



Practice Profile

“... a highly experienced leader who consistently demonstrates his ability to effectively prosecute cases which are substantial and of significant gravity, complexity and sensitivity.”

James is an experienced and highly respected advocate, with an established and busy leading practice, centred almost exclusively on serious and financial crime. After many years prosecuting and defending cases involving organised crime, drugs, homicide, kidnap, armed robbery, police corruption, sexual offences and fraud as leading junior, James took silk in early 2025.

Empathetic and engaging

James' professionalism, meticulous preparation and 'polite relentlessness' in court – combining a pleasant and fair manner with determination and persistence – make him popular with instructing solicitors and opponents alike. He has been praised for his tough and precise cross-examination and for his ability to establish effective relationships and build rapport easily. Simply put, people like him and listen to him.

Long and complex cases

In the last few years James's practice has been dominated by a series of complex, multi-handed cases including NHS and plant machinery frauds, three very large drug cases, each involving 30+ defendants, high-profile prosecutions for murder, gang-related attempted murder; and defending in cases of money laundering and sexual assault on a victim with cerebral palsy.

In all these cases, James's leadership and his ability to process and prioritise swathes of detail, including expert, forensic and psychiatric evidence, stand out.

He is a first-class team leader and strategist, directing resources to the most important aspects of a case, avoiding unnecessary confrontations and providing exceptional levels of client support and care.

James's Privacy Policy can be downloaded [here](#).

Areas of Practice

- Confiscation, Civil Recovery & Asset Forfeiture
- Cyber Crime
- Financial & Corporate Crime
- General Crime
- Homicide
- Prosecution
- Regulatory & Professional Discipline

- Serious & Organised Crime
- Sexual Offences

CPS Panels:

- General Crime- Grade 4
- Serious Crime- Grade 4
- RASSO- Grade 4
- Fraud- Grade 4

News

Two Convicted of £290k Drugs Supply Conspiracy

27 March 2025

Two Defendants have been convicted at Snaresbrook Crown Court for agreeing to supply Class A drugs in the London Borough of Tower Hamlets. The drugs line has an estimated annual yield of approximately £290,000. All 5 other Defendants had earlier pleaded guilty. All Defendants will be sentenced later this year.

James Brown KC leading Anna Dutka prosecuted the case, instructed by the CPS London North Unit.

King's Counsel Appointment

24 January 2025

We are delighted to announce that James Brown is to be appointed King's Counsel (KC). The Lord Chancellor will formally bestow the title of KC upon James at the Silks' appointment ceremony at Westminster Hall on 24th March 2025.

King Charles III has approved the appointment of 105 barristers and solicitors as King's Counsel in England and Wales. The title of KC is awarded to those who have demonstrated overall excellence in advocacy in the higher courts.

Sarah Forshaw KC and Mark Heywood KC, Joint Heads of Chambers at 5KBW, said:

"We could not be more delighted. James Brown is an advocate of exceptional calibre. Calm, highly effective, compelling, he stands out from the crowd. James brings the number of Silks in Chambers up to 10. At 5 King's Bench Walk (Crime Set of the Year), we pride ourselves on excellence; nothing less will do. That James has demonstrated that excellence, and been recognised for it, is such very good news."

Congratulations to James and all those who were successful.

Semi-pro Footballers Jailed for Drug Conspiracy

6 June 2024

Six former semi-professional football players have been jailed for their parts in a conspiracy to supply over 2.7 tonnes of cocaine. The organised criminal gang, headed by Adam Pepera, used encrypted messaging and a network of storage units to supply cocaine worth in excess of £200m. One of the gang members, Luke Skeete, was initially stopped by police in possession of 8 kilos of cocaine. Analysis of his phone, and extensive investigation, led to police uncovering the wider network involved in the enterprise. Pepera received a sentence of

24 years, reduced from 29 years for his guilty plea, with sentences for the others ranging from 13 years to 18 years 9 months.

James Brown, leading Phoebe Bragg, appeared on behalf of the Crown. The case was investigated by the Metropolitan Police's Specialist Crime Unit and prosecuted by the CPS.

<https://www.standard.co.uk/news/crime/footballers-cocaine-luke-skeete-acton-chiswick-london-metropolitan-police-b1160439.html>

<https://news.sky.com/story/six-semi-pro-footballers-jailed-for-over-100-years-after-selling-cocaine-worth-up-to-260m-13144324>

Nightclub Murder

11 November 2023

Danny Robinson KC and James Brown prosecuted three defendants for the murder of a man outside a nightclub in Ilford, East London.

After an 8-week trial at the Central Criminal Court, two defendants were convicted of murder and the third was found guilty of manslaughter.

The two defendants were sentenced yesterday to life imprisonment with a minimum term of 25 years. The third defendant will be sentenced on the 22nd November.

Read more here:

Two jailed for life over Ilford nightclub killing - BBC News

National Health Service Fraud & Bribery

9 March 2023

After a three month trial, James Brown and Rupert Kent secured convictions in a National Health Service fraud and bribery case involving dishonest procurement practices operated by an employee of, and suppliers to, an NHS Trust. Instructed by the Crown Prosecution Service's Serious Economic Organised Crime and International Directorate.'

Recent Cases

R v AT & Ors [Central Criminal Court] 2022

Unlawful killing following mass brawl in south – East London

Charlotte Newell QC led James Brown in this trial at the Central Criminal Court.

Mum's life 'shattered into pieces' after Chilsehurst plumber Frankie Bulbrook chased and killed in mass brawl (msn.com)

Operation Hillside [CCC] 2020

Attempted Murder of Police Officers

James Brown led Ben Holt for the Crown in this high profile trial involving the attempted murder of Police Officers during a gun fight following an armed 'car jacking'. The defendant was convicted by a jury and received a life sentence.

News report here.

Link to Met Police report.

R v. OH [Isleworth] 2018

Manslaughter of homeless man at Westminster Shelter

James Brown acted for the Crown in this trial involving the the killing of a homeless man at Westminster Shelter following a drunken argument.

News report here.

R v. O & ors [Wood Green] 2018

"County Lines" Drugs Conspiracy

James Brown was lead Counsel for the Crown in this "County lines" drugs conspiracy, 5 week trial in August 2018.

News report here.

R v. F & ors [Southwark] 2018

Importation of 100 kilos of cocaine by helicopter

James Brown was leading Counsel for the Crown in this case involving the Importation of 100 kilos of cocaine by helicopter, landing at luxury hotels in Kent.

News report here.

R v. K & ors [Snaresbrook] 2018

Multi Kilo class A Drugs conspiracy

James Brown prosecuted this East London organised crime network for a Multi-kilo class A drugs conspiracy at a 5 week trial at Snaresbrook CC in January 2018.