



# 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.

## Recommendations

"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

## Expertise

### Crime

Thomas Acworth's practice covers the spectrum of criminal and quasi-criminal matters: from cases of serious violence to technical road traffic and regulatory offences. He combines meticulous preparation with excellent client care to deliver personable, pragmatic and effective representation. Thomas prosecutes and defends.

#### Appellate Work

- **F v The Queen (Jamaica):** Murder. Advising on appeal to Privy Council on issues of identification, character evidence and incompetency of counsel. Case concerned a gangland contract killing.
- **R v C & D:** Armed Robbery. Resisting appeal against terminating ruling following successful submission of no case to answer. Case concerned joint-enterprise and circumstantial evidence.

#### Violence

- **R v Q and Another:** Assisting an offender. Led by Tom Evans. Vulnerable defendant accused of assisting his co-accused (tried for murder and attempted murder) to escape from the police.
- **R v A Youth:** Wounding with Intent. 13-year-old boy stabbed a fellow teenager after following her into a housing estate on Halloween. Defendant asked victim how dead she wanted to be before inflicting wound. Tried in the Crown Court.
- **R v X:** Wounding with Intent. Accused stabbed injured party six times. Wounds inflicted to the neck, abdomen and internal organs. Complex mental health issues.
- **R v K & Others:** Wounding with Intent, False Imprisonment, Robbery, Threats to Kill and Possession of Firearm with Intent. Allegations of detention and torture following a drug deal gone awry.
- **R v H & Others:** Wounding with Intent. Brawl in city centre following a night out. The three defendants were accused carrying out a group attack on the complainant.
- **R v M:** Aggravated Burglary, False Imprisonment and ABH. Defendant accused of taking his ex-partner hostage at their former home.
- **R v T & H:** Armed Robbery. Knife-point joint enterprise robbery of commercial premises. Both defendants ran cutthroat defences.
- **R v F & X:** Aggravated Burglary and Dwelling Robbery. Allegations of armed home invasions in which defendants demanded drugs and drug money.
- **R v D, E & F:** Robbery and Dwelling Robbery. Joint-enterprise ventures. Elderly and vulnerable victims.

#### Drugs

- **R v L & Six Others:** Conspiracy to Supply – Class A. Led by David Richards. County lines conspiracy. Substantial telephone evidence. Issues of human trafficking, forced criminality and extended abuse of process arguments.
- **R v F:** Conspiracy to Supply – Class A. Conspiracy to supply crack cocaine and heroin. Undercover police officers.
- **R v R:** Possession with Intent to Supply – Class A. Schoolboy of previous good character alleged to have supplied fellow pupils with cocaine and MDMA.

- **R v U:** Possession with Intent to Supply – Class A. Prosecution of man found with thousands of pounds worth of cocaine and MDMA at a music festival.

## Sexual offences

- **R v L:** Arranging Child Sex Offences. Defendant was a former schoolteacher of previous good character.
- **R v K:** Sexual Assault. Defence of concierge accused of biting a maid.
- **R v W:** Sexual Assault. Young client with severe ADHD. Allegations of sexual touching and biting of a teenage woman at a house party.
- **R v Y:** Making Indecent Images of Children. Carer for the disabled of previous good character. Significant number of Category A images.
- **R v H:** Attempting to Engage in Sexual Communication with a Child. Vulnerable defendant. Civilian vigilante groups. Previous SHPO for similar offending.
- **R v E:** Sexual Assault. Allegations of threats to rape and sexual touching following discovery of partner's infidelity. **R v K:** Disclosing Private Sexual Images. Defendant put indecent images of her best friend on Facebook. Defence of consent.

## Motoring offences

- **R v T:** Causing Serious Injury by Dangerous Driving. Serious road traffic collision. Client significantly over the drink drive limit. Victim sustained serious injuries and required a skin-graft.
- **R v M:** Causing Serious Injury by Dangerous Driving. Client drove on the wrong side of the road and caused a collision. Victim sustained significant psychiatric injuries and a broken neck.

## Regulatory crime

- **R v H:** Bankrupt acting as Company Director. Defendant set up two companies whilst bankrupt, one of which traded for an extensive period.
- **HMRC v X Ltd & Others:** Trading in Breach of VAT and PAYE Security Notices. Notable regional company continually trading in breach of VAT and PAYE security notices. History of difficulties with HMRC.
- **Local Authority v X:** Contempt of Court. Vulnerable, elderly client. Allegations of breach of ASBO.
- **X County Council v F:** Failing to Produce Waste Transfer Notice. Prosecution of a business that was flouting the Waste Regulations and causing a neighbourhood nuisance.
- **X County Council v Y:** Knowingly Failing to Secure Regular Attendance at School. Child in GCSE year. Non-compliance following previous conviction. Dispute over learning centre provision.
- **Police Force v S:** Closure Order. Acting for applicant police force. Suspected crack house. Occupant threatening neighbours with violence.

## Fraud, Business and Financial Crime

- **R v Z:** Fraud. Employee accused of defrauding family-run business of hundreds of thousands of pounds.
- **R v J:** Fraud. NCO in the Grenadier Guards alleged to have perpetrated a number 'sweetheart' frauds against vulnerable women that he met on dating apps.
- **R v H:** Bankrupt acting as Company Director. Defendant set up two companies whilst bankrupt, one of which traded for an extensive period.
- **R v P:** Fraud. Fraudulent misuse of gift cards totalling thousands of pounds.

- **R v Q:** Burglary. Case involved intermediary assisted cross-examination of a vulnerable adult.

## Public and Regulatory

Thomas Acworth's public and regulatory practice focuses on regulatory crime and police law. With experience of prosecuting and defending 'traditional' criminal cases, an eye for detail and an aptitude for technical law, Thomas represents his clients with skill beyond his year of call.

### Police law

Thomas is regarded as a "go-to" barrister in the field of firearms licensing. He has acted for police forces across England as well as individuals seeking the restoration of their certificates. Thomas is highly regarded for his ability to deal with cases sensitively, pragmatically and robustly.

- **Chief Constable v U:** Firearms Licence Appeal. Appeared against a QC. City executive's shotgun certificate revoked on basis of post-acquittal restraining order and mental health concerns. Case required detailed analysis of psychiatric reports.
- **Chief Constable v F:** Firearms Licence Appeal. Hundreds of guns found at residence of a registered firearms dealer together with prohibited weapons and prohibited ammunition. PII and evidential issues resultant from concurrent criminal proceedings.
- **Chief Constable v Q:** Firearms Licence Appeal. Revocation of firearms certificate on basis of intelligence reports. Appeal concerned PII and public safety considerations.
- **Chief Constable v Z:** Firearms Licence Appeal. Refusal to grant shotgun certificate on basis of minor, historic, offences of violence and ongoing tendency to obsessive and aggressive behaviour.
- **Chief Constable v H:** Firearms Licence Appeal. Lengthy appeal brought by practising solicitor. Issues of mental health and domestic abuse, both historic and contemporary. Sensitive handling of vulnerable parties.
- **Chief Constable v Q:** Firearms Licence Appeal. Revocation based on irresponsible behaviour (minor road traffic incidents) and insecure storage of weapons.