



Robert Courts KC

Year of Call: 2003

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Crime and Regulatory Crime

Robert Courts is an experienced criminal practitioner appearing for both the prosecution and defence in all Courts up to and including the Court of Appeal.

He is a Grade 2 prosecutor on the CPS Approved List of Advocates for the Western Circuit.

In 2009 Robert spent four months in New Zealand, working for Crown Law Office – the government’s legal advisory department – as part of a Pegasus Scholarship. As part of his stint in the criminal department, which only handles appellate work, Robert drafted submissions for the Court of Appeal and Supreme Court of New Zealand, and appeared as a second junior for the Crown in the New Zealand Court of Appeal.

Back in the United Kingdom, he undertakes all areas of criminal work in the Crown Court, has particular experience in dealing with multi-handed trials and accordingly has been led on a number of occasions (R v Ward & others, R v Clarke & Painter; R v Quadri & others, R v Phillips).

He has experience in all aspects of criminal offences, but particular expertise in the following:

- Offences Against the Person, including murder;
- Fraud;
- Road Traffic;
- Dangerous Dogs Act;
- Animal cruelty;
- Theft and other dishonesty;
- Sexual Offences;
- Child Cruelty;
- Criminal Damage and Arson;
- Proceeds of Crime Act 2002.

Robert has a particular specialist interest in cases arising from animals and aircraft, in both the criminal and civil spheres. He also has a related interest in animal cruelty cases and RSPCA prosecutions.

He also has a particular specialist interest in trading standards offences, where he has prosecuted and defended in high profile cases, and has experience cross-examining experts.

Robert has experience prosecuting Proceeds of Crime Act 2002 and related confiscation proceedings (see R v Ward and others, below).

He also has experience of arguments arising from Risk of Sexual Harm Orders under the Sexual Offences Act 2003.

Recent notable cases include:

Oxfordshire Trading Standards v Bateman (2011) – Robert defended the first defendant in a three handed case prosecuted by leading Counsel;

R v Ellis (2011) – appeal against sentence in the Court of Appeal;

R v S (2009) – Winchester Crown Court. Second junior in a multi-handed case defending a youth charged with grievous bodily harm;

CAA v Hynett (2009) – prosecuting a low-flying helicopter pilot on the Isle of Wight;

R v Phillips (2008) – Bournemouth Crown Court. 8 week trial, as second junior counsel. An alleged conspiracy to steal high value plant machinery from across the south of England and export it to Cyprus.

R v Ward and others (2007) – Portsmouth Crown Court. Robert was the Prosecution junior in this six week, seven-handed trial, concerning a conspiracy to defraud vulnerable householders. Reports of the case appeared in national newspapers. Robert prosecuted all the POCA proceedings arising from the case in his own right;

R v Clarke & Painter (2006) – Bristol Crown Court. Robert was the Prosecution second junior in this widely publicised case concerning a parental double murder. Robert's responsibility was for unused material and disclosure. He also appeared to prosecute the matter in his own right when leading and first junior Counsel were unavailable;

R v Quadri and others (2006) – Southampton Crown Court. Robert was a Prosecution junior in this four-handed fraud trial, concerning identity theft.

R v Morrow (2006) – appeal against sentence in the Court of Appeal;

Other cases of note include:

Legal argument of Risk of Sexual Harm Orders under the Sexual Offences Act 2003;

Defending a Youth on a charge of Arson;

Defending a Youth on a charge of Blackmail;

Defending Proceeds of Crime Act confiscation applications.

He is often instructed by various other agencies to prosecute, including local authorities (for example, enforcing vagrancy and begging laws,) the police (in relation to orders relating to sex offenders and confiscation matters), the RCPO, the Department of Work and Pensions and the Civil Aviation Authority.

Robert has recently lectured on various issues arising out of trading standards prosecutions.

Robert is a member of the Criminal Bar Association.

Scholarships

Hardwicke Scholarship (Lincolns' Inn) – 2003

Denning Pupillage Scholarship (Lincolns' Inn) – 2003

Pegasus Scholarship – 2009

Professional qualifications & appointments

Accredited Mediation Advocate

Professional bodies

Criminal Bar Association

Personal Injury Bar Association (PIBA)

Western Circuit