

Jonathan Sandiford KC

Call to Bar: 1992

Silk Year: 2020

“Focuses his practice on prosecution, with a strong track record in trading standards prosecutions,”

“He has remarkable attention to detail”

“Very experienced in prosecution work”

“Noted for his experience in prosecution work”

THE LEGAL 500

Jonathan Sandiford KC has maintained his reputation as a top-class advocate throughout his career. He has over 25 years’ experience in complex and sensitive cases including fraud and Trading Standards prosecutions, murder, terrorism, hate crimes (racial, religious and sexual orientation) and large scale drug dealing. His expertise and attention to detail have made him a firm favourite with prosecution agencies specialising in both crime & regulatory areas and, whilst those relationships continue to go from strength to strength Jonathan is also regularly instructed to defend by leading solicitors firms.

Jonathan was sworn in as Queen’s Counsel in March 2020, prior to taking silk Jonathan regularly undertook work that might have usually been instructed to a QC, this was as a direct result of the confidence and trust in his abilities shown by the CPS Special Crime and Counter Terrorist Divisions as well as the eCrime Team of the National Trading Standards Board.

Between March 2014 and September 2016 he was retained by the Crown Prosecution Service to advise the IPCC in respect of the investigation into alleged misconduct by South Yorkshire Police and others in the aftermath of the Hillsborough Stadium disaster.

In 2015 he was instructed as Junior Counsel to prosecute youngest ever defendant charged and convicted of terrorism offences in the UK for inciting another to launch a murderous attack on the ANZAC Day Parade in Melbourne, Australia..

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Practice areas:

Criminal Law
Trading Standards Law
Terrorism Law
Homicide

Professional appointments:

Crown Court Recorder
(North Eastern Circuit) 2009

He has prosecuted a number of cases involving the stirring up of racial, religious and other forms of hatred via the internet including the leading case of Sheppard and Whittle [2010] 1 Cr.App.R 26 in the Crown Court and later the Court of Appeal.

In 2016 – 2017 Jonathan was instructed to prosecute two defendants first case in the United Kingdom involving the importation and supply via the Dark Web of the highly concentrated and dangerous opioid, Fentanyl.

In 2017 Jonathan successfully prosecuted a defendant who was stopped at Manchester Airport as he tried to smuggle a viable improvised explosive device (IED) onto a Ryanair aeroplane at Manchester Airport with the intention of detonating it in flight. In 2009 Jonathan was one of the youngest persons to be appointed to sit as a Recorder (part time judge) on the North Eastern Circuit.

Trading Standards Law

Jonathan has a particular interest and experience in cases where the internet has been used to commit regulatory and fraudulent offences. This including issues of jurisdiction where again, Jonathan has a particular expertise having been Lead Counsel for the Crown in the leading case of R v Sheppard and Whittle [2010] 1 Cr.App.R 26.

Jonathan has written and presented training material on scam websites for National Trading Standards to all of the trading standards regions in England and Wales.

Jonathan regularly prosecutes on behalf of the eCrime Team of the National Trading Standards Board and since early 2014 Jonathan has been instructed in some of the most substantial prosecutions brought by NTS for the operation and use of scam websites (80,000 pages+).

More recently Jonathan was instructed by Peters and Peters for the defence of a client under investigation by NTS for the alleged operation of a copycat website.

Trading Standards Cases

Re: J [2021](QC) Retained by Peters and Peters to advise and defence a client under investigation by NTS for consumer protection offences in respect of the alleged operation of a copycat website

Operation Zebedee and Operation Treacle [2017-2021](Leading Junior / QC) Ongoing instruction to prosecute two cases alleging multi-million-pound offences of fraudulent trading, breaching the consumer protection from unfair trading regulations and money laundering in respect of internet ticket touting.

Operation Eiffel [2017-2021](Leading Junior / QC) Ground breaking prosecution of internet ticket touts for offences of multi-million-pound fraudulent trading in respect of the acquisition of event tickets using multiple identities and bots and resale via secondary ticket websites. Involved a substantial abuse of process argument based upon the application of the Regulator's Code; a challenge to the decision to prosecute and issues of contract law. The trial itself raised issues of the relevance of market practice evidence to dishonesty following the decisions in R v Hayes and Ivey v Genting Casino.

Operation Angel Leading Counsel in the Prosecution of fraud and consumer protection offences arising out of the Vance Miller kitchen empire formerly operated from Maple Mill in Oldham, Greater Manchester.

Operation Dougal Leading Counsel in the Prosecution in the most substantial case ever prosecuted by National Trading Standards. The case involved the operation of so called 'copycat' websites whereby consumers were misled into believing they were using official government websites to apply for driving licences and the like. In fact consumers were tricked into using and paying for worthless or non-existent ancillary services. The scam generated over £40 million in less than 2 years

Operation Clio 2 Leading Counsel for the Prosecution in another substantial case involving the alleged operation of copycat website.

R v George Orwell Prosecution for consumer protection offences involving the operation of copycat websites offering services ancillary to passport renewals.

Training In September 2018 Jonathan and Denise Breen-Lawton wrote and provided training to all Trading Standards Regions in England and Wales on how to spot potential scam websites

Terrorism Law

In 2015 he was instructed as Junior Counsel to prosecute youngest ever defendant charged and convicted of terrorism offences in the UK for inciting another to launch a murderous attack on the ANZAC Day Parade in Melbourne, Australia.

In 2017 Jonathan successfully prosecuted a defendant who was stopped at Manchester Airport as he tried to smuggle a viable improvised explosive device (IED) onto a Ryanair aeroplane at Manchester Airport with the intention of detonating it in flight.

Terrorism Cases

R v K and A (2020-2021) (QC) Presently instructed to prosecute two young defendants for encouraging / inciting acts of terrorism by seeking to recruit members for an Al Qaeda affiliate in Syria. A complex abuse of process argument has been raised, based upon the Modern Slavery Act 2015.

R v X (2020)(QC) Instructed to resist an application for leave to appeal out of time by the youngest person in the UK to be convicted of terrorist offences. See R v X [2015] below.

R v F (2019) Prosecution of a defendant for two offences of collecting information useful to a person committing or preparing an act of terrorism and soliciting murder by trying to recruit an accomplice to participate in a mass casualty vehicle attack.

R v D (2019) Instructed to prosecute a defendant for inciting religious hatred against Muslims via the internet.

R v P (2019) Prosecution of a defendant for possessing a firearm and several offences of collecting information likely to be useful to a person committing or preparing an act of terrorism including the IRA Green Book.

R v AW (2018) (Manchester Crown Court) Prosecution of a supporter of ISIS for inciting and encouraging acts of terrorism in the United Kingdom.

R v MK (2018) (Newcastle Crown Court) Prosecution for encouraging and inciting acts of terrorism via the internet.

R v S (2018) (Leeds Crown Court) Prosecution for preparing acts of terrorism where it was alleged that the defendant was a white supremacist who planned to launch a murderous mass casualty attack on a Gay Pride event.

R v Madle (2017) Prosecution of a “Breaking Bad” type case where the defendant had made crystal meth with intent to supply it and had manufactured an improvised explosive device with intent to endanger life.

R v Khan and Khan (2017) (Leeds Crown Court) Prosecution of a husband and wife for preparing acts of terrorism where the husband was arrested en route to Syria via Manchester Airport to join ISIS.

R v N Muhammad (2017) (Manchester Crown Court) Prosecution for possessing explosives with intent to endanger life where the defendant was stopped by security at Manchester Airport as he tried to smuggle a viable improvised explosive device on to a Ryanair Flight with the intention of detonating it in flight.

R v M Hussain (2017) (Sheffield Crown Court) Prosecution for preparing acts of terrorism by a defendant who travelled to Turkey intending to enter Syria to join the Al Nusra Front, a franchise of Al Qaeda.

R v Creighton (2016-2017) (Kingston upon Thames Crown Court) Prosecution of a white supremacist for stirring up hatred on the grounds of race, religion and sexual orientation via the Russian Social Media Website “VK”. Also possession of the White Resistance Manual which contains bomb making instructions and other information useful to a terrorist.

R v K and K (2016-2017)(Leeds Crown Court) Prosecution of husband and wife for preparing acts of terrorism by making arrangements for the male defendant to travel to Syria to join ISIS.

R v X (2015)(Old Bailey and Manchester Crown Court) Junior Counsel in the successful prosecution of the youngest ever person convicted of terrorism offences in the United Kingdom. The 15 year old defendant was a committed supporter of ISIS who incited another member of ISIS in Australia to plot a murderous attack on the ANZAC Day Parade in Melbourne.

Op Catorze (2012) (Woolwich Crown Court and Old Bailey) Leading Junior instructed by the CPS Counter Terrorism Unit to appear at the Old Bailey to prosecute three young Kurdish women accused of petrol bombing a Turkish club in North London in revenge for an airstrike by the Turkish air force that killed over 30 Kurds in December 2011. The defendants all pleaded guilty to arson being reckless as to the endangering of life. The two older defendants were sentenced to 6 years 8 months imprisonment. The third, younger defendant received 6 years YOI. Successfully argued that the offence should be regarded as aggravated by both the defendants’ political motivations (which included expressions of support for the proscribed PKK) and racial motivation given that the club was selected for attack because it was Turkish.

R v J (2012)(Old Bailey) Prosecution of a former member of Al-Muhajiroun for possessing documents useful to a terrorist.

R v F (2012)(Old Bailey) Prosecution of a dentist who was a supporter of Al Qaeda for having a variety of bomb making manuals and manuals and how to kill with bare hands and various weapons.

R v NF (2012) (Old Bailey) Prosecution for disseminating terrorist documents by selling copies of the Anarchist Cookbook (which contains bomb making instructions) via eBay. Operation Pluton (2012-2014) (Old Bailey) Leading Junior Counsel for the Crown in the prosecution of two brothers charged with conspiring to travel abroad to attend a terrorist training camp (AQ).

R v Hartshorn (2011) Instructed by the CPS Counter Terrorism Unit to prosecute two case of using Facebook to incite riot and stir up racial hatred during the disturbances of August 2011.

Criminal Law

Criminal Cases:

R v S [2021](QC) Instructed for the defence in a case where the defendant was alleged to have participated in a five handed murder by stabbing when 17 years of age.

R v P [2020] (QC) Prosecution of a particularly brutal domestic abuse murder where the defendant sought to raise defences of loss of self-control and / or diminished responsibility.

R v R [2018-2021][Leading Junior – QC] Presently instructed to prosecute a senior police employee for alleged fraud and doing acts tending and intended to pervert the course of justice by tampering with and stealing from multiple cash exhibits over a number of years.

R v W (2018-2019) [Junior Alone] Prosecution of a serving police officer for stealing money when attending a sudden death and doing acts tending and intended to pervert the course of justice (Junior Alone).

R v J and L [2018-2019] [Leading Junior] Instructed to prosecute a police dog handler alleged to have used his police dog to commit offences of wounding with intent to cause grievous bodily harm. Also a colleague for alleged misconduct in a public office by failing to prevent one of the attack. Defendants were acquitted after trial.

Op Teddington (2005-2017) (12 years) Leading Counsel for the Crown in the largest case ever prosecuted by the Leeds Complex Casework Unit arising from a covert police investigation involving the use of undercover police officers and technical surveillance. Multi-handed, multi-indictment and trial case including allegations of Conspiracy to Defraud, Money Laundering and Perverting the Course of Justice against the main defendant, his solicitor, accountant, bank manager, business partners and various others. Resulted in four successful trips to the Court of Appeal In 2011 the main defendant was ordered to pay £2 million in confiscation proceedings.

Hillsborough Enquiry (2014-2016) Instructed by the Crown Prosecution Service to advise the IPCC in respect of their investigation into allegations against members of South Yorkshire Police and others of perverting the course of justice and misconduct in a public office

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Operation Yates (2012-2017) (Leeds, Leicester and Warwick Crown Courts) Leading Junior Counsel for the Crown in the successful prosecution of an organised crime group involved in the distribution of millions of pounds worth of heroin imported via the postal system from Pakistan.

R v Gledhill and Brennan (2016-2017)(York Crown Court) First Prosecution in the United Kingdom of two graduates for selling the highly concentrated and dangerous opioid, Fentanyl, via the Dark Web.

R v Howe (2008-2012) Leading Counsel for the Crown instructed by CPS Central Fraud Group in prosecution of an estate agent / financial adviser for the theft / defrauding of over £1m from a number of vulnerable clients.

Operation Eldorado (2008-2011) Leading Counsel for the Crown in prosecution of multi-handed, multi-indictment and multi-trial conspiracies to supply heroin and cocaine involving defendants from London, Liverpool and Yorkshire.

Operation Goodyear (2009 – 2011) Leading Counsel for the Crown in a complex multi-handed conspiracy to handle stolen cars where false identities were created by pretending to import vehicles from Australia.

Operation Stet and Stet 2 (2010-2012) Leading Counsel for the Crown in a nationwide multi-handed, multi-indictment conspiracy to supply Class A involving the West Yorkshire, South Yorkshire and Greater Manchester police forces. Included the admission of Dutch intercept material and connected issues of disclosure.

Operation Yankee (2010-2011) Leading Counsel for the Crown in a multi-handed, multi-indictment conspiracy to burgle houses and steal cars involving organised gangs operating across the North of England.

R v Cowen (2010-2011) Instructed by CPS CTU to prosecute a white supremacist for stirring up racial hatred and making and distributing indecent images of children via the internet.

Op Tartare (2008-2012) Leading Junior for the Crown in a long running prosecution brought by the CPS Complex Casework unit following joint investigations by the West Yorkshire Police and the City of Stoke Trading Standards Unit.

The most serious offence was a sophisticated and complex conspiracy to handle over £400,000 worth of vehicles stolen in Hanoi burglaries. The vehicles were given false identities supported by faked documentation. Many of them were then shipped to Japan where they were sold at auction.

The case was complicated by the decision of the third defendant to reveal that he had been a police informant. He unsuccessfully applied to stay the indictment asserting that he had been authorised to participate / promised he would not be prosecuted. When that failed he unsuccessfully sought to run duress claiming that he had been threatened by his co-accused

R v Kelly and Others (2012-2013) (Preston Crown Court) Leading Junior Counsel for the Crown in the successful Prosecution of 29 defendants for offences of perverting the course of justice arising from the actions of a Clerk to Liverpool Magistrates Court who took payment to secure the removal of driving convictions and penalty points to avoid driving disqualifications.

R v K (2014-2015) (Snaresbrook Crown Court) Instructed by the CPS in the successful prosecution of a 17 years old for attempting to murder a 15 year old with a hammer in a so called “honour killing”.

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R v C and others (2013-2014) (Bradford Crown Court) Junior Counsel for the Crown in the successful prosecution of four men for the gangland motivated murder where the innocent victim was shot through the knees then doused with sulphuric acid.

R v Snow and Atkins (2013-2014) (Leeds Crown Court) Successful Prosecution of two prisoners housed in the segregation unit of HMP Full Sutton who entered into a racially motivated conspiracy to send improvised incendiary devices to Asian firms of solicitors.

R v Bham and others (2006-2007) Leading Counsel for the Crown where defendants were alleged to have been involved in organising staged accident insurance claims. The lead defendant advanced a complicated abuse of process application based on allegations that local officers and Metropolitan counter terrorism officers investigating the 7/7 bombings had colluded to conduct improper searches.

Op Stirrup (2002–2008) Leading Junior for the Crown in the following five cases that were part of Operation Stirrup – a standing police investigation by West Yorkshire Police into drugs and firearms offences involving or with connections to Jamaican Yardie gangs.

Operation Troon (2004-2006) Leading Counsel for the Crown in a multi-indictment, multi-handed prosecution for Conspiracy to Burgle and supply of significant quantities of Class A drugs arising out of a police undercover operation.

Op Montana (2004-2007) Leading Counsel for Crown in prosecution of a multi-handed car ringing case.

R v Tharan Ali, Amran Ali and others (2004-2005) Leading Counsel for the Crown in multiple bank, credit card and insurance frauds committed by a Law student and his brother.

R v Capitano and others (2004) Leading Counsel for the Crown in a car ringing case using covert surveillance to gather evidence.

Op Lacuna (2004-2005) Leading Counsel for the Crown in a multi-handed car ringing where the cloned vehicles were disposed of via the Autotrader and similar websites.

R v Eyre, Hawthorne and others (2004-2005) Junior Counsel for the Crown prosecuting members of a Paedophile Ring where children were sold into prostitution and trafficked up and down the country.

R v Ali and another (2005-2006) Successful prosecution of a serving police officer for perverting the course of justice.

R v Capuvanno and others (2005-2006) Leading Counsel in successful prosecution for possession of cocaine with intent to supply and perverting the course of justice where the main defendant had persuaded a co-accused to make a false confession to the police.

R v Allin and Hussain (2006) Prosecuted the theft of over £1m by a bank manager who had been compromised by organised criminals.

R v Ganley and others (2006-2007) Leading Counsel for the Crown in a case involving an organised gang of burglars who travelled out from Tyne and Wear to target commercial and residential premises across North and West Yorkshire.

R v Samuel and others (2003-2004) Leading Junior in the prosecution of a gang who conspired to clone credit cards with a potential loss of over £30m.

R v W (2002-2003) Successful prosecution of a man who raped his 6 year old step-daughter and attempted to pervert the course of justice by persuading his 15 year old nephew to falsely confess and by planting DNA evidence.

Op Alkerton (2003-2004) Leading Junior for the Crown in the prosecution of gangs of house burglars who targeted car keys and vehicles to pass onto organised criminals. Reported on the front page of the Daily Mail as: "The Scourge of Suburbia". Advised on and implemented a strategy to ensure offenders were appropriately sentenced by the court.

Operation Pancrack (1999-2002) Led Junior in Prosecution of multi-handed, nationwide conspiracy to supply controlled drugs allegedly run by a convicted heroin dealer from his prison cell and investigated by the National Crime Squad using covert methods. Took over the prosecution of the case in the Court of Appeal after Leading Counsel was appointed to the Circuit Bench.

Homicide

Homicide cases

R v H [2021] (QC)

Three months before trial, Jonathan took over the prosecution of H for living on the earnings of prostitution; murder and perverting the course of justice.

In 2001-2002 the then 40 year old defendant physically abused and exploited his 17-19 year old girlfriend, R to satisfy his own drug misuse.

In 2002 H killed R and disposed of her body on farmland which was not discovered for 10 years, by which time there were only skeletal remains.

The trial was listed for 3 months due to complexities arising from the inability to scientifically ascertain the cause of death; the need to call a large number of witnesses and because there was a deep pool of known and unknown suspects who had to be excluded as being responsible for R's death.

H also made a substantial application to stay the indictment as an abuse of process on the grounds of delay and difficulties with the investigation causing him not to have been identified as a suspect and arrested until 2014.

The application for a stay was successfully opposed and, having always denied responsibility for the killing, H pleaded guilty to manslaughter and the other offences on the day of his trial **R v S** [2021](QC) Instructed for the defence in a case where the defendant was alleged to have participated in a five handed murder by stabbing when 17 years of age.

R v P [2020] (QC) Prosecution of a particularly brutal domestic abuse murder where the defendant sought to raise defences of loss of self-control and / or diminished responsibility.

R v F (2019) Prosecution of a defendant for two offences of collecting information useful to a person committing or preparing an act of terrorism and soliciting murder by trying to recruit an accomplice to participate in a mass casualty vehicle attack.

R v S (2018) (Leeds Crown Court) Prosecution for preparing acts of terrorism where it was alleged that the defendant was a white supremacist who planned to launch a murderous mass casualty attack on a Gay Pride event.

R v N Muhammad (2017) (Manchester Crown Court) Prosecution for possessing explosives with intent to endanger life where the defendant was stopped by security at Manchester Airport as he tried to smuggle a viable improvised explosive device on to a Ryanair Flight with the intention of detonating it in flight.

R v X (2015)(Old Bailey and Manchester Crown Court) Junior Counsel in the successful prosecution of the youngest ever person convicted of terrorism offences in the United Kingdom. The 15 year old defendant was a committed supporter of ISIS who incited another member of ISIS in Australia to plot a murderous attack on the ANZAC Day Parade in Melbourne.

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Reported Cases

R v Sheppard and Whittle[2010] 1 Cr.App.R 26 The first prosecution for publishing racially inflammatory material online. On appeal this became and remains the leading case on the criminal jurisdiction of the English criminal courts over the internet.

Kelly v DPP166 JP 621 DC Consideration of the meaning of “course of conduct” under Section 7 of the Protection of Harassment Act 1997. **R v Stratton & Brown** [1998] Crim LR 485 & 505 Directions to jury on intoxication and intent; time of retirement of jury.

R v Leeds Crown Court ex parte Uddin [2014] 1 WLR 1742 The decision to grant or withhold bail during the course of a trial was a matter relating to a trial on indictment and therefore was not susceptible to challenge by way of judicial review (Senior Courts Act 1981 s29(3))

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