



Steven Bird

Director



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Practice and Background

Steven Bird founded the practice in October 2000. He was a partner at Simons Muirhead & Burton from 1993 to 2000 having been with that firm as a trainee, qualifying in 1990.

He specialises in serious fraud, regulatory and criminal cases but especially:-

- serious fraud;
- murder and other serious offences of violence;
- gross negligence manslaughter;
- large drug cases;
- confiscation and restraint proceedings;
- various regulatory matters (including corporate compliance under the Modern Slavery Act 2015, trading standards investigations, health and safety investigations or investigations involving financial regulation);
- rape and other serious sexual offences.

He is well known for taking on cases where there has been a potential miscarriage of justice and has a busy appellate practice both in the Court of Appeal and by way of applications to the Criminal Cases Review Commission. He represents previous victims of miscarriages of justice in claiming compensation from the Home Office.

Steven has been rated as a star individual in the Chambers and Partners directory since 2011 and has been described as having "excellent technical experience and ability, allowing him to identify issues at an early stage". In the 2010 edition he was praised for his thorough preparation of cases and described as "a true class act" and "a lawyer's lawyer". He was rated as a star performer again in 2012 where he was described as "a superb solicitor whose judgement can be trusted implicitly" and it is said that "he has incredible procedural knowledge and he prepares and supports fabulously." He remains in that position in the Chambers and Partners rankings.

The 2012 edition of the Legal 500 again ranks him as a leading individual and he is referred to as "extremely experienced and knowledgeable" In the 2011 edition he was said to be a "superb appellate lawyer", being "very comfortable with difficult forensic issues" and "an able and committed lawyer". He remains ranked as a leading individual in the Legal 500 for 2016.

In 2016 Steven was admitted to the List of Counsel at the International Criminal Court.

He has been included in Who's Who since 2014.

Recent and notable cases

In previous years Steven has defended in the following cases:

Fraud and Regulatory Matters

- the Robinsons legal aid fraud (the largest legal aid fraud case in which the trial of our client lasted 13 months);
- an investigation into the expense claims made by an MP following the controversy brought about by the Daily Telegraph investigation (his client was not charged);
- a case involving allegations of corruption against the managing director of a company in relation to contracts received from a public company;

- a land banking case of significant size, value and which attracted publicity in the national media. The client was the only one acquitted after a lengthy trial;
- representing a journalist in the corruption investigation known as Operation Elvedon. After considerable time and effort, the CPS finally agreed that it was not in the public interest to pursue the prosecution and a *nolle prosequi* was entered in early June 2103;
- a large alleged boiler room fraud prosecuted in south Wales where his client was an accountant and was acquitted of conspiracy to defraud charges.
- a large insider dealing investigation brought by the FSA which was a flagship prosecution for the Financial Conduct Authority;
- representing a banker in both the LIBOR and Foreign Exchange investigations;
- a large "boiler room" type fraud involving the sale of coloured diamonds to investors (which has just ended in an acquittal);

Serious Crime

- the appeal against conviction of a man convicted of gross negligence an allegation of gross negligence manslaughter by legionnaires' disease following the installation by our client's company of humidification equipment in a hotel buffet unit leading to two deaths
- numerous murders including the murder of a young boy by a gang of youths in the East End, a prominent contract killing case in Sussex and the highly publicised murder of a financier at his Chelsea home, a gang related murder in Battersea and a six handed murder in south London involving the shooting of a young man at point blank range with a shotgun
- manslaughter following the Tebay rail tragedy where 4 people were killed by a runaway trailer
- the high profile prosecutions of various animal rights protestors including some charged under the new legislation (Serious Organised Crime and Police Act 2005), many of those arrested in the recent Operation Achilles raids against

SHAC activists and with conspiracy to commit arson to buildings at the University of Oxford.

- representing a doctor accused of administering poison to procure a miscarriage (the first trial of its kind since the introduction of the Abortion Act over 40 years ago) and subsequently the same man in relation to an attempt to pervert the course of justice from prison.
- two unrelated cases involving allegations of conspiracy to pervert the course of justice against a criminal defence solicitor (both successfully defended);
- a solicitor charged with making telephone calls to his client who was in custody in breach of a little known part of the Prison Act 1952
- various rape cases including a successful appeal against conviction where he did not act at trial and an acquittal of a man accused of raping his estranged wife.
- representing a number of professional footballers on various allegations of rape, indecency, GBH and perverting the course of justice (in a murder case), on each occasion without charge or conviction
- a 7 handed conspiracy to commit an offence under s145 of the Serious Organised Crime and Police Act 2005 involving 25 demonstrations by animal rights activists against suppliers to HLS. He represented five of the seven defendants.
- a case involving the death of an elderly woman alleged to have been caused by the neglect of family members caring for her at the time of her death
- a further trial involving allegations of conspiracy to blackmail the customers and suppliers of Huntingdon Life Sciences;
- a case involving the death of a 7 month old baby originally prosecuted as a murder but ultimately concluded as a case of infanticide;
- a computer hacking related case involving the breach of a Serious Crime Prevention Order;

Current cases

Currently his non-appellate cases include:

- a very large conspiracy to commit insider dealing brought by the Financial Conduct Authority known as Operation Tabernula;
- an allegation of fraud and perverting the course of justice against a retired solicitor;
- a money laundering case involving allegations that his client is a significant member of an alleged major organised criminal network in London;
- a money laundering case said to involve the laundering and movement of many millions of pounds;
- representing an individual in Operation Ravine (a branch of the Operation Yewtree investigation looking at historic sexual abuse allegations mainly involving celebrities in the wake of the Saville affair);
- representing a former prison Governor in relation to an investigation into alleged widespread historic allegations of abuse within the prison system.

His appellate caseload includes a number of murder cases including some of high public profile as well as some appeals relating to serious sexual and drug offences.

Membership of professional bodies

Steven is a Committee member of:-

- London Criminal Courts Solicitors Association (LCCSA);
- Criminal Appeal Lawyers Association (CALA) (where he is also Chairman)

He is a member of:

- Fraud Lawyers Association
- Proceeds of Crime Lawyers Association

He was a Police Station duty solicitor from 1992 to 2004 and remains a member of the Funding Review Committee for the Legal Services Commission.

He is a member of the Editorial Board of LexisNexis PSL.

Police Station Advisers Index and other publications

He is the co-author (with Brian Spiro) of the "*Police Station Advisers Index*" first published in September 1995 and now on its fourth edition (published by Thomson Sweet & Maxwell). This is one of the three main texts on advising suspects in police stations and is widely used by legal representatives in police stations throughout the country.

He contributed a chapter to a book entitled "*The Criminal Cases Review Commission: Hope for the Innocent?*" published by Palgrave Macmillan.

He has also contributed a chapter to the recently published second edition of *Taylor on Criminal Appeals* dealing with the funding regime for appellate work including applications to the CCRC and appeals from the lower courts up to the Supreme Court.

Lectures

He has lectured on accredited courses for:

- Justice at their 2006 Human Rights Conference;
- London Criminal Courts Solicitors Association on "Serious Drug Offences", "Drug Trafficking Act 1994", "Duty Solicitor Police Station Update" and "Funding in Criminal Appeals";
- Criminal Appeal Lawyers Association on funding for criminal appeals;
- Police Station Defence Service on representing clients in the police station (two separate courses);

In addition he has given his opinion on national News bulletins and appeared on Legal Network Television and "CPDCast" podcasts on witness anonymity, funding for appellate cases and advising suspects at the police station.

Education and Languages

Steven speaks reasonable French. He was educated at the Royal Liberty School, Romford. He obtained an LLB (Law/French) at the University of Birmingham which included a Diplôme d'Etudes Juridiques Françaises at Université de Limoges. He studied for his Law Society Finals at the College of Law in Guildford before returning to the University of Birmingham to complete a Master of Laws (LLM) post-graduate degree with a dissertation on children's evidence in child sexual abuse cases.