

John Elvidge QC

Barrister

Overview

The Legal 500 2020/2021

"An excellent leader with a cool head."

Chambers and Partners UK Bar 2021

"He has good insight and really understands human behaviour."

John Elvidge QC is an experienced Silk who has led in many important high profile criminal cases on the North Eastern Circuit. His practice includes homicide, fraud, organised crime, sexual exploitation and modern slavery. He receives instructions in large complex cases under VHCC contracts (prosecution and defence). He also undertakes regulatory work, including health & Safety prosecutions, professional disciplinary hearings and licensing.

A selection of recent cases

R v Saffari [2021] (Teesside) Defending Noza Saffari accused of the murder of a significant criminal figure who was also a member of the Kurdish Peshmerga. The victim was shot at point blank range in a vacant terraced house in Hartlepool. The prosecution alleged this was a planned execution orchestrated by an Albanian gang. After a trial lasting three months S was acquitted of murder but convicted of manslaughter (lack of intent). Leading Rod Hunt of Dere Street Barristers and instructed by AHM, Middlesbrough.

R v Sanderson [2020] (Newcastle) Defending a man who was held unfit to plead and subsequently found to have unlawfully caused the death of his mother. Leading Geoffrey Knowles of Cathedral Chambers and instructed by Lawson and Thompson, Blyth.

R v Milroy [2020] (Newcastle) Defending Steven Milroy who was jointly charged with the murder of a man who suffered a sustained and brutal attack inside and outside M's home in a dispute over stolen drugs. After a 'cut throat-defence' the co-accused was convicted of murder and M was convicted of manslaughter (lack of intent). Leading Liam O'Brien of Dere Street Barristers and instructed by Hodgson Coulthard, Houghton le Spring.

R v Vaughan & Johnson [2020] (Teesside) Prosecuting two young defendants who were convicted of the murder (V) / manslaughter (J) of an older man who was, apparently, attacked for buying drugs with a counterfeit £20 note. Instructed by CPS Middlesbrough, leading their Rachel Masters.



Year of Call / Year of silk

1988 / 2010

Practice Areas

[Crime](#)

[Regulatory](#)



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R v Pearson [2020] (Teesside) Defending Andrew Pearson who was convicted of the kidnap and murder of his former girlfriend Natalie Harker in a secluded wood near Catterick, North Yorkshire. Leading Rod Hunt of Dere Street Barristers and instructed by Hudson Hart & Burrows, Richmond and AHM, Middlesbrough.

R v NHC [2020] (Leeds) Prosecuting a partnership business that pleaded guilty to the offence of Corporate Manslaughter and was fined £160,000 after their workman suffered a fatal fall from the flat roof extension to a terraced house. The business accepted the prosecution case that their failure to take reasonable care for their employee was gross, including failures to comply with Regulations and HSE Guidance relating to work at height. Instructed by CPS Special Crime and Counter Terrorism Division and the Health and Safety Executive.

R v Odessa Carey [2020] (Newcastle) Defending Ms Carey who psychiatrists determined unfit to plead. A jury subsequently found that she had killed her mother, who was decapitated. Leading Penny Hall of Dere Street Barristers and instructed by Alderson Law, Blyth.

R v J [2020] (Teesside) Defending a businessman charged with murder who was alleged to have participated in a joint enterprise to exact "street justice" / retribution on a man suspected of burglary. After a seven week trial J was acquitted of all charges; other defendants were convicted of murder and/or manslaughter. The case involved expert interpretation of iOS location and health app data. Leading Stephen Constantine of Dere Street Barristers and instructed by TBI, Hartlepool.

R v Timney [2019] (Teesside) Defending Andrew Timney who was alleged to have killed his neighbour. Complex medical evidence on cause of death – pathology, neuropathology, neurology, cardiology and toxicology. Acquitted of murder, convicted of manslaughter. Instructed by VCW Law, Stockton on Tees to lead their HCA Nicole Horton.

R v J [2019] (Newcastle) Defending J who admitted killing his boss by strangulation but said he did so in self-defence. He pleaded guilty to theft and was acquitted of murder, manslaughter and assault with intent to rob. Leading David Comb of Trinity Chambers and instructed by Alderson Law, Blyth.

R v Wass [2019] (Newcastle) Defending Mrs Wass who was alleged to be a party to the murder of a young mother in Hartlepool in broad daylight by her estranged partner, Torbjorn Kettlewell. She was acquitted of murder and convicted of manslaughter, as a secondary party. Leading Stephen Constantine of Dere Street Barristers and instructed by TBI, Hartlepool.

Appointments:

Queen's Counsel (2010)

Head of York Chambers (2011)

Head of Dere Street Barristers
(2011 to date)

Master of the Bench,
Gray's Inn (2014)

Leader of the North Eastern
Circuit (2014 to 2016)

Education:

King Edward VII School,
Sheffield

University of Newcastle upon
Tyne

Inns of Court School of Law

Pupil of HH Michael Taylor
at the chambers of Robin
Stewart QC (2 Harcourt
Buildings, Temple & annex at
17, Blake Street, York

Memberships:

Gray's Inn

North Eastern Circuit

Criminal Bar Association

Bar Council (2007/10,
2013/16)

General Management
Committee of the Bar Council
(2014/16)

A selection of notable cases

R v Grannon [2019] (Hull/Sheffield) Prosecuting Albert Grannon aged 78 who negligently shot and killed his 6 years old great grandson with an air rifle and pleaded guilty to gross negligence manslaughter. Instructed by CPS Complex Case Unit, Leeds.

R v Atay [2019] (Newcastle) Prosecuting Mrs Atay who stabbed and killed her husband in their family home. She subsequently claimed to have acted in self-defence. Psychiatric and psychological evidence was called in support of alternative partial defences of loss of control and diminished responsibility based on alleged coercive control of her by the deceased. Mrs Atay was convicted of manslaughter only by reason of lack of specific intent to kill. The sentencing judge rejected her account of coercive control. Leading Laurie Scott of Dere Street Barristers and instructed by CPS Northumbria.

The Court of Appeal rejected the defendant's appeal against her sentence of 14 years' imprisonment [2020] EWCA Crim 274.

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R v Williams [2018] (Leeds) Prosecuting the manufacturer of a cot-bed for HSE offences which led to the death of a baby. Instructed by CPS Special Crime Division, York.

R v Black and others [2018] (Liverpool) Defending R, a financial consultant in a trial prosecuted by the Serious Fraud Office that lasted 5 months. The case concerned millions of pounds worth of sales of solar panels throughout the UK using incentive schemes based on prospective offshore investment and insurance that did not materialise. Leading Mark Styles of Dere Street Barristers and instructed by Wragg Mark-Bell, Carlisle.

R v Rafael and others [2018] (Teesside) Prosecuting members of a family who were tried over 4 months and convicted of running a modern slavery business -tricking vulnerable people from the Slovakia into the UK to exploit them for financial gain. Leading Matthew Donkin and Richard Holland, both of New Park Court Chambers, and instructed by CPS CCU Northumbria.

R v Azram and others [2015-17] (Newcastle) Prosecuting 24 defendants in a series of trials arising from Operation Shelter, a police investigation into the sexual exploitation of girls and young women in the West End of Newcastle. Leading Dan Cordey of Dere Street Barristers and Nick Lane of New Park Court Chambers; instructed by CPS CCU Northumbria.

Directory Recommendations

The Legal 500 2020/2021

"An excellent leader with a cool head."

Chambers and Partners UK Bar 2021

"He has good insight and really understands human behaviour"

Chambers and Partners UK Bar 2020

"A very well-respected barrister."

Chambers and Partners UK Bar 2019

"He is very insightful and he has a keen eye for detail. He gets straight to the point and is a very tenacious advocate." "He is very experienced and very calm."

The Legal 500 2019

"A stalwart and very self-possessed silk."

Chambers and Partners UK Bar 2018

"He has excellent advocacy and client care skills. The matter was complex and despite having the case sent to him late, he mastered the vast amount of evidence with ease and speed."

The Legal 500 2017

"Very experienced in high-profile homicide cases"

The Legal 500 2016

"Experienced in a range of heavyweight cases."

The Legal 500 2015

"He is, for many, the first-choice silk on the North Eastern Circuit"

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