

John Crawford

Call 2016

John practises in all areas of criminal law and related proceedings. He is unafraid of arguing complex points of law, and has twice been involved in cases certified as being of “general public importance” permitting appeals to the Supreme Court. He is ranked as a leading junior within Legal 500.

SPECIALISMS

Crime

John has a busy criminal practice and has acted in a broad range of cases for both the defence and prosecution. He has been instructed in various cases involving death or serious violence, including murder, attempted murder, and death by careless driving. John has expertise in representing young people within the criminal justice system, including representing youths accused of rape, sexual assault, robbery, and fraud. He also has experience of prosecuting and defending large scale fraud and drug conspiracy cases.

John also has particular expertise in representing individuals who have been extradited back to the jurisdiction from abroad, and is very familiar with the issues concerning specialty and associated legal arguments.

In addition, John has acted for local authorities in relation to a range of criminal prosecutions concerning building, housing and planning law. This includes prosecuting cases in the Crown Court and Magistrates’ Court on their behalf, as well as providing pre-charge advice. John has also used this experience to defend individuals facing breach of enforcement notice proceedings and other cases brought by local authorities.

John also has experience of dealing with POCA proceedings, included contested hearings and applications to vary historic orders. He has also dealt with other post-conviction matters including applications for football banning orders.

John has a broad experience of disclosure matters. He has conducted LLP reviews on behalf of the police, and has also been instructed as a disclosure junior in a large county lines case.

Private Prosecutions

John has extensive experience in conducting the various stages of a private prosecution.

He has been instructed in numerous trademark and fraud prosecutions from first appearances through to trials and sentencing hearings. John is comfortable with the legal and practical hurdles that can arise when bringing a private prosecution and presenting the case to the Court. He also has significant experience of costs applications following successful prosecutions, both against Defendants personally and from central funds.

John’s experience includes private prosecutions brought by large bodies as well as individuals, and he is able to advise and deal with the different complexities which each situation creates.



Expertise

Criminal

Private Prosecutions

Regulatory

International & Offshore

Sports Law

He has acted as a disclosure officer to review material to comply with both initial and ongoing disclosure obligations. As a result, John is aware of the significant burden that disclosure obligations place on a private prosecutor, and the importance of ensuring the process is carried out effectively.

Regulatory

Alongside his Criminal practice, John has been instructed in a number of related regulatory matters. This has included prosecutions on behalf of the Forestry Commission and Fisheries Authorities, as well as extensive experience of breach of trademark offences.

John has also been involved in prosecutions on behalf of local authorities for breaches of health and safety at work regulations, HMO conditions, and licensing cases. This has included drafting advices for clients pre-charge as well as representation at hearings.

John has been appointed to the List of Specialist Regulatory Advocates in Health & Safety and Environmental Law (List B).

As a result of John's prosecution experience in this area he has also been instructed to defend individuals facing prosecution by these bodies, and to draft representations to try and avoid possible future prosecutions.

PROFESSIONAL APPOINTMENTS

- Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) Grade 3 Prosecutor.
- List of Specialist Regulatory Advocates in Health & Safety and Environmental Law (List B).
- Legal 500 "Rising Star" for International Crime and Extradition.
- Legal 500 "Leading Junior – Tier 3" for Crime (General and Fraud).

EDUCATION

- BPTC: University of Law: Outstanding.
- BA Law (Cantab): Cambridge: First.

AWARDS

- Gray's Inn Reid Scholarship.
- University of Law Employment Law award (BPTC).
- Lamb Building Advanced Criminal Procedure award (BPTC).
- Ng Law award (Jesus College Cambridge).

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

John is direct access qualified and is able to accept instructions from the public or businesses directly.

John is a door tenant at 5 St Andrew's Hill where he maintains a practice in extradition law.



Clerking team



Liam Gorman
Lead Criminal &
Regulatory Clerk
0191 245 9521



Chris Gibbin
Clerk
01642 247 569



Paul McNab
Civil & Criminal Silks'
Clerk
0113 3235 955



Fiona Bullock
Direct Access Clerk
01642 247 569



Chloe Lau
Criminal & Regulatory
Clerk
0191 245 9550



Edward Shepherd
Criminal & Regulatory
Clerk
0191 245 9542

What Others Say

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"John has on all occasions been diligent and conscientious, demonstrating an assiduous attention to detail. John is strong technically and applies a very high standard of skill and care to all the cases in which I have instructed him."

Instructing solicitor

"John's style is very effective and persuasive. He is measured, logical and has a natural instinct to sense the way the case is going."

Instructing solicitor

"I have always been very impressed by Mr Crawford's knowledge and Court craft as well as his client handling skills. I have had no hesitation in sending him to represent clients who I have known for years in the sure knowledge that they will be skilfully represented and well looked after"

Instructing solicitor

"He has all the qualities that both solicitors and lay clients expect in a modern day barrister"

Instructing solicitor

"John is unflappable and responsive when under pressure either in court or from other parties in litigation"

Instructing solicitor

Notable Cases

R v Alder Willis (2024)

John was instructed as the prosecution junior in a murder trial. The Defendant was convicted by the jury of murder and possession of a bladed article and received a minimum term of 18 years.

R v CD (2024)

John's client was acquitted of multiple counts of rape against his former partner. The case involved a successful s41 application and cross examination of the complainant on subsequent text messages between the individuals.

H4H v DB & MB (2023)

John was instructed in a private prosecution on behalf of a charity who were bringing multiple counts of fraud against two Defendants who had carried out a fundraiser. Following a 5 day trial both Defendants were convicted on all counts.

SBC v CN (2023)

John was instructed by a local authority to prosecute a rogue builder who had defrauded over 15 separate individuals in a scam worth over £600,000. The Defendant entered guilty pleas at the start of a 3 week trial.

R v GM & RM (2023)

John was instructed on behalf of DI in a 10 count historic sex case involving multiple independent complainants.

R v JF (2023)

John was instructed to prosecute JF in 3 separate trials of s18, attempt s18 and PWITS A amongst other offences. Following convictions on all indictments the Defendant is awaiting sentence.

R v DB (2023)

John's client was charged with a number of sexual assaults against a girl who was 14. The sexual activity was agreed to have been "consensual". Given the complainant's age and vulnerability cross examination was conducted through a s28 hearing. The case also involved non-defendant bad character applications and a s41 application to adduce the complainant's sexual history.

Operation Salem (2022-23)

John was the Prosecution junior in a large scale telephone fraud being managed from India but with middlemen in the UK acting as bankers. The successful 4 week prosecution involved various banking and cell site evidence to demonstrate chains of contact and banking which linked to the delivery of the cash that had been defrauded from the victims.

R v OM (2022)

John's client was a youth who was charged with penetrative sexual activity with another youth. After a 6 day trial involving the cross examination of numerous young witnesses John's client was acquitted.

CPS v RB (2022)

John was the Defence Junior counsel in a response to an application made by the CPS for a declaration of interpretation in respect of s152 of the Extradition Act. The Divisional Court ruled against the CPS, finding that John's client did not have to serve a 9 year prison sentence due to errors within the extradition request. A point of law of public importance was certified but following further representations the Supreme Court refused the CPS permission to appeal.

Operation Florida (2021-22)

John was led in a 22 week drugs conspiracy trial. The case involved a substantial amount of phone data along with observation logs. John's client was acquitted of the drugs offences and received only a short custodial sentence for money laundering.

R v SG (2021)

John secured three acquittals on an indictment with counts of s18, s20 and s47 after a four day trial arising out of an alleged unprovoked assault at a party, causing substantial facial injuries. Cross examination of the complainant and the OIC led to further disclosure coming to light significantly undermining the Crown's case. As a result the Crown offered no evidence on counts 1 and 2 at half time and John's client was acquitted by the jury on count 3.

MCS v JS (2020)

John was instructed to prosecute a private prosecution alleging fraud against a pub owner who had kept the proceeds of a charity fundraiser for themselves and falsely created a thank you certificate. The Defendant was convicted following trial, having maintained that he had sent the cheque in the post. The case was reported in the local press.

R v ZB (2020)

John Defended a youth accused of 4 knifepoint robberies against young complainants. Notwithstanding numerous positive ID parades John's client was acquitted on two of the four charges and received a non custodial sentence.

LBBD v AB (2020)

John represented a client charged with breaching an enforcement notice following building work he had carried out in his own home. Following cross examination of the local council officers a successful application of no case to answer was made.

LBL v RE & FG (2019)

Acting on behalf of a local authority John secured convictions against both Defendants in a case relating to illegally renting a HMO following a multiple day trial in the Magistrates Court.

CFC v LA (2019)

Appearing on behalf of the Local Authority John successfully argued against the premises being allowed to keep their licence in a 2 day hearing.

R v RM (2018)

John was instructed to represent an 11y.o boy, who faced charges of a rape, attempted rape and sexual assault against a 12y.o boy. John's client was acquitted on count 1 and convicted on count 2 but received a non-custodial sentence.