

## Lawyer of the week Tom Forster KC

Tom Forster KC, a barrister at Red Lion Chambers, acted as special advocate representing the interests of the media, including The Times, in the proceedings from which they were excluded in the High Court and Court of Appeal in the Afghan superinjunction case.

The Ministry of Defence obtained a superinjunction in September 2023 to keep secret a data leak that put the lives of thousands of Afghans at risk as well as the government's response to it.

Thousands of Afghan nationals were relocated to the UK under a secret scheme as a result of the data leak, which could only be reported after the High Court ruled last Tuesday that the gagging order should be lifted.

**What were the biggest hurdles you had to overcome in the case?** As a security-cleared advocate I'm not permitted to say.

**What is the best decision you have taken as a lawyer?** Watching the film *My Cousin Vinny* — it contains the most masterful cross-examination committed to celluloid you could ever wish to see.

**Whom do you most admire in the law?** My fellow special advocates — all talented and fearless. My good fortune has been to work extensively

with Angus McCullough KC and Rachel Toney — peerless.

**What is the best advice you have received?** My father told me never to be seen outside a pub. Handy if ever tempted to stand outside the Seven Stars on Carey Street in London and your judge leaves the Royal Courts of Justice from the rear entrance.

**What is the funniest thing that has happened in your job?** I was once led by Anthony Arlidge KC in a corruption case. When the jury

acquitted our client we got a note from them asking for Anthony's business card.

**What are the best and worst aspects of being a lawyer?** The best: each day presents a different challenge. The worst: receiving emails after midnight.

**What law would you enact and why?** The abolition of sending emails after midnight and before 5.30am.

**What is your favourite film?** *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid*. It's without parallel. "Who are those guys?" is a favourite refrain in our house.

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