



Robert Woodcock QC

Call: 1978

Silk:2009

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Robert Woodcock QC has nearly 40 years of criminal law experience. He is an expert within his field and has considerable experience both defending and prosecuting organised crime, sexual offences, homicide, fraud, regulatory law and police disciplinary action.

He is able to say that he has been led for the defence and the crown by some of the finest Leaders in the land and believes that a wealth of prosecuting makes him a better defender as defending makes him a stronger prosecutor. He is *an outstanding cross-examiner, persuasive advocate and skilled tactician*.

Crime

Robert Woodcock has been practising criminal law all his professional life. He believes strongly that so complex is the legislation and so furious the rate of change that only specialist criminal advocates have a chance of offering the service required.

He has for many years prosecuted and defended cases of the utmost seriousness and, sometimes, sensitivity. He has considerable experience in cases involving allegations of sexual abuse by perpetrators of all ages and on victims of all ages and both sexes. Prior to taking Silk he led for the Crown in numerous homicide prosecutions and conducted them alone. Since taking Silk he has also led for the defence in numerous large-scale drug conspiracies, homicides, child sexual exploitation cases and cases involving allegations of corruption. Fraud cases are also handled by him.

The cases to which attention is drawn are but some of a vast range of experience over many years as a defender and as a prosecutor

Homicide

- **R v P (2015)** Successful defence in a 2 week trial of joint enterprise murder where the client was alleged to have run back to his home to provide knives to the killer.
- **R v B (2014)** Defended joint enterprise murder of a completely innocent man in the course of

an alleged drugs war. Acquitted after 2 trials, each of 10 weeks.

- **R v Barre (2014)** Defended in 5 handed murder by stabbing during an arranged fight involving cut throat defences.
- **R v S (2014)** Defended manslaughter arising from a fall occurring some hours after one punch and at a completely different location. Expert evidence involved complex neuropathology, further complicated by high blood alcohol levels.
- **R v D (2013)** Successfully defended 78 year old man accused of assisting a former partner to murder her lover, whose body was located in the freezer of her new lover. Difficult expert evidence regarding pressure on the ocular nerves with consequent reduction in blood pressure and heart rate and elements of a cut-throat trial.
- **R v Line (2012)** Assassination of two members of a rival gang in the Suffolk travelling community. The trial centred on the exploration of DNA , gunshot residue evidence, and alleged links with an absent but renowned criminal for whom it was suggested the assassinations had been carried out.
- **R v Muir (2013)** Defended the murder of a mistress, whose body was found in a shallow grave accompanied by flowers bearing his fingerprints, and whose “confessions” were found on his mobile phone. He denied any involvement, but was convicted of manslaughter.
- **R v S (2010)** Defended son accused of murdering his father as he lay dying in his hospital bed. Defence of diminished responsibility was accepted and a community based sentence imposed.
- **R v Nichols (2010)** murder of her husband by a series of minor assaults over two months by a series of minor assaults until he weakened to the point of dying. She recruited as accomplices, her brother, her lover and her 8 year old son (who had jumped up and down on his chest) all of whom in one way or another also assaulted him her husband. Actual cause of death was undetermined beyond a gradual weakening of the deceased until resistance was impossible.
- **R v Hodgson (2010)** One month defence of a skilled house burglar addicted to crack cocaine throttled an 85 year old widow in her bed having extracted from her PIN numbers for her credit cards, set her body alight and destroyed her home. The evidence was an accumulation of circumstantial facts from which inferences of involvement were invited.

Violent Crime

Robert has undertaken the full range of violent offences against the person, but has particular experience in the difficult field of violence against young children and infants.

- **R v D (2011)** Assaulting of an adopted baby with congenital defects made exacerbated by the joint actions of both accused. The defence explored fictitious injury; proven violence upon the child by the mother; and challenged a host of Crown experts.
- **R v M (2011)** Defence of a woman accused of poisoning her child so that she nearly died.
- **R v C (2011)** Successful defence of a man was accused of shaking his one month old baby daughter in a rage and causing serious injury.

Sexual Offences

Work in the field of sexual offences has often involved extended families, historic allegations and complex interrelationships between several parties.

- **R v K (2015)** Successful defence of one of 7 charged with trafficking a child for prostitution, stupefying her with drugs and facilitating child sex offences. The two month trial required interpreters and an intermediary. Evidential inconsistencies and investigatory failings led to a successful submission at the close of the prosecution case.
- **R v Law (2015)** Defended a man said to have facilitated or conspired with group of men in Rochdale to offer of his daughter as payment to others for drugs. The complainant had repeatedly sought to resile from her original statement.
- **R v M (2011)** Defended a youth charged with rapes of autistic cousins who were incapable of meaningful cross examination: the judge directed a fair trial was possible: numerous acquittals were secured.
- **R v Nesbitt (2010)** Defended a man accused of historic offences of raping numerous of his former wives, girlfriends and even some of his own children.

Organised Crime

As well as homicides occurring within organised criminal contexts, Robert has appeared in numerous cases arising from the main criminal activity, in particular drug trafficking

- **R v M (2015)** Successful defence a career criminal accused of two conspiracies to commit violent robberies of elderly folk it was thought had large amounts of cash at home or in their nearby businesses. The victims were tied up, threatened and assaulted by masked men carrying weapons. The evidence against the defendant in both trials was that of two co-conspirators awaiting sentence.
- **R v Watts and others (2014)** 7 week trial successfully prosecuting 9 men importing and distributing huge quantities of amphetamine hidden from Holland. Vast seizures of cash were made.
- **R v W (2012)** Successful defence of conspiracy to corrupt a serving police officer to effect a large scale drug distribution within the North East of England.

Recommendations

- *"an outstanding cross-examiner, persuasive advocate and skilled tactician"* - **Legal 500 (2017)**

Memberships

Criminal Bar Association

North Eastern Circuit