expertise in cases involving food safety, environmental and health and safety issues.

Legal 500 2023/Business and regulatory crime (including health and safety)/Western Circuit

'Tom is a charming, intellectually nimble advocate with an excellent client manner. Judges respect him and juries warm to him.'

Legal 500 2022/Crime (General and Fraud)/Leading Juniors/Western Circuit

'Tom is a very able barrister. He is an excellent, very persuasive advocate. His cross-examination is always well-considered and appropriate to the witness he is dealing with. He is hard-working and always well prepared.'

Legal 500 2022/Business and regulatory crime (including health and safety)/Western Circuit

'He has sterling advocacy skills and exceptional levels of client empathy.'

Legal 500 2021/Crime/Leading juniors

'Reliable and meticulous in his preparation for conferences and hearings with good presentation at trial.'

"Tom Horder is another key name within the set"

Legal 500 2021/Business and regulatory crime (including health and safety)/Leading Juniors

'He is an exceptionally impressive advocate; calm and measured, with just the right amount of flair.'

Legal 500 2020/Crime/Leading juniors

'His preparation is meticulous and he inspires confidence in his clients.'

Legal 500 2020/Regulatory, health and safety, and licensing/Leading Juniors

'An unruffled barrister with a light touch.'

Legal 500 2018/19/Crime/Leading juniors

'Experienced across a broad spectrum of criminal cases.'

Legal 500 2017/Crime/Leading juniors

'An excellent advocate with a strong courtroom presence.'

Legal 500 2016/Crime/Leading juniors

'He is led, and often leads, in some of the most complex cases, including those involving serious violence'

Legal 500 2015/Crime/Leading juniors

'Particularly highly regarded for his ability to handle the most serious and complex cases.'

Legal 500 2014/Crime

'...attracts praise, and is 'very good at explaining procedure and tactics to clients'

'Particularly highly regarded for his ability to handle the most serious and complex cases'

Legal 500 2013/Crime

"I would like to thank you for your diligent work on this case. Your client care and commitment to the case was exceptional. Your willingness to "go the extra mile" was impressive and proved crucial. Your planning and delivery of the cross examination proved decisive. An ok case (partly because of the statute) transformed into a strong case, according to his honour the Judge, before our very eyes, as our opponent was exposed as a liar."

Instructing solicitor, 2017

"Tom was brilliant, stood head and shoulders above the other barristers"

Instructing solicitor, 2016

Academic qualifications

- BA (Hons) History, University of Newcastle-Upon-Tyne
- PGDL and BVC, BPP Law School

Professional qualifications & appointments

- Attorney-General's Unified List of Prosecuting Advocates (Panel A)
- Specialist Regulatory Advocates in H&S and Environmental Law List
- CPS Grade 4 Prosecutor
- Fee-Paid Judge of the Mental Health Tribunal

Direct Access

Tom welcomes instructions on a direct access basis .

He particularly welcomes direct access instructions relating to aviation offences and pilots facing the prospect of CAA prosecution.

Tom has previously prosecuted, defended and advised in a range of aviation related matters including; an allegation of low flying by a CPL(H) holder during a filming assignment, airspace infringement in Class A airspace, licensing and type certificate infringements by a microlight pilot and an allegation of log book fraud against a senior airline pilot.

Tom has a PPL having learnt to fly during an RAF Flying Scholarship and as a member of his University Air Squadron. He flies his Rollason Condor from Thruxton and has been lucky enough to fly a wide range of aircraft ranging from Bulldogs to an SF260.