

Law  
Firm  
Partner  
Moves  
in  
London

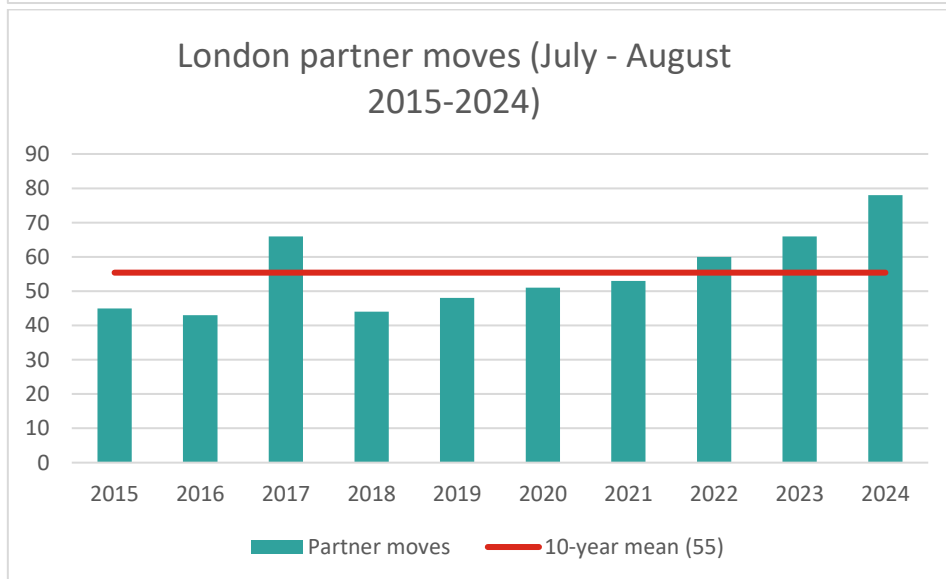
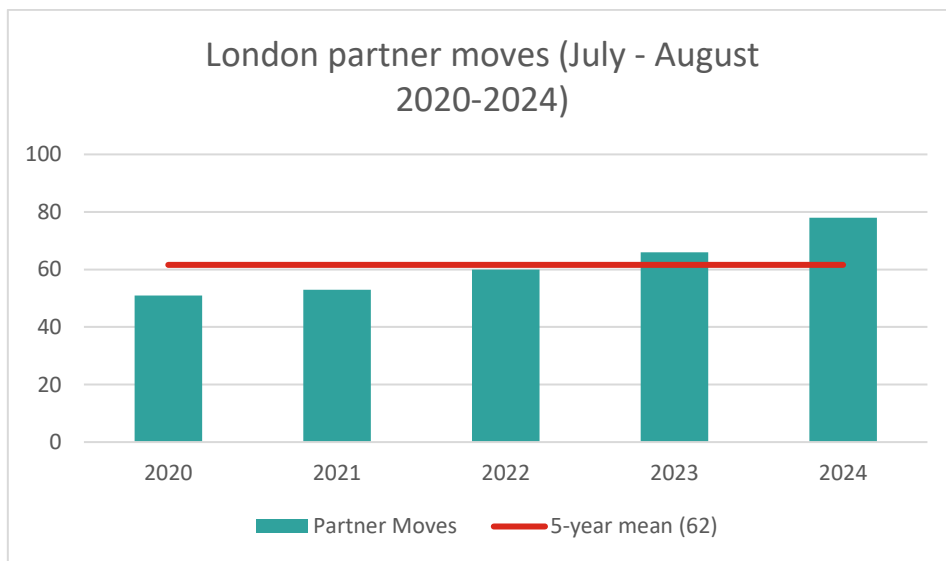
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◆ July – August 2024  
Issue No. 82

Welcome to the 82<sup>nd</sup> edition of Law Firm Partner Moves in London, from the specialist partner team at Edwards Gibson, where we look back at announced partner-level recruitment activity in London over the past two months and give you a ‘who’s moved where’ update.

July – August 2024

Our July-August edition, traditionally the quietest period of the year for partner hire announcements, contains **by far** the highest number for the same two-month period since our records began in 2007. This bi-monthly round-up records an astonishing **78** partner moves– **18%** up on the (joint) record **66** we saw for the same period in 2023; **27%** up on the cumulative five-year average of **62**; and **41%** up on the ten-year average of **55** for the same period.



It seems that the red-hot market which saw the [highest ever number of partner moves in 2023](#), and an [even stronger first-half of 2024](#), has somehow dramatically accelerated over the summer. Despite a relatively weak economy, the partner hire market continues to be driven by US law firms making private equity related investment bets on individual partners and teams. Indeed, all but one of the top recruiters this round-up were US law firms - predominately poaching private equity flavoured lawyers. The most coveted firms were: **Gateley**, **Sidley Austin**, and **Paul Weiss** - which hired five partners each; followed by **Akin** and **Kirkland & Ellis** (which hired four partners apiece); and **Greenberg Traurig** and **Proskauer Rose**, which both hired three.

◆ **Top partner recruiters in London July – August 2024**

• <b>Gateley</b>	<b>5</b>	(1 lateral)
• <b>Paul Weiss</b>	<b>5</b>	(3 laterals)
• <b>Sidley Austin</b>	<b>5</b>	(5 laterals)
• <b>Akin</b>	<b>4</b>	(4 laterals)
• <b>Kirkland &amp; Ellis</b>	<b>4</b>	(2 laterals)
• <b>Greenberg Traurig</b>	<b>3</b>	(3 laterals)
• <b>Proskauer Rose</b>	<b>3</b>	(3 laterals)

In addition, ten firms, hired two partners each: **Ashurst**, **A&O Shearman**, **BCLP**, **DWF**, **Hill Dickinson**, **Hogan Lovells**, **Latham & Watkins**, **Milbank**, **O’Melveny & Myers**, and **Stephenson Harwood**.

◆ **Firms with largest attrition in July – August 2024 (partnership to partnership moves only)**

• <b>Latham &amp; Watkins</b>	<b>6</b>
• <b>Cooley</b>	<b>3</b>
• <b>Kirkland &amp; Ellis</b>	<b>3</b>
• <b>Pinsent Masons</b>	<b>3</b>

**Latham & Watkins** saw the highest attrition levels, losing six finance laterals this edition - five to **Sidley Austin** and one to **Milbank**. Three firms saw the departure of three serving partners: **Cooley** (to **Akin**); **Kirkland & Ellis** (two to **Paul Weiss** and one to **A&O Shearman**); and **Pinsent Masons** to **Greenberg Traurig**.

In addition, five firms lost two partners each: **Ashurst**, **A&O Shearman**, **BCLP**, **Cahill** and **White & Case**.



◆ **Team hires July – August 2024**

The most sizeable, not to mention most dramatic, multi-partner team move this edition was Chicago outfit **Sidley Austin**'s hire of a five-partner leveraged finance team from Latham & Watkins, led by Latham's former London managing partner together with its onetime chair of the London finance practice. In addition, two firms hired three partner teams: **Akin** (corporate from Cooley); and **Greenberg Traurig** (international arbitration/construction disputes from Pinsent Masons).

*The most sizeable, not to mention most dramatic, multi-partner team move this edition was Chicago outfit Sidley Austin's hire of a five-partner leveraged finance team from Latham & Watkins...*

Lastly, two firms hired two partner teams: **O'Melveny & Myers** (private equity from Ashurst); and **Proskauer Rose** (leveraged finance and high yield from Cahill).

◆ **Happy Birthday to the Apex Predator**

This August marked the first anniversary of New York firm Paul Weiss' fiery [rebirth of its London office with an English law offering](#). Since then, the relentless London regeneration project has witnessed an astonishing **26** lawyers join its City partnership. Of these, **22** were laterals, **2** were vertical hires and **2** were from in-house – they have come from a narrow selection of just five firms and a couple of private equity houses.

*The first firm to suffer from Paul Weiss' predations was Kirkland & Ellis which, since last summer, has continued to gently haemorrhage London partners to its rival losing a total of 13 – an average of over one per month.*

The first firm to suffer from Paul Weiss' predations was **Kirkland & Ellis** which, since last summer, has continued to gently haemorrhage London partners to its rival losing a total of **13** – an average of over one per month. The Big Law raptor has bitten far smaller chunks out of **Linklaters** (**4** laterals and one vertical), and **Clifford Chance** (**3** laterals and one vertical); happily for them, it has barely scratched

**Akin** and **Ropes & Gray** – which have lost just one partner apiece. Its most recent hires, both from in-house, and both former Kirkland & Ellis or Linklaters partners, come from **Blantyre Capital** and client **TDR Capital** respectively - the latter at least appearing to be a far more gentle affair, with the apex predator seeming to ask permission to court its General Counsel before snapping him up.



◆ **Meet me in St Louis - US firm closes in London after three years**

In August it was revealed that St Louis headquartered **Armstrong Teasdale** is to close its London office. The ephemeral City outpost was opened in February 2021, when the Missouri outfit acquired the (then) 16 partner low-key commercial firm **Kerman & Co.** Since then, the firm has bled partners at a faster rate than it could acquire them and, at the time of writing, has shrunk to just 10 partners, most of whom have an IP flavour. This closure comes alongside the firm's departure from Boston and Salt Lake City – suggesting that its struggles are not exclusively Europe-centric, although the Midwest firm is reportedly also shuttering its only other non-US outpost in Dublin.

◆ **Cahill clings on**

*New York firm Cahill ... has had its London office cut to the quick after suffering a series of high-profile defections to rivals.*

If further proof was needed that US law firms don't always have it their way in London, as one US law firm closes, another - New York firm **Cahill** – has had its London office cut to the quick after suffering a series of high-profile defections to rivals. Since January the Wall Street firm has lost seven leveraged finance/ high yield lawyers who have taken partnership elsewhere (four to **Latham & Watkins**, two to **Proskauer Rose** and one to **White & Case**), leaving its London outpost with just two disputes partners.

✦ **Other Fun Facts July – August 2024**

- **19%** of moves this edition were female (**13**).
- **8** firms hired from in-house or business: **A&O Shearman** (from Barclays Investment Bank), **Bristows** (from TikTok), **Cleary Gottlieb** (from the Competition and Markets Authority), **Fox Williams** (from Algebra), **Gateley** (from business), **Latham & Watkins** (from Patria Investments), **Paul Weiss** (from TDR Capital and Blantyre Capital) and **Stephenson Harwood** (from Triton Partners).
- **13%** of all moves (**10**) were vertical hires (non-partners elevated to partnership upon moving from another law firm).

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you would like to discuss this article or any other aspect of the market in more depth.

Scott Gibson, Director [scott.gibson@edwardsgibson.com](mailto:scott.gibson@edwardsgibson.com) or +44 (0)7788 454 080

Sloane Poulton, Director [sloane.poulton@edwardsgibson.com](mailto:sloane.poulton@edwardsgibson.com) or +44 (0)7967 603 402

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✦ **A&O Shearman**

Two finance hires for the newly merged firm this edition as it welcomes: **Parisa Clovis** from Kirkland & Ellis, and **Filippo Crosara** from Barclays Corporate & Investment Bank, where he was a managing director. At her new firm, Clovis, who is a funds finance specialist, will lead on European sponsor side fund finance; whilst dual English and Italian qualified Crosara will specialise in lender-side leveraged finance.

✦ **Akin**

A quartet of laterals for the Texan-spawned outfit as it welcomes: a three-partner corporate team from Cooley, comprising London managing partner **Justin Stock** along with **Stephen Rosen** and **David Bresnick**; whilst also snatching energy specialist **Rob Butler** from Baker Botts. Stock, Rosen and Bresnick advise on a range of corporate transactions with a particular angle on the tech and life sciences sectors. Butler covers transactions in the energy and infrastructure sectors, with a particular focus on upstream and midstream oil and gas, LNG and LNG shipping.

✦ **Alius Law**

Litigation specialist **Ben Drew** defects to the disputes boutique from Fladgate, where he was co-head of insolvency and restructuring. Drew focuses on disputes in the financial services sector with a particular angle on contentious insolvency matters.

✦ **Ashurst**

The Anglo-Australian outfit welcomes an English and Indian qualified duo to co-head its India practice: corporate lateral **Kalpana Unadkat**, from Mumbai-based Khaitan & Co, joins alongside former colleague, finance lawyer **Shishir Mehta**, who left Khaitan in 2022 to go into business. Unadkat advises on cross border joint ventures and M&A, commercial contracts and corporate governance. Mehta, who re-joins Big Law after founding a media development

collective, will advise on banking and finance matters with an India flavour.

✦ **BCLP**

A brace of laterals for the international firm as it adds: **Perry Yam** from Mayer Brown, where he was global co-head of corporate and head of private equity; and disputes lawyer **Shivani Sanghi** from Fieldfisher, where she was head of the firm's India practice. Yam advises investors, management teams and investee companies on private equity transactions, with a particular focus on mid-market deals. Dual English and Indian qualified, Sanghi covers a mix of international commercial arbitration and commercial litigation with a focus on India and CIS related disputes.

✦ **Bristows**

The IP-flavoured outfit nabs TikTok's head of litigation EMEA **Julian Darrall**. Darrall, a media disputes specialist, acts for broadcasters, newspapers, publishers and tech companies on matters such as defamation, privacy and data protection.

✦ **Charles Russell Speechlys**

The London headquartered firm hires employment lateral **Dan Pollard** from global labour boutique GQ Littler. Pollard advises employers on both contentious and non-contentious employment matters including: HR projects, employment tribunal claims, service agreements and corporate governance.

✦ **Cleary Gottlieb**

Prodigal Son... the Competition and Markets Authority loses its third in-house lawyer to a law firm partnership since October last year as the New Yorker welcomes back CMA director of mergers **Ricardo Zimbrón**, who was previously an associate at the firm. Zimbrón will cover UK and EU competition law, including merger control, anticompetitive agreements, abuse of dominance and digital regulation.

- ✦ **Cooley**  
 The Silicon Valley headquartered technology specialist adds disputes lateral **Bryony Hurst** from Bird & Bird. Hurst covers commercial litigation matters, with a particular focus on TMT disputes – her clients include media entities, technology companies and digital businesses.
- ✦ **Davis Polk**  
 In its second lateral hire this year, the normally uber conservative Wall Street firm adds corporate lateral **Gordon Milne** from A&O Shearman. Milne specialises in private equity and advising private equity houses, financial sponsors and portfolio companies on cross-border M&A, corporate finance, refinancings, restructurings and exits.
- ✦ **Dentons**  
 The global firm elevates direct real estate lawyer **Tom Taylor** from Norton Rose Fulbright, where he was a counsel. Taylor advises on a broad range of commercial real estate matters with a particular angle on the acquisition, disposal and development of residential and mixed-use projects.
- ✦ **DWF**  
 Two laterals for the private equity-controlled firm as it welcomes: real estate lawyer **Rupert Dowdell** from Dentons; and international arbitration specialist **Brian Kotick** from Anglo-Hong Kong firm M.B. Kemp. Dowdell specialises in real estate investment in the office, industrial and retail sectors. Kotick advises on commercial and investment treaty arbitration spanning a variety of sectors, including construction, infrastructure and energy.
- ✦ **Edwin Coe**  
 Tax disputes and private client litigator **Morag Ofili** arrives at the Lincoln’s Inn firm from Harbottle & Lewis, where she was a managing associate. Ofili, who is a barrister, joins the tax team at her new firm.
- ✦ **Fieldfisher**  
 US firm Hausfeld’s head of commercial litigation **John McElroy** decamps to the tech-focused European firm. McElroy undertakes a mix of commercial litigation and financial disputes with a focus on the latter; acting for and against claimants, bondholders, institutional shareholders, banks and investment institutions.
- ✦ **Fladgate**  
 The London firm elevates disputes lawyer **Thomas Karalis** from Ashurst, where he was a counsel. Karalis advises on a mix of litigation and international commercial arbitration, with a particular angle in the energy, resources, and automotive sectors.
- ✦ **Fox Williams**  
 Hiring from in-house, the City firm welcomes financial services regulatory lawyer **Omar Salem** from consumer fin-tech company Algbra, where he was general counsel. Salem’s expertise includes payment services, electronic money, asset management, mortgages and consumer credit matters.
- ✦ **Fried Frank**  
 Freshfields corporate real estate lateral **Roger Schofield** makes the swich to the New York headquartered outfit. Schofield specialises in private equity real estate, advising on joint ventures, capital solutions and real estate-related M&A.
- ✦ **Gately**  
 A quintet of new faces for the listed firm this round up: corporate tax lawyer, and former head of Squire Patton Bogg’s tax strategy and benefits team, **Bernhard Gilbey** resurfaces after a six-year stint in business; insolvency and restructuring lateral **Alexander Wood** is welcomed from BDB Pitmans; real estate lawyer **Marcus Wright** joins from Clifford Chance, where he was a director; fellow real estate lawyer **Shaz Sharif** arrives from DAC Beachcroft, where she was a senior



associate; and corporate lawyer **Sam Meiklejohn** joins from Cooley, where he was an associate. Gilbey, who left private practice in 2018, has a broad range of global and domestic corporate tax experience. Wood's expertise covers contentious and non-contentious insolvency and corporate recovery including: restructurings, enforcement, administrations, receiverships, liquidations, and voluntary arrangements. Wright advises investors, developers, landlords and tenants on commercial property transactions and development projects. Sharif, who joins the specialist residential development team, covers residential, mixed-use and regeneration schemes. Meiklejohn advises on public company corporate matters and equity capital markets, including primary and secondary securities offerings.

✔ **Gibson Dunn & Crutcher**

Two hires for the Los Angeles headquartered giant as it welcomes: corporate lateral **Will Summers** from White & Case; and privacy and cyber security specialist **Lore Leitner** from Goodwin Procter. Summers advises private equity houses and financial sponsors on a mix of acquisitions, divestitures, co-investments, joint ventures and corporate restructurings. Leitner, who is English and Belgian qualified, covers data strategies across various industry sectors, engaging with regulators in the UK and the EEA.

● **Goodwin Procter**

Private funds lateral **Thiha Tun** defects to the Boston-born outfit from Dechert. Tun – who advises alternative asset fund sponsors, institutional investors and financial advisors on a broad range of private funds matters – has a particular focus on secondary transactions.

✔ **Greenberg Traurig**

Making the switch to the US firm from Pinsent Masons is a three-partner international arbitration/construction disputes team comprising: **Jason Hambury** (former global co-

head of international arbitration), **Gurmukh Riyat** and **Clea Bigelow-Nuttall**. The trio primarily advise on international construction and engineering disputes in the energy, infrastructure and extractive industry sectors.

✔ **Hill Dickinson**

The national firm nabs a brace of laterals this edition as employment lawyer **Blair Adams** arrives from Winckworth Sherwood, and maritime specialist **Mark Johnson** joins from Haynes and Boone. Adams advises corporates and executives on a range of contentious and non-contentious employment matters. Johnson's expertise lies primarily in negotiating and documenting maritime and offshore projects.

✔ **Hogan Lovells**

The global firm welcomes two new faces (one lateral and one vertical) this round-up; private equity specialist **James Cross** joins from K&L Gates and finance lawyer **Nick Cusack** arrives from Weil Gotshal, where he was a counsel. Cross advises investors and management teams on buyouts, restructurings and bolt-on acquisitions. Cusack focuses on leveraged finance transactions acting for both private equity sponsors and lenders across the capital structure.

✔ **Howard Kennedy**

After [less than two years at Locke Lord](#), corporate ECM lawyer **Kieran Stone** defects to the London firm. Stone advises both issuers and advisers on a range of corporate transactions on the main market and AIM with a focus on natural resources.

✔ **Jenner & Block**

The US firm hires disputes lateral **Ed Davis** from Stephenson Harwood, where he was co-head of commercial litigation. Davis advises on a broad range of commercial disputes and contentious insolvency matters with a particular angle on finance litigation and investigations.

✦ **Kirkland & Ellis**

Four hires (two lateral and two verticals) for the Chicago-spawned powerhouse this edition as it welcomes: technology lawyer **André Duminy**, from Clifford Chance, where he was head of the London tech and digital group; competition lawyer **Satyen Dhana** from Simmons & Simmons, where he was head of competition, antitrust and trade; corporate specialist **Andrew Reilly** from Milbank, where he was a special counsel; and restructuring lawyer **Charlotte Wheeler** from Hogan Lovells, where she was a senior associate. Duminy specialises in technology and business separation issues, as well as multi-vendor and multijurisdictional carveout transactions. Dhana advises on both UK and EU competition matters including investigations, sector enquiries and Phase 1 and Phase 2 UK and EU merger control. Reilly covers general partner stake transactions, strategic asset management M&A and secondaries work. Wheeler advises large corporates, private equity sponsors, senior banks and credit funds on debt restructurings and financings.

✦ **Latham & Watkins**

Two hires for the expansive global firm as it welcomes: energy and infrastructure lawyer **Pedro Rufino Carvalho** from Brazilian alternative investment firm Patria Investments, where he was global general counsel; and leveraged finance lawyer **Danielle Brown** from Cahill, where she was a counsel. Rufino Carvalho, who prior to joining Patria was a partner at Herbert Smith, covers the financing and M&A aspects of matters in the infrastructure and energy sectors – with a focus on Brazil among other emerging markets. Brown – whose hire is a follow-on from a three-partner leverage finance team from Cahill comprising laterals **Jonathan Brownson**, **Joydeep Choudhuri** and **Prue Criddle** ([mentioned in our last edition](#)) – predominately advises lenders.

✦ **Milbank**

The New York firm bags a brace of laterals as it adds: structured finance and CLO specialist **Alex Martin** from Latham & Watkins; and restructuring lawyer **Ian Wallace** from White & Case. Martin covers an eclectic range of structured finance transactions including: CLOs, securitisations, asset-based portfolio and fund financing transactions and private credit. Wallace advises debtor-side corporates and financial sponsors, as well as a wide range of creditors, on cross-border restructuring matters.

✦ **Mishcon de Reya**

The London firm adds technology litigator **Robert Griffiths** from Deloitte Legal. Griffiths, who joins the innovation department at his new firm, primarily advises on contractual and tortious claims relating to the provision of IT and outsourcing projects.

✦ **Morgan Lewis**

The US firm nabs private funds lateral **Ted Craig** from Paul Hastings. Craig advises on fund formation and fund transactional matters, including GP-led secondary transactions and co-investments.

✦ **O'Melveny & Myers**

Private equity laterals **David Carter** and **Braeden Donnelly** defect to the L.A. headquartered outfit from Ashurst. Carter, who was co-head of private equity at his former firm, and Donnelly advise on mergers and acquisitions, leveraged buy-outs, disposals and corporate reconstructions.

✦ **Orrick**

Competition specialist **Victoria Newbold** decamps to the US firm from BCLP. Newbold, who has a particular angle in the tech, financial services and retail sectors, advises on a range of competition matters including: investigations, merger control and foreign direct investment.

✦ **Paul Hastings**

Following the hire of former Weil leveraged finance lawyer [Reena Gogna \(reported in June\)](#), the West Coast firm adds fellow finance lateral **Brian Maher**, also from Weil. Maher, a structured finance specialist, advises banks, credit funds, and private equity firms on securitisations, asset-based lending, CLOs, loan portfolio acquisitions and restructurings.

✦ **Paul Weiss**

Five hires for the covetous New Yorker as it takes a double swipe at Kirkland & Ellis with the addition of funds duo **Jeremy Leggate** and **Dave Pritchett**; it also launches a European restructuring practice with the addition of **Liz Osborne** from Akin along with Blantyre Capital's investment director **Kai Zeng**; and adds corporate lawyer **David Holdsworth** from TDR Capital where he was general counsel. Leggate and Pritchett advise private investment fund sponsors on the structuring and operation of alternative investment funds across a range of asset classes, with Leggate having a particular angle on infrastructure funds. Osborne, who will head the European restructuring group, advises both companies and creditors on European restructurings and special situations investments. Zeng advises on cross-border restructurings and distressed transactions for financial sponsors, debtors, and creditors. Holdsworth, who was previously a partner at both Linklaters and Kirkland & Ellis, focuses on private equity, public and private M&A and joint ventures.

✦ **Proskauer Rose**

Three hires for the US firm this edition as it welcomes: finance duo **Jake Keaveny** and **Warren Newton** from fellow New Yorker Cahill; and leveraged finance lawyer **Megan Lawrence** from A&O Shearman. Whilst Keaveny and Newton both advise on leveraged finance and out-of-court debt restructurings, Keaveny, who is New York qualified, has a particular angle on high-yield debt offerings. Lawrence's move is another

addition to the leveraged finance team and follows her former team-head Philip Bowden's move to Proskauer [announced in our previous edition](#).

✦ **RPC**

The insurance flavoured set-up bolsters its contentious competition offering with lateral **Zoe Mernick-Levene** from claimant firm Leigh Day, where she was head of competition. Mernick-Levene advises on collective action competition, financial and regulatory claims on behalf of consumers, investors, and other stakeholders.

✦ **Shoosmiths**

Employment specialist **Adam Lambert** makes the switch to the national firm from BCLP, where he was the head of the UK employment and labour group. Lambert covers all forms of employment law with a particular focus on contentious matters.

✦ **Sidley Austin**

A five-partner leveraged finance team decamps from Latham & Watkins to the Chicago outfit as it welcomes: **Jayanthi Sadanandan**, **Sam Hamilton**, **Fergus O'Domhnaill**, **Joseph Kimberling** and **Ben Wright**. Led by Sadanandan (onetime London office managing partner) and Hamilton (former chair of the London finance practice), the quintet specialise in sponsor-side cross-border leveraged financings as well as asset-based loans, bridge financings, investment grade loans and post-IPO matters.

✦ **Simmons & Simmons**

The London headquartered international firm snags private equity specialist **Richard Kyle** from Eversheds Sutherland. Kyle, who has a focus on "the diversified industrial sector", advises institutional investors and management teams on private equity transactions, M&A and special situations.

✔ **Stephenson Harwood**

Two hires for the international firm as it welcomes: in-house private credit specialist **Daniel Andrews**, who makes the switch from private equity firm Triton Partners where he was a senior counsel; and private client tax lawyer **Ronnie Myers**, who joins from Burges Salmon, where he was a director. Dual UK and Hong Kong qualified, Andrews advises capital providers on origination and restructuring of debt and equity financings. Myers assists high-net worth individuals, family offices and trust companies on UK tax and trust structuring.

✔ **Taylor Wessing**

Financial disputes and investigations lateral **Parham Kouchikali** defects to the European firm from RPC. Kouchikali advises continental banks, hedge funds and high net worth investors on banking disputes, contentious financial services and civil fraud matters.

✔ **Travers Smith**

The private equity flavoured London firm welcomes infrastructure finance lawyer **Ryan Ayrton** from Watson Farley & Williams. Ayrton advises sponsors and funders on structured finance transactions, with a particular focus on infrastructure financings and related M&A.

✔ **Vinson & Elkins**

International arbitration and disputes barrister **James Barratt** decamps to the Houston headquartered outfit from Fried Frank. Barratt, who joins as European co-head of international disputes, advises on international commercial arbitrations, public international law and investment arbitrations alongside English court proceedings, primarily in the energy sector.

✔ **Wallace**

Real estate lateral **Michael Nixon** joins the West End firm from Knights. Nixon advises on all aspects of commercial property including sale,

acquisition, funding and letting with a particular angle in secured lending and development matters.

✔ **White & Case**

For the third time since November, the New Yorker raids Ropes & Gray for a private funds partner – this time lateral **Alexandra Chauvin**, who was head of European secondaries. Chauvin specialises in structuring and executing US and European secondaries transactions in private alternative investment funds.

[Edwards Gibson Partner Round-Up – click here to read our methodology](#)

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#### • The Specialist Partner Team



Scott Gibson  
Director  
[scott.gibson@edwardsgibson.com](mailto:scott.gibson@edwardsgibson.com)  
+44 (0) 7788 454080



Sloane Poulton  
Director  
[sloane.poulton@edwardsgibson.com](mailto:sloane.poulton@edwardsgibson.com)  
+44 (0) 7967 603402

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