

Thomas Acworth

Year of Call: 2014

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Overview

Thomas Acworth is a criminal specialist. His practice encompasses general crime, regulatory crime and police law.

Sexual offences

Tom Acworth has built a strong practice in sexual offences, mainly defending those alleged to be rapists and abusers.

R v Y (Operation Coastal): Rape, Indecent Assault and Gross Indecency. Defendant accused of systematic sexual abuse (including rape) of his step-sons and their teenage friends.

R v K: Rape and Indecent Assault. Defendant accused of historical anal, vaginal and oral rape of ex-wife during their marriage. Also accused of systematic sexual abuse of step-daughter within that relationship.

R v Z: Rape of Child under 13. Defendant accused of historic anal and oral rape of step-sibling.

R v U: Rape. Student of previous good character accused of raping fellow student following night out in town.

R v I: Rape. Defendant accused of raping his wife pending the instigation of divorce proceedings.

R v H: Rape. Defendant accused of raping young woman at an afterparty following a night out clubbing.

R v P: Rape of child under 13, sexual assault of a child under 13, sexual activity with children: 77-year-old defendant accused of grooming, sexually abusing and raping biological granddaughters.

R v A: Rape, Attempted Rape, Sexual Activity with Children: Step-father accused of serious sexual abuse of child under the age of 10.

R v Q: Attempted Rape, Indecent Assault, Assault by Penetration of Child under 13, Sexual Assault, Inciting Child to Engage in Sexual Activity: Historical allegations of serious sexual abuse following aborted previous investigation in 2009.

R v P (Operation Millburn): Indecent Assault, Gross Indecency with Children. Catholic priest accused of molesting child parishioner during the mid-1980s.

R v K: Assault by Penetration of Child under 13 and Sexual Assault of Child under 13. Defendant alleged to have molested his youngest biological sister in her sleep.

R v K: Assault by Penetration of Child under 13 and Sexual Assault of Child under 13. Defendant with borderline IQ accused of

historical sexual assaults on very young child.

R v L: Causing Children to Engage in Sexual Activity and Sexual Assaults of Children under 13. Defendant with significant learning difficulties accused of sexually touching his two great-nieces, aged four and seven.

R v P: Sexual Assault of Child under 13, Causing Child under 13 to Engage in Sexual Activity. Allegations of grooming and serious sexual abuse on four-year-old complainant. Defendant was C's biological grandfather.

R v J: Sexual Assault of Child under 13, Voyeurism and Making Indecent Images of Children. Defendant accused of planting hidden cameras around the house to observe his step-daughter in a state of undress, sexually assaulting her during the night and taking indecent photographs of her whilst she slept.

R v H: Attempting to Incite Child to Engage in Penetrative Sexual Activity and Making Indecent Images of Children. Computer professional accused of inciting a fictitious 15-year-old to engage in serious sexual activity and creating numerous indecent images. Case involved complex computer evidence.

R v K: Disclosing Private Sexual Images. Defendant put indecent images of her best friend on Facebook. Defence of consent.

Recommendations

Thomas Acworth is a sought-after junior with notable expertise in criminal defence work. His caseload includes murders, fraud and sexual abuse matters.

Strengths:

- "He approaches cases forensically and achieves very good results."
- "He is very diligent."

Chambers UK 2025/Crime/Western Bar

Strengths:

- "He possesses skills way beyond his call."
- "Thomas is very hard-working and always in command of his brief."
- "Thomas is a fearless and determined advocate."

Chambers UK 2024/Crime/Western Bar

Strengths: "Thomas is a fearless advocate."

Chambers UK 2023/Crime/Western Bar

'Thomas is driven, focused and talented. He has precise attention to detail and a robust approach to advocacy.'

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

'Thomas is an extremely diligent practitioner with an extraordinary eye for detail and his knowledge is genuinely astounding. No stone is left unturned in his preparation and his advocacy is equally impressive.'

Legal 500 2024/ Crime (General and Fraud)/Leading Juniors/ Western Circuit

'He has an excellent court manner, very calm and controlled and his witness handling is absolutely superb. He isn't fazed by judges.'

Legal 500 2023/Crime (General and Fraud)/Leading Juniors/Western Circuit

'A barrister of great tenacity, very hard working and with an eye for detail. He shows a high level of dedication to his clients and is fearless and straight talking in his approach.'

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

"Words cannot explain how elated I am with the outcome today. I am ever so grateful. Wanted to express my deepest appreciation"

Client's email to instructing solicitor

"I am extremely grateful for the excellent work you have done on this case"

Email from instructing solicitor

"I've just had a chat with young Mr. F and he's asked me to pass on his sincere thanks for yesterday. In his words you were top dollar and really cool. Thank you for all your efforts in securing a great result for us"

Email from instructing solicitor

"I must say he is absolutely amazing at what he does, firm when he needs to be (and he needed to be with me) and so incredibly quick thinking when he is in court"

Client's email to instructing solicitor

Academic qualifications

- BPTC (Kaplan)
- LLB (Newcastle University)

Scholarships

- Academic Scholar (Canford School)
- The Luboshez Award (Middle Temple)
- Arnold and Porter Prize for Competition Law (N'cle)
- Pinsent Masons Prize for Public Law (N'cle)
- Cartmell Shepherd Mooting Prize

Professional bodies

- Criminal Bar Association
- Western Circuit