



Practice Profile

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.

Ben appears in Crown Courts throughout London and the South East of England and has also appeared before the Court of Appeal. He is instructed equally to prosecute and defend in a wide variety of cases; specifically serious violence, dishonesty offences and drugs supply. 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 been instructed by the CPS Proceeds of Crime Unit to conduct confiscation hearings post-conviction.

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. 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 regularly defends members of the Armed Forces; both in the civilian Court and the Court Martial. He has appeared in the Court Martial in the UK and abroad. He is fully aware of the specific issues that can arise when Service Personnel appear before the civilian Courts; both in terms the trial process and the impact that any sentence can have on their continued employment.

Ben Holt is able to accept instructions direct from the public in appropriate cases. For further information in this regard please contact the **Senior Clerk**.

Upcoming cases:

- Operation Tandil [Croydon] 2017 - Prosecution of 13 defendants for violent disorder resulting from an incident at a bus stop in Croydon [leader Jonathan Polnay]. BBC news report
- R v A [Snaresbrook] 2017 - Attempted Murder trial. Defendant is alleged to have driven onto a pavement and run over an acquaintance. Instructed to prosecute.
- R v A [Isleworth] 2017 - Section 29 of the Offences Against the Person Act. The defendant is charged with throwing acid at the victim; thereby causing life changing injuries.

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

Recent Cases

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).