

Thomas Beardsworth

Call: 2021



✉ clerks@zharecourt.com ☎ 020 7353 5324

Thomas Beardsworth is building a criminal and civil practice across Chambers' core specialisms.

The principal part of Tom's practice is criminal prosecution and defence. Tom has prosecuted fraud, regulatory offences and general crime. As sole counsel Tom has been instructed to defend allegations of false imprisonment, a bomb hoax, supply of Class A drugs, wounding with intent and attempted rape. Tom knows from experience the value of preparatory work before trial, particularly in relation to admissibility and disclosure.

Tom recently secured the discontinuance of proceedings in one case by challenging the admissibility of confession evidence, in another following representations on modern slavery, and in another through a disclosure request the answer to which provided an innocent explanation for the presence of the defendant's blood at the complainant's address.

Tom has a growing civil and advisory practice. He has a particular interest in the exercise of investigative powers and the civil recovery of the proceeds of crime. He represents both applicants and respondents in asset freezing and forfeiture applications brought under Part 5 of POCA, both as sole counsel and led by King's Counsel. He has been instructed by a government department to advise on procedural errors by several train operating companies in their prosecutions of fare evaders over many years.

Before coming to the Bar, Tom worked for five years as a financial journalist at Bloomberg.

Thomas accepts [Direct Access](#) instructions.

Expertise

Business Crime & Financial Services

Tom's is often instructed by the prosecution in the fields of business crime and financial services. Among his recent cases are:

- husband-and-wife co-defendants who abused their position to defraud a charity

- a Mail Forwarding Business that accepted counterfeit documents from customers
- the director of a haulage business who falsified tachograph records
- a tenant who dishonestly obtained social housing

Tom has also represented defendants including one said to have dishonestly claimed on their home insurance and several accused of handling criminal property. Tom is familiar with the offences in the Company Directors Disqualification Act having completed a substantial draft advice for senior members of Chambers during pupillage.

Tom also has experience working as part of a large defence team. He has assisted in the review of unused material in a SFO prosecution. In another case he drafted submissions on behalf of a brokerage involved in a dividend arbitrage scheme that addressed the FCA's calculation of financial benefit.

In the civil jurisdiction, Tom acts for both applicants and respondents in account and cash freezing and forfeiture applications pursuant to Part 5 of POCA.

Before coming to the Bar Tom was a financial journalist for five years. He has a sound understanding of capital markets in general and the less liquid parts of the corporate bond market in particular. Of equal or greater importance, he developed an understanding of how a financial-market scandal or crisis feels to people in the middle of it.

Civil Litigation

Tom has a growing civil and advisory practice. He has a particular interest in the exercise of investigative powers and the civil recovery of the proceeds of crime. He represents both applicants and respondents in asset freezing and forfeiture applications brought under Part 5 of POCA, both as sole counsel and led by King's Counsel.

He has been instructed by a government department to advise on procedural errors by several train operating companies in their prosecutions of fare evaders over many years.

Tom successfully represented a prison operator in responding to an application for writ of habeas corpus in the High Court.

Consumer & Trading Standards

Tom regularly represents local authorities in consumer and trading standards matters. In the civil jurisdiction he also has experience applying for Closure Orders and Food Condemnation Orders.

Criminal Defence

As sole counsel Tom has been instructed to defend allegations of false imprisonment, a bomb hoax, supply of Class A drugs, wounding with intent and attempted rape. Tom knows from experience the value of preparatory work before trial, particularly in relation to admissibility and disclosure.

Tom recently secured the discontinuance of proceedings in one case by challenging the admissibility of confession evidence, in another following representations on modern slavery, and in another through a disclosure request the answer to which provided an innocent explanation for the presence of the defendant's blood at the complainant's address.

Gaming & Licensing

Tom has represented the Metropolitan Police in licensing matters and has experience resolving contested applications to the satisfaction of the police, premises holders and interested parties. Tom is also familiar with special treatment premises licensing. He has prosecuted a massage parlour on behalf of a local authority for breach of its license conditions.

Tom is familiar with the licensing requirements and offences contained in the Gambling Act 2005, having been instructed in Part 5 POCA proceedings in which that is an issue.

Health & Safety

Tom seeks to develop a practice in health and safety law. As a pupil Tom assisted in drafting advice on potential prosecutions of companies who produced, certified and marketed cladding products that were used on Grenfell Tower. He has a good understanding of sections 2 and 3 of the Health and Safety at Work Act.

Inquests

Tom seeks to develop a practice in coronial law. During his pupillage Tom assisted members of Chambers in inquest work including an Article 2 inquest concerning the police's purported failure to respond promptly to reports of domestic violence before the victim was later killed by her partner.

International, Sanctions & Extradition

During pupillage Tom assisted senior barristers with criminal trials and inquiries overseas – including the Cayman Islands, Gibraltar and the Seychelles – and is familiar with how their rules of law and procedure can differ from England and Wales. During pupillage Tom also assisted counsel representing Kuwait in that state's first extradition request at Westminster Magistrates' Court. He has drafted advice concerning requests for mutual legal assistance and the extraterritorial powers of English investigators.

Private Prosecution

Tom has considerable experience prosecuting for non-CPS public authorities – including allegations of fraudulently obtaining property and selling counterfeit goods – and welcomes instructions to advise private individuals and organisations considering a prosecution.

Tom is well-placed to provide guidance on the early stages of criminal proceedings having been instructed by a government department to advise on procedural errors by several train operating companies in initiating prosecutions for fare evasion.

Tom works well in a team. During pupillage he assisted a private prosecutor at the sentencing stage by producing schedules to itemise each of the three conspirators' monetary gains. He has likewise worked as a junior member of a large team in several cases including SFO and FCA proceedings.

Professional Discipline

Tom accepts instructions in the field of professional discipline. As a pupil barrister he assisted members of Chambers in a range of disciplinary tribunals concerning doctors, solicitors and police officers.

Tom has represented police officers in the criminal courts for both on-duty and off-duty misconduct.

Before coming to the Bar Tom was a financial journalist for five years. He specialized in covering less-liquid parts of the corporate bond market where the line between legitimate, opportunistic market behaviour and wrongdoing can be difficult to identify. Tom developed an understanding of how a workplace scandal or crisis feels to people in the middle of it.

Public Inquiries

Tom accepts instructions to act in public inquiries. During his pupillage Tom assisted members of Chambers in their work on the Covid Inquiry, the Grenfell Tower Inquiry and an inquiry in Gibraltar.

Public Prosecution

Tom regularly prosecutes for the Crown Prosecution Service, local authorities and regulatory agencies. His current and recent instructions include fraud, robbery and affray. Tom has a proactive approach to case management, providing early advice on issues that are likely to prove difficult at trial. He is also instructed in relation to confiscation and has successfully resisted defendant section 23 applications seeking to reduce the sums ordered against them.

Tom represents the Metropolitan Police in a range of civil applications concerning criminal conduct, such as Stalking Protection Orders, Closure Orders, Gang Injunctions and account or cash forfeiture orders, which supplement his understanding of police investigative work.

Tom has undertaken work for the CPS Appeals Unit as a disclosure junior in an appeal against a historic conviction.

Sports Law

Tom accepts instructions in the field of sports law.

During pupillage he assisted counsel advising the British Horseracing Authority on the application of Section C of the Rules of Racing (ownership and registration) to a high-profile individual whom a civil court had determined was responsible for seriously discreditable conduct.