Stephen Nelson

YEAR OF CALL 2022



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Career Overview

Steve Nelson joined Chambers as a Door Tenant in March 2025 and became a full Tenant in March 2026, having been a Crown Court Advocate since 2001. He has advocacy experience across all criminal courts spanning over 30 years, including more than 25 years at the Crown Court. Prior to his transfer to the Bar in November 2022, he founded and ran his own Criminal Defence Solicitors' practice for 30 years. He is police station accredited and a Duty Solicitor, and is well used to working under extreme pressure.

Steve is therefore a barrister who knows the criminal justice system from all angles — from cradle to grave, and from the police station to the Central Criminal Court.

He specialises in defending murder, manslaughter and other serious violence, dishonesty and fraud, drugs, and public order matters but is but is regularly instructed in a wide variety of cases across the spectrum of criminality.

Lay clients value him for his humour, candour, calmness and empathy, while professional clients value his keen appreciation of all that solicitors need to support their practice. He is a "safe pair of hands," and is often instructed in

cases requiring a particularly sensitive approach.

Area of Practice

Firearms / Trafficking / Manufacturing

Serious Acts of Violence (including Murder and Manslaughter)

Drugs / Conspiracy / Importation / Distribution / Production / Encrochat

Fraud / Money Laundering

Proceeds of Crime (POCA)

Theft / Conspiracy to Steal/Burglary/Dishonesty

Road Traffic Incidents (Criminal and Civil Liability)

Prison Law

Personal Injury (Vehicle related)

Some Civil jurisdiction

Notable Cases

Infanticide. R v (A youth defendant) Central Criminal Court Sole Counsel

R v (A youth defendant) Central Criminal Court sole counsel. Described by Steve as the most difficult case of his career. A tragic case involving a very young and vulnerable defendant and which involved the liaisons with a variety of child psychology and psychiatric services. It also involved some very disturbing and emotional CCTV evidence. Following a great number of representations and meetings with the Crown Prosecution Service the case was eventually dealt with by the Crown offering no evidence.

Murder R v JSG Central Criminal Court

Junior. KC passed away early in a four-month trial. Although a new leader was brought on board, Steve did much of the heavy lifting throughout. Client was a defendant in a complicated and potentially gang and/or drug related shooting. Very detailed examination of CCTV and telephone evidence established an evidential deficiency such that it was not possible to show the client knew of any plan to murder the deceased. Client acquitted of murder.

R v TJ Woolwich Crown Court

Junior. Alleged murder in Prison. Extensive examination of CCTV and various computerised logs. Client acquitted following half time submission.

R v JH Central Criminal Court

Junior. Multi-handed murder case. Client was a youth and at college, so significant potential impact on a young defendant's future. Extensive examination of CCTV and phones. Acquittal for murder, conviction on lesser matters.

R v RW Central Criminal Court

Sole Counsel. Eventual accepted plea to manslaughter by reason of diminished responsibility. Extensive use of psychiatric evidence.

R v MS Maidstone Crown Court

Sole Counsel. Much research into ballistic and firearm evidence including recoil and position of firearms in relation the deceased's pathology evidence. Acquitted of murder.

R v AA Central Criminal Court

Junior in Trial of Issue where the defendant was ruled unfit to plead or stand trial by reason of mental illness. After examination of CCTV, blood spatter and other forensic evidence, Court found that the death did occur at the hands of the accused. Sole counsel when defendant's health subsequently improved. Manslaughter admitted by reason of diminished responsibility.

R v NN Newcastle Crown Court

A case early in Steve's advocacy career where the client wanted him to conduct the trial. Case involved substantial gangland violence in the North East. A knowledge of firearms and the early use of CCTV was of assistance

Other Cases

R v JT Woolwich Crown Court

Assault case where a Father was accused of serious violence against his own son. The circumstances were highly unusual and required a working knowledge of the local geography. Steve demonstrated that the alleged timings and places were impossible.

R v SA Maidstone Crown Court

Robbery and assault case where Steve was able to demonstrate using telephone evidence and CCTV timings that the Client could not have been the assailant. Defendant acquitted.

R v MH Woolwich Crown Court

Drugs and violence case with a very informed and determined client. Steve was able to build on empathy with the client, enabling them to work as a good team in a matter which needed a knowledge of Blood Stains, DNA transfer and a very careful and controlled cross examination.

R v DW Woolwich Crown Court

Client was accused of a stabbing at a block of flats. Careful examination of the blood trail, scene photographs and DNA evidence showed that the complainant was in fact the aggressor. Client acquitted.

R v GY Woolwich Crown Court

Alleged defacing of the Stephen Lawrence memorial. A case early in Steve's advocacy career, in which careful examination of various Police Officers established that the client was not involved.

R v JS Woolwich Crown Court

A case involving kidnap and firearms in which it was shown the defendant played no part. Defendant acquitted following a half-time submission.

R v DH Woolwich Crown Court

Kidnap and false imprisonment case which involved a firearm. Careful examination of the facts showed the defendant played no real part in events. Half time submission led to the dismissal of several counts on the indictment, client subsequently acquitted on the remaining counts.

R v MH Woolwich Crown Court

A difficult and complex matter involving drugs and assault. Lay client heavily invested in the case, and had dispensed with the services of several previous counsel and solicitors.

Other Information

Steve has been involved in Criminal Practice since leaving school in 1976 and has considerable experience in all aspects of preparation of Criminal Cases. Thus at the Bar he has an almost unique insight as to what is required to run a solicitors' practice, including what is needed for all quality marks and audit requirements. In his spare time Steve is a life long supporter of Charlton Athletic FC and a keen cricketer and enjoys spending time with his wife and family.