



Lee Fish

Year of call 2003



clerks@newparkcourt.co.uk



+44 (0)191 232 1980

Lee Fish is a highly sought-after and experienced barrister who is recommended in the leading legal directories as “exceptional”, “a very well-skilled and excellent performer”, and “inspires confidence”.

Lee’s criminal practice covers serious, substantial and high-profile cases. He has developed notable expertise in the prosecution and defence of those accused of manslaughter, murder, rape and other serious offences. Lee has been appointed to CPS Serious Crime Panel, Specialist Fraud Panel and Rape and Serious Sexual Offence panel.

Known for his ‘tactical mind’ and as an effective communicator, both in Court and with vulnerable clients, Lee does not shy away from having difficult conversations.

Lee has considerable experience in regulatory offences and has specialist expertise in environmental regulation – prosecuting and defending authorities, companies and individuals. He has been described as a “true environmental law practitioner”. He is noted for his ability to tackle complex and often commercially sensitive cases requiring urgent legal advice, particularly criminal allegations. Lee has strong relations with the Environment Agency and is a Specialist Regulatory Advocate in Health & Safety and Environmental Law (List A).

As part of his regulatory practice, Lee has also been instructed by the Health and Safety Executive. His level of expertise has resulted in him being placed on the specialist panel of regulatory advocates since 2012, and he was appointed to List A in 2019. Lee also has experience acting for regulators such as the General Medical Council, Solicitors Regulation Authority, Food Standards Agency, and Marine Management Organisation.

Expertise

Crime

Leeds

16 Park Place
Leeds
LS1 2SJ
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Notable Crime cases

R v IT

Prosecution of man who sexually abused his step-son, step-daughter and his step-son's friend. This was sexually offending of the utmost gravity. One of the complainant's disclosed whilst the proceedings were ongoing. This was successfully managed and defendant was convicted. Difficult issues in relation to bad character and s.41.

R v PA

Prosecution of man for raping two separate partners. Also subjected them to domestic abuse and blackmail. Some of the offending was filmed. This case was challenging as the defendant chose to represent himself. Convicted on all counts and sentenced to life imprisonment.

R v C

Defence of lead defendant who organised multiple criminal conspiracies from prison. It was also alleged that he had attempted to interfere with witnesses in an ongoing case. Defendant was acquitted of perverting the course of justice.

R v SD

Defence of a teaching assistant who engaged in sexual communication with one of his students.

R v RM

Defence of a teacher who abused young boys whilst a volunteer in a Catholic orphanage in 1970s.

R v H & W

Prosecution of two serving police officers for child cruelty.

R v McKenna

Defence of man accused of raping two separate women in 1980's. Defendant was identified decades later by DNA evidence. Case received national attention.

R v Alemi

Defence of consultant psychiatrist for forging the will of an elderly woman. Led by Daffyd Enoch KC.

R v Marshall

Prosecution of football coach accused of sexually abusing 5 boys. This was part of Operation Tide, which is a national investigation in to historical sexual abuse within football. This case involved complex fitness to plead issues and disclosure of material which was subject to legal professional privilege.

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R v Briggs

Defence of care assistant who was accused of murdering one of her elderly clients in her own home. Entire prosecution case was focused upon disproving the defendant's account that she and the deceased had been attacked by an unknown intruder. Involved expert evidence regarding the staging of a crime scene. Case also involved significant financial evidence regarding the defendant's dire financial position. Led by John Elvidge KC.

R v Armstrong

Defence of man accused of killing partner. Complex medical and bad character issues. Led by Nick Lumley KC.

R v CH

Defence of 17 old boy for murder. Led by Paul Greaney KC.

R v M

Successful defence of a man for historic sexual offences at the Central Criminal Court.

R v Smith

Successfully excluded the interview of a man with schizophrenia who confessed to a serious robbery in the absence of an appropriate adult or solicitor. Judge held that serious breaches of PACE rendered the interview inadmissible.

Environmental Law

Notable Environmental Law cases

R v HM Property Solutions & Hornsby

Prosecution of company and its director. Open cast mine that caused pollution to Hartley Burn in Haltwhistle.

R v Coates and others

Prosecution of a number defendants including 3 limited companies for unlawful depositing of waste at two separate sites. At one of the sites the waste was stored in such a way as to be potentially harmful to human health. Issues in relation to the duty of care requirements.

R v M

Defence of company and its director for serious environmental offences arising out of water discharge activities and the spreading of hazardous waste on land.

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R v Shepherd & Albert Hill Skip Hire

Leading counsel for the Crown. Case involved the prosecution of a rogue skip hire company and those running the company who were responsible for serious environmental offences. Successful prosecution, which involved complex issues of law.

R v Benson, Brough & Easy Skips (NE) Limited

Prosecution by the Environment Agency of a limited company and its directors for illegal waste offences. Prosecution for the first time applied for a confiscation order. Advised on the correct approach to the application. The result was an order for just under £250,000 against the directors of the company.

R v Sealane Inshore Limited & Durham County Council

The prosecution of a local authority and an independent contractor for causing pollution. Durham County Council employed Sealane Inshore Limited to complete renovation works on a bridge. A substance from the works entered the watercourse causing pollution and death to fish. Provided advice prior to proceedings commencing. Case involved substantial legal argument on the meaning of “causing”, strict liability and vicarious liability.

R v Dunlop, Rutherford & Bain

Instructed to prosecute a number of Defendants who were engaged in illegal fishing activities at the River Aln. The case revolved around an illegal method of fishing called “stroke hauling”. Involved expert evidence on different methods of fishing and techniques.

R v Mba & Kumar

Prosecution for offences under transfrontier shipment of waste regime. Case concerned the exportation of hazardous waste to Nigeria.

RE ES

Representing the Environment Agency in an appeal to the Planning Inspectorate following the agency’s decision to revoke an environmental permit.

Health & Safety

Notable Health & Safety cases

R v PN

Instructed by the Health and Safety Executive to prosecute a farmer following the electrocution of one of his workers who died as a result of his injuries.

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R v NM

Instructed by Health and Safety Executive to prosecute plumber who was undertaking gas work without qualifications. This included the issuing of gas safety certificates.

R v PB

Instructed by the Health and Safety Executive in the prosecution of a construction site supervisor following a fall from height resulting in catastrophic injuries to a worker at the site who was left in a tetraplegic condition.

R v MGM Ltd

Instructed by the Health and Safety Executive in the prosecution of a company following a fall from height at a construction site.

Other Regulatory

Notable Other Regulatory cases

R v S and others

Instructed by the Marine Management Organisation in a test case, where it was argued that the prosecution was an abuse of process due to the way in which fishing quota is allocated and managed in the UK. Involved significant disclosure issues and matters of EU and domestic law. Judge found for the Crown at first instance. This was upheld by the Court of Appeal.

R v WSL

Prosecution by the Food Standards Agency of an abattoir for breaches of regulations relating to the removal of specified risk material from carcasses. Advice was provided prior to proceedings commencing.

R v IS

2 separate prosecutions by the Food Standards Agency of a dairy owner, for breaching hygiene regulations.

Inquests

Notable Inquests cases

RE MB

Represented the Environment Agency at Inquest in to the death of a man during the floods in Hull in Summer 2007. Deceased drowned after his foot became caught in a drain, which the Environment Agency was charged with maintaining.

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RE RR

Represented the family of the deceased when their daughter, a serving prisoner, committed suicide by setting herself on fire in her cell.

RE X

Represented the family of the deceased following a death at work. Inquest focused upon issues about the fitting of a safe in the back of a security van, which caused a crushing injury resulting in death.

Professional Discipline

Notable Professional Discipline cases

Dr G

Represented GMC. Oncoplastic Surgeon. Multiple failures alleged in the procedure in relation to the mastectomies and breast reconstruction.

Dr M

Represented GMC. Psychiatrist who gave flawed evidence in a murder trial in relation to defence of diminished responsibility.

Dr S

Represented GMC. Multiple findings of dishonesty in relation to qualifications and level of experience.

Training

Lee is a qualified advocacy trainer on the North Eastern circuit and provides training to pupils and new practitioners. He has been involved in providing advocacy training to students on the Bar Vocational Course at Northumbria University.

Lee has attended training courses on the handling of vulnerable witnesses and handling cases involving rape and serious sexual offences.

Appointments

- CPS Serious Crime Panel (Level 4)
- CPS Level 4 Prosecutor

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- CPS Specialist Fraud Panel (Level 3)
- CPS Specialist Rape Panel
- Specialist Regulatory Advocate in Health & Safety and Environmental Law (List A)

Education

- LLB (Hons) (First Class), University of Newcastle upon Tyne

Awards

- Advanced award in Environmental Law
- Price Waterhouse Coopers Dissertation Prize

Memberships

- North Eastern Circuit

Directory Quotes

“Lee Fish is a sound environmental law practitioner.”

Chambers and Partners 2025 [Environment]

“Lee Fish is a very good barrister and a pleasant opponent.”

Chambers & Partners 2024

“Lee is an exceptional barrister. Very bright and very able. I couldn’t speak highly enough of him.”

Chambers & Partners 2023

“Lee is very sensible, very bright and very good to work with.”

Chambers & Partners 2022

“Lee advises with a clarity of thought that inspires confidence. He has a natural rapport with juries and conveys complicated narratives in a way that lands and is persuasive.”

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Legal 500 2022

“He is incredibly personable, very well skilled and an excellent performer. He's thoroughly versed in environmental law.”

Chambers and Partners 2021 (Environment)

“A strong criminal junior.”

Legal 500 2021 (Crime)

“A true environmental law practitioner.”

Chambers & Partners 2020 (Environment)

“Experienced junior barrister specialising in environmental crime. He frequently acts for the Environment Agency in prosecutions relating to contaminated land, pollution and the unlawful disposal of waste.”

Chambers & Partners 2019 (Environment)

“He has a brilliant tactical mind.”

Legal 500 2018 (Crime)

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