



LIBERTAS
CHAMBERS

David Bentley

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Year of Call: 1998

David has developed a highly regarded practise specialising in all aspects of criminal law, inquests, professional discipline and regulatory law.

He is frequently instructed in high profile criminal cases involving serious and organised crime including homicide, terrorism, fraud and financial crime, large scale drugs conspiracies, firearms, armed robbery, human trafficking and modern slavery.

David also has considerable experience of proceedings in the Coroner's Court. He has appeared on behalf of a broad spectrum of interested persons (IP) especially at inquests involving a jury and Article 2 of the European Convention on Human Rights. Many of the inquests that David attends often involve deaths in hospitals, police custody, prisons, at work, restraint deaths and those involving individuals with mental health issues.

David is the Counsel of choice for many NHS Trusts and has represented numerous senior medical professionals over the years, who required representation at inquests involving deaths in hospital or where the deceased had contact with the hospital prior to their death.

David's experience in the field of professional discipline, criminal and regulatory law provides him with a unique insight into parallel proceedings, which may be established as a result of the evidence heard during the course of the investigatory process by the coroner. This allows him to provide expert advice to the client, in relation to the wider contextual landscape, where there are contemplated civil or criminal proceedings or where referrals to a client's professional regulator may occur.

David has appeared in cases concerning the Health and Safety Executive, Trading Standards & Environment Agency. He provides representation to high-net-worth individuals and insured clients facing large and complex prosecutions brought by regulatory bodies. David represented the lead defendant in one of the largest prosecutions ever brought by the Environment Agency in the North East of England.

David receives instructions to defend clients in private prosecution cases brought by the Federation Against Copyright Theft (FACT) on behalf of the Premier League. Such cases concern the alleged theft of the intellectual property rights of broadcasters under the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988. David has been involved in cases concerning Sky Television and the broadcast of live Premiership football in the UK.

David has extensive experience of professional disciplinary hearings. This type of work brings him into close contact with the General Medical Council and the Medical Practitioners Tribunal Service when representing doctors facing allegations of serious misconduct. This usually requires his attendance before the Interim Orders Panel and Fitness to Practise Panel.



Extremely passionate about the work he undertakes, David adopts a pro-active and determined approach to every case. He works closely with instructing solicitors at each stage and is always available to discuss any issues that may arise. He can provide advice on difficult areas of law, evidential complexities and strategic considerations at very short notice, to enable his instructing solicitors to give immediate feedback to their clients. His strong work ethic and high levels of preparation ensure that he can provide all his clients with an exceptional service.

Recommendations

The **Legal 500** has described him over the years as “building a very good practice”, “somebody who takes complex cases and who is very good to work with” and a barrister “who is able to play ball with the big boys and gets some great results”.

Appointments & Memberships:

- Lincoln’s Inn
- Northern Circuit
- Criminal Bar Association

CASE HISTORY

CRIMINAL DEFENCE

Drugs

Operation Embossed 2 – leading “Encrochat” case.

R v. EE – £100 million pound European conspiracy to import/distribute Class A drugs – the case involved defendants from seven European countries.

R v. PD and Others – “Operation Norfolk” involved the investigation into a £50 million pound conspiracy to import/distribute Class A drugs.

R v. PF – £25 million conspiracy to supply heroin and cocaine – the case against the defendant did not proceed after extensive legal argument lasting many weeks.

Armed Robbery

R v. MW – 36 armed robberies over a six-month period, this case featured on Crimewatch UK.

R v. MA & JM – 10 cash-in-transit armed robberies on G4S vehicles.



R v. IT – serious organised crime group involved in targeting high-end jewellers selling luxury Swiss watches.

R v. AJ – series of armed robberies on owners of high-performance supercars stolen to order for export or for the commission of further criminal offences.

Violent Disorder

R v. DJ & Others – represented four of the ringleaders of the “Naughty Forty” Stoke City Football hooligan firm. This involved large-scale football related violent disorder, which occurred throughout Manchester City Centre.

R v YM – serious assault and violent disorder between the members of an extended Asian family in the Staffordshire area – all five defendants were acquitted after a four week trial as a result of legal argument resurrected after the close of both the prosecution and defence cases.

Firearms

R v AK – serious violent disorder between two rival Asian gangs in the Lancashire area – a shotgun was discharged during the incident.

Homicide

R v. MW – double murder of two alcoholics in their own home.

R v. KB – the torture and murder of a suspected paedophile.

R v. SL – murder of elderly lady who disturbed a burglar in her own home – defendant was acquitted as a result of alibi evidence and extensive consideration of CCTV evidence by the defence which placed him away from the scene at the relevant time.

BUSINESS CRIME

R v. CG – £4 million money laundering case involving the proceeds of a drugs operation headed by the defendant’s husband. He had already received 25 years imprisonment for Importation of Class A drugs having been convicted at an earlier trial. The defendant was acquitted of money laundering.

R v. PK & Others – large-scale conspiracy to defraud involving bogus sponsorship acquired from UK businesses in excess of £8 million.

R v. RG & Others – large scale conspiracy to defraud and converting criminal property involving in excess of £1 million – bogus bailiffs contacting small businesses threatening



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action if payment not made immediately.

REGULATORY

Environment Agency v. WF – represented a farmer accused alongside others of a large-scale illegal tipping/burial operation involving asbestos and other toxic chemicals and waste. The financial gain was in excess of £2 million.

Environment Agency v CRG Ltd – represented the Managing Director of a recycling company called before The Planning Inspectorate at a public enquiry in relation to breaches under the Environmental Permitting (England & Wales) Regulations 2010.