Vincent Ward

Year of call 1998

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Vincent Ward has a well-established criminal practice. He accepts instructions in all types of cases, including complex cases and those of the utmost seriousness.

He is on the approved list of advocates authorised to prosecute rape and serious sexual offences. He also appears regularly in the Mental Health Review Tribunal. Previously he worked in the music industry where he developed organisational and interpersonal skills to an extremely high level. He is known for his straightforward approach and for getting to the heart of a case quickly.

Vincent is qualified to offer legal advice and representation directly to the public through the public access scheme and is using this opportunity to develop his civil practice. Having lectured in law at Northumbria University between 1998 and 2005 he maintains close links with the university, maintains a keen interest in education and training, is a qualified advocacy trainer and has recently completed a 3 year appointment as an external examiner for the BPTC (the professional course for training barristers).

Vincent was called to the bar in 1998 and has a Masters degree in mental health law.

Expertise

Crime

Vincent has a burgeoning practise in both prosecution and defence work. He has prosecuted cases of serious violence and homicide. He is authorised to prosecute cases of rape and serious sexual offences. He has defended in cases involving homicide, serious fraud, large scale drug supply, large scale commercial burglary and serious sexual assaults (including rape).

He has become recognised for his use of information technology in case preparation and can confidently manage cases involving very high volumes of material. He maintains an interest in education.

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Notable Crime cases

R v Jaspreet Oberoi, Ricky Collins & Others (Operation Ultimatum)

Conspiracy to Steal.

Sheffield Crown Court. H. H. Judge Reeds K.C. Led by Matthew Donkin. Instructed by the Serious Economic Organised Crime and International Directorate, CPS.

The prosecution of twenty defendants who were conspiring to steal rail in substantial quantities from locations all around the country. The principal organisers were a scrap metal dealer based at Kiveton Park, a former railway worker and a manager at Network Rail and those in lesser roles including a number of defendants who worked on the railway or were involved in the stealing. Some 3000 tonnes of rail were stolen and shipped abroad at a loss to Network Rail of over £1 million and generating substantial quantities of cash for the conspirators.

There were essentially two conspiracies. One involved the thieves travelling to locations where they had been tipped off about rail available to be taken, and simply loading it up and driving away with it. The other conspiracy was more involved and was successful due to the manager – Ricky Collins – making arrangements for rail to be loaded onto vehicles to be stolen, but under the guise of legitimate, authorised, removals.

Due to the size of the case, the prosecution of the defendants needed three separate trials to be conducted over a period of 20 months. A vast volume of documentary and other evidence was obtained by British Transport Police officers and needed to be distilled down into manageable form for each jury, without contaminating one trial with evidence of a separate conspiracy. Cell-site evidence and telephone data was of such a volume that over one hundred separate Sequence of Events charts were prepared by an analyst to cover the 125 separate individual thefts that took place. Fourteen defendants were convicted.

R v Ashraf - Defence

A conspiracy to commit arson in which Vincent defended. The case involved complex psychiatric and other medical evidence.

R v Greaves (2018) - Defence

This was a case involving the most serious sexual allegations by multiple complainants resulting in mixed verdicts. Although the defendant was acquitted of rape and other serious sexual offences those offences he was convicted of attracted a life sentence. The disclosure issues in the case were identified by the judge as of special interest to the national disclosure review announced by CPS in Jan 2018. The case also involved arguments over the service of telephone evidence. Vincent's arguments were successful in both cases. Following those arguments (which took up the first week of the trial) the case involved cross examination on a large number of text and social media messages. This required lengthy detailed forensic work and demonstrates Vincent's commitment to thorough preparation.

R v Connolly (2018) - Defence

In this case Vincent successfully argued a point on causation of injury following careful cross examination of the complainant's mother. An impromptu joint telephone conference was arranged involving prosecuting Counsel and an A&E consultant from a local hospital during the short adjournment on day 2. Following that conference the prosecution accepted a guilty plea to a s47 offence as an alternative to the s18 offence the client had been indicted for. This demonstrates Vincent's ability to work flexibly and to respond well to developing situations thinking outside the box.

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R v Kirkley (2018) - Defence

In this case Vincent received instructions, as a late return, to defend a client against allegations of neglect and ill treatment of a child. The allegations were very serious and Vincent was to meet the client on the first day of trial. There was a large quantity of unused material including material from linked Family Court proceedings. Following consideration of that material Vincent was able to successfully argue for the exclusion of the evidence of the complainant leaving the Prosecution with no option but to offer no evidence. This case demonstrates Vincent's ability to gain the confidence of a lay client under very difficult circumstances as well as his attention to detail in the preparation of cases and his ability to distil cogent and persuasive arguments not previously identified.

R v Devlin (2017) - Prosecution

This was an indecent images case which Vincent prosecuted and which involved technical issues about the nature of temporary internet files and proof of knowledge of such files.

R v Nellis & Nellis (2017) - Prosecution

This was a prosecution of a regulatory offence for the Department of Business Innovation and Skills. The defendants were operating a business when one of them was prohibited. There were parallel allegations of fraud. It was a complex case involving a large volume of documentary evidence. Resulting in one conviction and one acquittal.

R v Bourne & Others - Prosecution

A conspiracy to commit murder and grievous bodily harm in which Vincent appeared as junior Counsel for the Prosecution. The case involved extremely sensitive witness and complex disclosure issues. Convictions were secured.

R v Kelso - Prosecution

This was a fraud allegation which Vincent prosecuted. The case attracted media attention as the defendant had committed similar offences in the past in other parts of the country which had resulted in his victims forming a group the purpose of which was to monitor his behaviour in order to inform other potential victims. The case resulted in a conviction and a lengthy prison sentence.

R v Nicholson & Kane (2018) - Proceeds of Crime Act

Instructed by CPS Northumbria Vincent successfully argued, against the commonly held view, for the initiation of confiscation proceedings after sentence had been passed. His skeleton argument has been disseminated to other CPS areas.

R v Alok Dhanda (2017) - Proceeds of Crime Act

Vincent prosecuted in this case in which the defendant had defrauded a number of people out of substantial sums of money (totalling in excess of £1m) by selling bogus investment schemes. The Proceeds of Crime Act confiscation proceedings involved property assets held abroad and resolved, following a day of intense negotiations, on terms entirely favourable to the client. The case demonstrates Vincent's sound judgment and robust approach when necessary in negotiations.

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Inquests

Vincent is experienced in Inquest work. He has recently been instructed in the following cases:

- Represented the interests of an elderly car driver who had pulled out onto a road causing a collision in which the teenage driver of an oncoming car and her 8 year old brother died. There were parallel criminal proceedings.
- Represented the interests of a lorry driver involved in a head on crash with a car in which the car driver died.
- Represented the interest of a car driver who had run down an killed an elderly pedestrian.

Public Access

Vincent continues to develop his experience in landlord and tenant work (both commercial and residential) and is rapidly growing his practice in assisting small businesses in particular.

Notable Public Access cases

Re: A

A current case in which Vincent represents the claimant in a claim for specific performance of a contract to buy/sell real property. Vincent represents this client under the public access scheme.

Viewpoint

Vincent advises this client (a commercial landlord with properties in Berwick) on a regular basis. He has drafted particulars of claim in a successful lease dispute and advised generally on landlord and tenant obligations over the last 7 years.

PCC Systems

Vincent drafted bespoke terms and conditions for this SME Information Technology company (2016).

Cinque Ports Motors

Vincent has advised this car dealership and drafted correspondence in a dispute arising with a buyer (2015)

Appointments

- CPS Level 4 Prosecutor
- CPS Specialist Fraud List Level 2
- CPS Specialist Rape Panel

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