

Richard Wormald KC

1967 – 2026

An Appreciation



Richard Wormald KC died on 28 May 2026, aged just 59, after a brave and ferocious battle with cancer.

Richard was one of the most well-known and popular advocates at the criminal Bar. He had an enviable practice, spanning all aspects of criminal work, and he was particularly renowned for his forensic skill.

Richard was called to the Bar by Gray's Inn in October 1993, after reading English and Philosophy at York University and obtaining a MA in law at City University.

He joined Three Raymond Buildings in 1994, notably without any need for interviews or practical assessments in light of his obvious ability.

He quickly developed a busy practice as a junior, and was much in demand. His charisma allowed him to woo clients, solicitors, and judges alike, whilst his fearlessness made him a formidable opponent.

He was instructed by solicitors across the profession in relation to 'heavy' criminal cases involving charges of murder, robbery, GBH and the like, but also high profile 'white collar' cases including fraud, insider dealing, perverting the course of justice and corruption. In the course of his career, he appeared in over twenty murder trials.

In 2013, he won Criminal Junior of the Year at the Chambers and Partners Bar awards. He took Silk in 2019.

Amongst his notable cases was representing former cabinet minister Chris Huhne including in the Court of Appeal in his challenge to the costs order made against him following his conviction in the Crown Court. Huhne had pleaded guilty to perverting the course of justice by having asked his ex-wife to take his speeding points. Richard argued that a delay in the investigation of its central witness, part-time judge Constance Briscoe, who was herself subsequently convicted, had slowed Huhne's case down and run up costs. Calling her a "rotten apple in the crown's barrel", he described the judge's decision on costs as unreasonable and unfair.

In 2013 Richard represented a press officer in HMRC who was arrested as part of Operation Elveden, Scotland Yard's investigation into corrupt payments to public officials. His client admitted to having received £17,475 from a Sun reporter, having leaked confidential information including details of the 2010 budget. Describing his client as "rather an odd fish" for having landed a job in the civil service, having formerly been in a rock band, Richard fearlessly sought to persuade the court to suspend his client's sentence of imprisonment. He succeeded.

In October 2017 Richard successfully represented a police officer on trial at Birmingham Crown Court for lying under oath about a man who had died while in custody. Kingsley Burrell had died from cardiac arrest in March 2011, four days after being detained by police. The prosecution had alleged that officers lied during an initial inquiry into the death and at the subsequent coroner's hearing about a cloth being placed over his head.

He represented some of the executives involved in the iSoft prosecutions, the high-profile cases brought by the FCA against former executives of the healthcare IT firm iSoft Group plc, and in the Rolls Royce prosecution.

He also achieved considerable success in his forays into the higher courts. In R v Cooper he persuaded the Court of Appeal to set aside the conviction of a man who had engaged in sexual activity with a 28-year-old woman diagnosed with schizoaffective disorder and an emotionally unstable personality disorder.

Richard spent his entire practice in Three Raymond Buildings, to which he was famously loyal; it was well known that he had declined offers to move elsewhere. He was a popular and sought-after pupil-supervisor with the result that, over his three decades in chambers, he had twelve pupils all of whom became lifelong friends. He was a stalwart of its cricket team and a formidable fast bowler.

He had a busy and fulfilled life outside of the Bar, often seeking to indulge his passion for risk-taking activities such as riding motorbikes, paragliding, and serious sailing (he was an accomplished sailor, and completed the Fastnet event twice). He loved reading and writing poetry, and had an extensive knowledge and appreciation of classical music, classical literature and military history. He even enjoyed a brief but glorious stint running a pub in Glynde.

In December 2023 he was diagnosed with cancer. He relentlessly fought it, enduring multiple rounds of treatment, and travelled to Turkey repeatedly to obtain immunotherapy drugs. Even

though his practical day-to-day life became very difficult – at times he was in crippling pain – he carried on working whilst receiving treatment.

With his irrepressible personality, generosity of spirit and sense of fun, Richard was a giant of a man. He saw the good in everyone. He also had the great quality of kindness, and the rare ability to find mischief in almost every situation.

Above all Richard loved his family. He had six children, to whom he was devoted, and our thoughts are with them, his wife Hannah and his wider family. He will be incredibly missed.

A funeral for friends and family will be held on 25th June at 11AM in Putney. Please email mbt@3rblaw.com if you would like to attend. A memorial will be held in central London in September. Details will be published here after the funeral.

