



Joe Bird

Call: 2012

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Joe maintains a busy, sound practice prosecuting and defending across the full range of criminal offences. He brings focused preparation, robust advocacy, a down to earth approach and sensitive interpersonal skills to his cases. Based in Red Lion Chambers' Chelmsford Annexe, Joe regularly appears across East Anglia, but also accepts instructions both in London and nationally.

In April 2015, he moved to independent practice at Red Lion Chambers after a successful 2½ years with the Crown Prosecution Service where he gained considerable experience and skills that continue to serve him today. Joe's practice is predominantly in the Crown Court. He also maintains a Magistrates' and Youth Court practice, delivering effective advocacy in those fast-paced jurisdictions.

Joe is authorised to accept instructions under the Direct Access scheme.

Crime

Joe's breadth of experience has provided him with a solid foundation on which he continues to build a busy prosecution and defence practice. He is regularly instructed in contested trials and hearings across the full range of offences. He is also able to deal with interlocutory and ancillary hearings in cases that would otherwise be much above his call including serious sexual offences, substantial conspiracies, serious violent offences and homicide.

General Crime

- **R v K (2017)** Defending in an aggravated burglary where it was alleged that K had attended the premises of a bankrupt business and stolen assets in lieu of an outstanding debt. Careful cross-examination of the complainant reframed the prosecution case entirely and lead to K's acquittal.
- **R v J (2016)** Defence junior in a conspiracy to supply class A drugs where seven of the eight defendants pleaded before trial. Joe was instructed during the first trial to deal with a large quantity of phone handset data served late. The trial was aborted because of that disclosure failure. At the second trial the indictment was quashed following his identification of a fundamental procedural failure.

- **R v M (2016)** Defending in a two handed s. 18 in the street outside a pub in rural Essex where the co-defendant blamed M for the assault. M was acquitted and the co-defendant convicted.
- **R v R (2015)** Defending in a gang related murder at the first hearing in the Magistrates' Court and the Plea and Case Management Hearing (PCMH). The prosecution eventually accepted pleas to manslaughter.
- **R v K (2015)** Prosecution of the harassment of a number of a school's staff and governors through vexatious correspondence and uploading abusive videos online. The defendant entered a guilty plea on a basis at the start of the trial.

Fraud & Proceeds of Crime (POCA)

Joe regularly handles cases involving a broad spectrum of fraud types including a particular specialism in benefit frauds of varying value and length. He is very familiar with the mechanics and subtleties involved in these offences.

Joe accepts instructions for both the prosecution and defence in a wide range of confiscation proceedings. He is fully aware of the advantages which can be achieved through negotiation and avoiding a full contested hearing in this growing area.

- **Operation Twilight (ongoing)** Disclosure junior in a multi-handed, multi-million pound conspiracy to cheat the public revenue.
- **R v P (2017)** Prosecution of a multi-agency benefit fraud that took place over a number of years. D pleaded eventually pleaded guilty.
- **Operation Dove (2015)** Secured confiscation orders against four defendants following their guilty pleas to a charge of conspiracy to supply substantial quantities of cannabis including importation into the UK.
- **Operation Hornet (2015)** Part of the prosecution disclosure team in a multi-million pound, eight handed banking fraud.
- **R v H (2015)** Successfully negotiated a compensation order in place of a confiscation order on behalf of a defendant who needed a number of years in which to realise the equity in a house in order to satisfy the order. The case involved a novel point of law relating to squatter's rights.

Violent Crime

Joe is regularly instructed by the prosecution and defence in cases of violence and has particular experience in cases of domestic violence. He is familiar with the sensitivities and vulnerabilities that are typical of these cases. His experience allows him to approach such cases with confidence and to advance apparently unattractive arguments sensitively but firmly in both cross-examination and submissions.

- **R v F (2017)** Defending a youth in the Crown Court where the original allegation was robbery of a pizza delivery vehicle where a weapon was used. Following a focused, realistic basis of plea

the prosecution accepted a guilty plea to vehicle taking and possession of an offensive weapon in place of the original robbery charge.

- **R v M (2016)** Successfully defended a charge of ABH in a domestic context where the only direct evidence came from the complainant and defendant and where his subsequent convictions for offences against a new partner were admitted in evidence.
- **R v S (2015)** Successfully defended an allegation that the defendant attended his ex-partner's home and threatened her with a knife.

Military Law

Joe has prosecuted and defended service personnel in the civilian courts on a number of occasions. He has a practical understanding of the often sensitive background to these offences and is aware of the consequences a conviction will have on a defendant's continued service. Joe accepts instructions in the civilian and military courts, both in this country and abroad.

Road Traffic

Joe has dealt with a wide range of road traffic offences and is experienced in marshalling the combination of technical, expert, and factual evidence that can arise in road traffic cases. He understands how to conduct a case in line with the principles that underpin road traffic legislation in the summary jurisdiction, an often overlooked area of practice. He well understands that avoiding or minimising a disqualification can be the most important result for a client. He always strives to achieve that objective and is well placed to make focused arguments and tactical decisions to achieve that aim.

- **R v G (2016)** Persuaded the prosecution to accept a guilty plea to careless driving where the original charge had been driving whilst unfit through drugs. The defendant's licence was endorsed with the minimum number of penalty points and he kept his licence.
- **R v T (2014)** Prosecution of an offence of driving whilst unfit through drugs. The resulting crash resulted in life changing injuries to the passenger. The defendant initially challenged the adverse toxicology report. Focused, early disclosure of the collision investigator's conclusions led the defendant to plead guilty well in advance of trial.
- **R v S (2014)** Prosecution of an extremely unusual case where a youth defendant had been charged with careless cycling which resulted in a fatality. A patient and empathetic approach, coupled with appropriate early disclosure led the defendant to plead guilty.

Professional Disciplinary & Regulatory

Joe has first-hand experience of the work and demands of a heavily regulated industry, having worked as the Senior Instructor at an outdoor centre in Essex before joining the Bar. He accepts instructions on behalf of both prosecuting authorities and defendants.

- **Ipswich Borough Council v P (2017)** Prosecution of a landlord who had repeatedly failed to comply with an improvement notice. An appropriate fine being imposed, and a substantial amount of the local authority's costs were recovered.
- **W v Chief Constable for Essex (2016)** Successful appeal against the imposition of a Criminal Behaviour Order, which had been drafted in terms that reflected a Sexual Harm Prevention Order and imposed following a civil application, without any related criminal proceedings. The amended order was substantially redrafted properly to reflect the limited evidence relied on by the Chief Constable.

Education

BSc (Hons) 2.1 - Sound Design

LLM (with merit) - General law

Memberships

Criminal Bar Association

South Eastern Circuit

Inner Temple