



Practice Profile

Ben Holt is a specialist criminal barrister. He has been instructed as leading and led junior for the prosecution and defence in a wide range of criminal cases.

Ben appears in Crown Courts throughout London and the South East of England. He regularly appears in the Court of Appeal. He is instructed predominantly to prosecute in a wide variety of cases. Recently, Ben has been involved in a number of substantial cases involving fraud and money laundering (both acting as sole Counsel and being led). He has recently prosecuted (as a leading junior) a six-handed violent disorder trial.

Ben Holt spent the first nine months of 2016 working in-house at HSBC reviewing files relating to customers who were mis-sold hedging products. He has specific experience in dealing with complicated disclosure issues; these have included the handling of particularly sensitive material and reviewing cases which have involved evidence from Covert Human Intelligence Sources and RIPA warrants. He has been instructed by the CPS to review disclosure on various matters and has worked together with the NCA and specialist units of the Metropolitan Police in this regard.

Ben Holt became a tenant following completion of his pupillage in Chambers. During pupillage he was supervised by Sarah Forshaw QC and the late Richard Sones.

Upcoming cases:

Operation Arrabella [Harrow] 2018

- Two-handed Prosecution trial. Defendants are alleged to have carried out in excess of 60 burglaries (including aggravated burglaries) in the course of one month.

Operation Galveston [Blackfriars] 2018

- Conspiracy to facilitate breach of immigration laws and money laundering offences. Two defendants are charged with organising the illegal entry into the UK of seven individuals.

Operation Manningtree [Inner London] 2018

- Led junior. Conspiracy to cause a public nuisance. Six defendants charged with organising an illegal rave in Central London.

Areas of Practice

- General Crime
- Prosecution
- Appellate
- Confiscation, Civil Recovery & Asset Forfeiture
- Public Access
- Fraud & Financial Crime
- Military Law
- Road Traffic
- Serious & Organised Crime
- Sexual Offences
- Cyber Crime
- Homicide & Corporate Manslaughter
- Terrorism

News

Fraud of the Grenfell Tower Victim Fund

1 October 2018

Ben Holt prosecuted the Finance Manager of the Grenfell Finance Team. She was employed by the RBK&C to assist in providing financial assistance to victims of the Grenfell Tower disaster. However, she stole £62,062 from prepaid credit cards that were allocated to survivors of the fire. During the course of the investigation into that allegation, it transpired that the defendant had defrauded her previous employer, the NHS. Defendant received a custodial sentence of 5-and-a-half years. Instructed by SCU, London.

[News report here](#)

Recent Cases

Operation Tandil [Croydon] 2018

Violent disorder arising out of an attack on an asylum seeker in Croydon

Two linked trials. Jonathan Polnay led Ben Holt in the first and Ben Holt led Dickon Reid in the second. A total of 14 defendants were charged with violent disorder arising out of an attack on an asylum seeker in Croydon. The case attracted international media attention. Instructed to SCU at CPS London.

[Daily Mirror report here](#)

[Daily Mail report here](#)

R v M [Isleworth] 2018

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allegation, it transpired that the defendant had defrauded her previous employer, the NHS. Defendant received a custodial sentence of 5-and-a-half years. Instructed by SCU, London.

[News report here](#)

R v. Abdikarim [Isleworth] 2017

Acid Attack

Ben Holt was instructed by the Prosecution for the trial of an 'acid attack' case. The victim was lured to a park in Isleworth by the defendant. A substance was thrown at him by another, unidentified, male. Victim lost his eye as a result of the attack. He gave evidence with the assistance of an intermediary. Defendant was convicted and sentenced to nine years' imprisonment.

[News report here](#)

R v. S [St Albans] 2017

Blackmail and misconduct in a public office

Ben Holt was instructed to defend a Detective Constable charged with blackmail and misconduct in a public office. S had used the PNC to find out personal details of an individual who was using the services of a prostitute. He then blackmailed him. Pleaded guilty. Sentence referred to the CoA by the A-G as being unduly lenient. Instructed by Slater & Gordon.

News reports:

[BBC report here](#)

[Daily Telegraph report here](#)

R v. Ahmed [Snaresbrook] 2017

Attempted Murder

Ben Holt was Prosecution counsel at this trial of attempted murder. The defendant had run over an acquaintance with whom he was having a disagreement. Convicted of section 18 and sentenced to nine years' imprisonment.

R v. Daniels & ors [Isleworth] 2017

Conspiracy to steal motor vehicles

Ben Holt acted for the Crown, Daniels was charged with two others with conspiracy to steal motor vehicles. He worked for a BMW dealership and was convicted of stealing car keys and customer's personal details before passing them on to other conspirators who would steal the cars that had been sold from his place of work. His co-defendants pleaded Guilty at PTPH; with one of them giving evidence for the Crown against Daniels. On conviction, Daniels was sentenced to 63 months' imprisonment.

News reports:

Evening Standard

Daily Mail

Operation Manningtree [Inner London] 2017 2017

13 handed Violent Disorder following illegal 'rave'

Catherine Pattison led Ben Holt in the Prosecution of 13 defendants for violent disorder that arose out of an illegal rave organised to take place on the night of Hallowe'en 2015 by a group called 'Scumtek'. The violence was described as the worst in London since the riots of 2011 and resulted in the largest deployment of Police Officers since that time.

News reports here:

Evening Standard

The Guardian

R v. Oorloff & Dickinson [Guildford] 2016

£2m 'Rare Earth Metal' Fraud

Jonathan Polnay led Ben Holt in this "boiler room" rare earth metals fraud. Both Defendants were convicted after trial of selling worthless Rare Earth Metals as part of an investment. The total value of the scam was £1.9m. Both defendants were convicted and sentenced to a total of 11 years' imprisonment. Instructed by CPS Headquarters Central Fraud Group.

News report here.

Operation Tineid [Blackfriars] 2015

Fraud

Catherine Farrelly led Ben Holt for the Crown. Defendants were charged with arranging co-defendants to take driving test on behalf of other people. NCA investigation, instructed by the Organised Crime Group at the CPS.

News report here.

R v. A & ors [C.C.C] 2015

Standing Order Fraud

Jonathan Polnay led Ben Holt for the Crown in a nine-handed standing order fraud that was set up and orchestrated by an inside man working with Nationwide bank. Case involved a considerable amount of forensic and banking evidence. (Investigated by DCPCU, instructed by CPS SCU). Jury were unable to reach a verdict on defendant said to be "inside man". Prosecuted re-trial alone and the defendant was convicted. Mail Online news report.

R v. S 2015

Armed Robbery

Ben Holt prosecution counsel in an armed robbery trial. Crown's case relied solely on ANPR, cell site and other circumstantial evidence. Defendant convicted and imprisoned for life.

R v. M & M [Woolwich] 2015

NHS fraud

Ben Holt represented the husband of an NHS employee, in a prosecution brought by NHS Protect. The wife was alleged to have stolen £300,000 from her employer whilst working for the NHS. The husband was said to have acquired the criminal property. Significant quantity of evidence served (over 10,000 pages). Ben acted alone; other parties in the trial had two counsel. Hung jury. Evening Standard news report.

R v. S & ors [C.C.C] 2014

Card fraud by ATM skimming

Catherine Pattison led Ben Holt for the prosecution in two separate sets of proceedings relating to Romanian nationals who were charged with card fraud by ATM "skimming". This was sophisticated organised crime group who were making equipment to capture individuals' bank account details when they inserted their cards into an ATM. A total of 13 defendants were charged with offences ranging from conspiracy to defraud, possessing articles for use in fraud and transferring criminal property. (Investigated by DCPCU, instructed by CPS SCU). Mirror Online news report.

Operation Kennedy [Portsmouth] 2014

Conspiracy to supply class A drugs

Gordon Carse led Ben Holt for the defence in this multi-handed Class A conspiracy trial. The defendant was alleged to have been part of a conspiracy to supply over £600,000 of cocaine in and around the Portsmouth area. The defendant's involvement and role were underpinned by cocaine found in his possession, call data and text messages. The defendant was acquitted. Sentences totalling 54 years imprisonment were handed down.

R v. T [Chelmsford] 2014

Firearms and drugs

Ben Holt represented a defendant charged with possession of firearm with intent to endanger life and drug supply offences. Convicted of the drug matters and simple possession of the gun. Sentenced to an eight-year term of imprisonment.

R v. R & ors [Croydon] 2013

Kidnap trial

Catherine Pattison led Ben Holt for the prosecution in this 5-handed kidnap trial. This case involved counsel reviewing a considerable amount of unused material. This included downloads from over 40 mobile telephones. There were numerous issues relating to sensitive disclosure. The case against the defendants was solely reliant on cell-site and tracker evidence. One defendant was convicted and received a prison sentence of 12 years. Instructed to draft respondent's notice to appeal. Leave refused; renewed in front of the full Court and refused. (Investigated by Kidnap & Special Investigation Unit of the Met, instructed by CPS SCU).