



Natalie Bird

Call 2015

Ranked as a leading junior by the Legal 500 directory, Natalie specialises in criminal and regulatory law.

Natalie prosecutes (CPS Level 3 and SFO's C Panel) and defends in the Crown Court, Youth Court, and Magistrates' Court on a wide range of criminal matters, including trial advocacy, sentences, and confiscation proceedings. In early 2023, Natalie was led by Tracy Ayling KC in the prosecution of Gary Bennett, who was convicted of murder and sentenced to a minimum term of 21 years in prison. In 2021, Natalie acted as disclosure counsel to the Crown in the high-profile CCRC reference of Peter Tredget, in which the Crown successfully resisted an appeal against conviction regarding 12 counts of manslaughter through numerous arsons dating back to the 1970s.

Natalie has a particular interest in fraud and economic crime, and has worked on investigations led by the Bank of England's Prudential Regulation Authority, the Financial Conduct Authority, the National Crime Agency, the Serious Fraud Office, and The Pensions Regulator. She is also on the SFO's C Panel of Counsel and is a Committee Member of the Young Fraud Lawyers Association.

Natalie also has experience representing individuals in Article 2 inquests before a Coroner and jury. For example, in a three-week jury inquest held in the spring of 2023 Natalie represented a nurse who had attended a "Code Blue" for a prisoner who collapsed and later died, having taken "spice" on the prison wing.

In addition to her criminal and inquest practice, Natalie regularly appears for healthcare regulators and regulated professionals in fitness to practise proceedings, and has been ranked as a "Leading Junior" in Legal 500's 2024 publication. Her experience in this field stems from her 8-month post-pupillage secondment with the Association of Optometrists in 2018, during which she managed a large number of cases and drafted representations to Case Examiners. Ever since, Natalie has case-presented as well as defended in a vast array of regulatory proceedings, including interim order hearings (including applications to the High Court to extend the order), substantive hearings, review hearings, restoration hearings, Specialist List appeals, and disclosure applications to the County Court.

Practice Areas

Prosecution

Natalie is a CPS Level 3 Prosecutor, prosecuting in the Crown Court, Youth Court, and Magistrates' Court in trial and POCA proceedings. While still at Level 2, in January 2022 Natalie successfully prosecuted a

wounding with intent jury trial.

In early 2023, Natalie was led by Tracy Ayling KC in the prosecution of Gary Bennett, who was convicted of murder and sentenced to a minimum term of 21 years in prison. For more information, please click here: <https://www.2bedfordrow.co.uk/2br-conduct-murder-trial-in-basildon-crown-court/>

In 2020-late 2021, Natalie acted as Disclosure Counsel to the Crown in the high profile CCRC reference of Peter Tredget, in which the Crown successfully resisted an appeal against conviction regarding 12 counts of manslaughter through numerous arsons dating back to the 1970s. For more information please click here: <https://www.2bedfordrow.co.uk/natalie-bird-acted-as-disclosure-counsel-for-the-crown-in-the-recent-court-of-appeal-case-of-r-v-tredget-2022-ewca-crim-108%e2%80%8b/>

Natalie is also on the SFO's C Panel and has a particular interest in fraud and economic crime, having completed part-time secondments with the Bank of England's Prudential Regulation Authority, the Financial Conduct Authority, and the National Crime Agency, assisting with and advising on investigations into individuals, banks and insurance companies. In 2021, she was instructed by the CPS and HMRC in a VAT and Corporation Tax evasion case involving losses totalling nearly £400,000 – following her comprehensive review of hundreds of pages of evidence and financial reporting, Natalie drafted an Indictment to which the Defendant pleaded Guilty in full.

Defence

Natalie regularly defends in the Crown Court, Youth Court, and Magistrates' Court, including trial advocacy, sentences, and confiscation proceedings.

A few months after successfully completing her pupillage with 2 Bedford Row, Natalie was led by former Head of Chambers Bill Clegg QC in a two-week trial regarding domestic violence and controlling and coercive behaviour, resulting in the client being acquitted of all charges. Since then, Natalie has represented many Defendants at trial in the Crown Court in her own right – please see the list below for some examples. She has a particular interest in fraud and economic crime, and is building a practice within the field of health & safety.

In 2023, Natalie secured the acquittal of a man in his thirties who was accused of historic sex offences from when he and the complainant were children in the 1990s/early 2000s. For more information please click here: <https://www.2bedfordrow.co.uk/natalie-bird-secures-acquittals-in-trial-alleging-historic-sexual-offences/>

Natalie welcomes all manner of instructions through solicitors as well as directly from lay clients. For example, Natalie provided a lay client with direct access advice regarding potential bribery whistleblowing, and she has secured an acquittal for a working mother accused of keying her neighbours' cars.

Notable Cases

- **R V P (2023):** Jury acquitted client in his 30s accused of historic sexual offences against another child. For more information, please click here: <https://www.2bedfordrow.co.uk/natalie-bird-secures-acquittals-in-trial-alleging-historic-sexual-offenc>

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- **R v R (2023):** Teenage client acquitted in the Youth Court of possession of a Class A drug with intent to supply, despite his DNA being found inside a knotted bag of drugs.
- **R v C (2023):** Vulnerable client acquitted of aggravated knifepoint burglary, despite being identified by the complainant in an ID procedure. For more information, please click here: <https://www.2bedfordrow.co.uk/natalie-bird-successful-in-aggravated-burglary-defence/>
- **R v J (2022):** Client acquitted of assaulting an emergency worker (a plain-clothes police officer).
- **R v J (2022):** Persuaded the Judge to sentence by way of the time the client had already served in prison, following Guilty pleas to supplying Class A drugs – he was released later that day.
- **R v M (2022):** Youth Court acquittal for a 17-year-old boy with severe learning disabilities who had been accused of sexual assault of a child under 13 and inciting a child under 13 to engage in sexual activity. For more information, please click here: <https://www.2bedfordrow.co.uk/youth-court-sexual-offences-acquittal/>
- **R v H (2021):** Secured a suspended sentence for a man who had pleaded Guilty to perverting the course of justice having falsely accused another man of robbery.
- **R v D (2021):** Secured a suspended sentence following a *Goodyear* indication for a man accused of supplying Class A drugs.
- **R v T (2020):** Client avoided prison having pleaded Guilty to stealing nearly £9,000 worth of goods from his employer.
- **R v C (2020):** Sexual assault charges against a driving instructor dropped following successful representations to the CPS.
- **R v N (2020):** Client charged with wounding with intent released on bail after successfully opposing the Crown's application to extend the Custody Time Limits.
- **R v F (2020):** Persuaded Judge to impose a Community Order rather than prison for a lady who had pleaded Guilty to possessing an identity document with a dishonest intention.
- **R v M (2019):** Secured an acquittal for a direct access client who had been caught on CCTV allegedly keying her neighbours' cars.
- **R v L (2019):** High-profile client sentenced to a suspended sentence for dangerous driving involving the flipping of a car.
- **R v W (2019):** Military veteran client given a conditional discharge having admitted purchasing a disguised firearm.
- **R v R (2019):** Client was acquitted by the jury of robbery despite the complainant claiming to have recognised her, and despite the stolen bag containing fingerprints belonging to R and R's partner.
- **R v S (2018):** Led by Bill Clegg QC in a two-week trial regarding domestic violence and controlling and coercive behaviour, resulting in the client being acquitted of all charges.
- **R v T (2018):** Acquittal of a man accused of domestic violence following a successful application to adduce the complainant's bad character (not relating to a conviction). The client's c.£4,000 worth of outstanding Court fines were then written off due to the time he had spent in custody.
- **R v J (2017):** Persuaded the Magistrates to find exceptional hardship, saving J from a 6-month totting ban which would have terminated his employment as a Class 1 HGV driver and forced him to sell his family's home.
- **R v B (2017):** Acquittal of an ex-police officer accused of a public order offence involving threats of violence against a ticket operator at a train station, despite CCTV footage and the independent eye-witness account of a university professor.

Professional Discipline

Natalie regularly appears for healthcare regulators and regulated professionals in fitness to practise

proceedings, and has been ranked as a “Leading Junior” in Legal 500’s 2024 publication: <https://www.legal500.com/firms/9410-chambers-of-brian-altman-kc-jim-sturman-kc/9410-london-england/#rankings>. Her experience in this field stems from her 8-month post-pupillage secondment with the Association of Optometrists in 2018, during which she managed a large number of cases and drafted representations to Case Examiners.

Ever since, Natalie has case-presented as well as defended in a vast array of regulatory proceedings, including interim order hearings (including applications to the High Court to extend the order), substantive hearings, review hearings, restoration hearings, and disclosure applications to the County Court.

Notable professional discipline cases

GDC v R (2023)

Represented the GDC in a complex substantive hearing concerning a variety of allegations which ultimately led to the dentist’s erasure from the GDC Register.

NMC v C (2023)

Persuaded the Interim Orders Panel to lift client nurse’s suspension order and replace it with conditions

GDC v S (2023)

Successfully represented the GDC in a highly-contentious interim order hearing, persuading the Committee to maintain an interim order including chaperone requirements for a Registrant who faced allegations of sexual harassment.

GDC v W (2022)

Represented the GDC in a complex and lengthy substantive hearing involving 80 sub-allegations relating to an illegal tooth-whitening practice, of which 75 were found proven, including dishonesty, leading to the Registrant’s erasure from the GDC Register.

GOC v Z (2022)

Secured a short suspension (which was not extended at its conclusion) for a student optometrist who had admitted to posting a series of discriminatory Tweets.

GDC v H (2021)

Successfully opposed a former dentist’s application to be restored to the GDC Register, five years after he had been erased for dishonesty

GDC v D (2021)

Five-day substantive hearing involving contested expert evidence regarding a wide array of clinical allegations, all of which were found proven along with impaired fitness to practise.

GOC v P (2021):

Persuaded the Committee to find that an optometrist's fitness to practise was not impaired, despite his admission of dishonesty having falsely denied slashing the tyres of a car which (unbeknownst to him at the time) belonged to his Practice Manager.

GOC v S (2020)

Successful Rule 16 application resulting in No Further Action being taken following an initial referral by the Case Examiners to the Fitness to Practise Committee for a substantive hearing.

GOC v C (2019)

All charges dropped after successful opposition of the GOC's application to amend the charges and/or recall the complainant who, during cross-examination, had demonstrated confusion as to what symptoms they had allegedly reported during their eye examination with my client.

GOC v S (2019)

Conditions of practice order revoked, leading up to the substantive hearing relating to an investigation of dishonesty.

NHS England v C (2018)

Client's conditions of practice were removed following a substantive finding by the GOC of sexual impropriety with a patient.

Fraud

Natalie is a Committee Member of the Young Fraud Lawyers Association with a particular interest in fraud and economic crime stemming from her pre-pupillage year as a paralegal within Norton Rose Fulbright's white collar crime team. Natalie has worked on investigations led by the Bank of England's Prudential Regulation Authority, the Financial Conduct Authority, the National Crime Agency, the Serious Fraud Office (she is SFO C Panel Counsel), and The Pensions Regulator, assisting with and advising on investigations into individuals, banks and insurance companies.

In 2022 and 2023, Natalie has defended individuals facing Indictments alleging fraud, including fraud by false representation and participating in a fraudulent business. Natalie also defends as well as prosecutes subsequent confiscation proceedings under the Proceeds of Crime Act, including contested applications by police forces under the civil POCA regime.

In 2021, she was instructed by the CPS and HMRC in a VAT and Corporation Tax evasion case involving losses totalling nearly £400,000 – following her comprehensive review of hundreds of pages of evidence and financial reporting, Natalie drafted an Indictment to which the Defendant pleaded Guilty in full.

Murder & Manslaughter

In early 2023, Natalie was led by Tracy Ayling KC in the prosecution of Gary Bennett, who was convicted of murder and sentenced to a minimum term of 21 years in prison. For more information, please click here: <https://www.2bedfordrow.co.uk/2br-conduct-murder-trial-in-basildon-crown-court/>

In 2020-late 2021, Natalie acted as Disclosure Counsel to the Crown in the high profile CCRC reference of Peter Tredget, in which the Crown successfully resisted an appeal against conviction regarding 12 counts of manslaughter through numerous arsons dating back to the 1970s. For more information please click here: [Natalie Bird acted as Disclosure Counsel for the Crown in the recent Court of Appeal case of R v Tredget \[2022\] EWCA Crim 108 – 2 Bedford Row – Barristers Chambers](#)

Coroner's Inquests

Natalie has experience representing individuals in Article 2 inquests before a Coroner and jury. For example, in a three-week jury inquest held in the spring of 2023 Natalie represented a nurse who had attended a “Code Blue” for a prisoner who collapsed and later died, having taken “spice” (a synthetic cannabinoid Novel Psychoactive Substance) on the prison wing.

Natalie accepts instructions from Interested Parties in inquests to be held before a jury as well those to be conducted by a Coroner alone.

Civil Asset Recovery & Forfeiture

In addition to Natalie’s Prosecution and Defence work in the Crown Courts, Natalie has represented a Police Force regarding a contested freezing order, and accepts instructions on both sides in civil as well as criminal POCA proceedings.

Financial Services

Natalie has worked on investigations led by the Bank of England’s Prudential Regulation Authority, the Financial Conduct Authority, the National Crime Agency, the Serious Fraud Office (she is SFO C Panel Counsel), and The Pensions Regulator, assisting with and advising on investigations into individuals, banks and insurance companies. She accepts instructions from lay clients as well as Regulators concerning investigations and legal proceedings.

Publications

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- CPS Panel Advocate Level 3
 - SFO Panel C Advocate (2021-2024)

Memberships

- JUSTICE
- Criminal Bar Association
- Women in Criminal Law
- Young Fraud Lawyers Association
- Female Fraud Forum
- Association of Regulatory & Disciplinary Lawyers

Education

- Ann Goddard Pupillage Scholarship, Gray's Inn
- Bar Professional Training Course (Outstanding), City Law School
- Denise Pannick BPTC Scholarship, Gray's Inn
- Gray's Inn Residential Scholarship
- MA Law (Cantab)

Qualifications

- Ann Goddard Pupillage Scholarship, Gray's Inn (2017)
- Bar Professional Training Course, City Law School, graded Outstanding (2014-2015)
- Denise Pannick BPTC Scholarship, Gray's Inn (2014)
- Gray's Inn Residential Scholarship (2014)
- MA Law (Cantab) (2011-2014)

Directory Quotes

"Natalie is extremely thorough in her preparation for hearings, she has impeccable attention to detail. Natalie's advocacy style is clear, detailed and methodical." (**"Rising Star" ranking, Legal 500 2023**)