

Law Firm Partner Moves in London

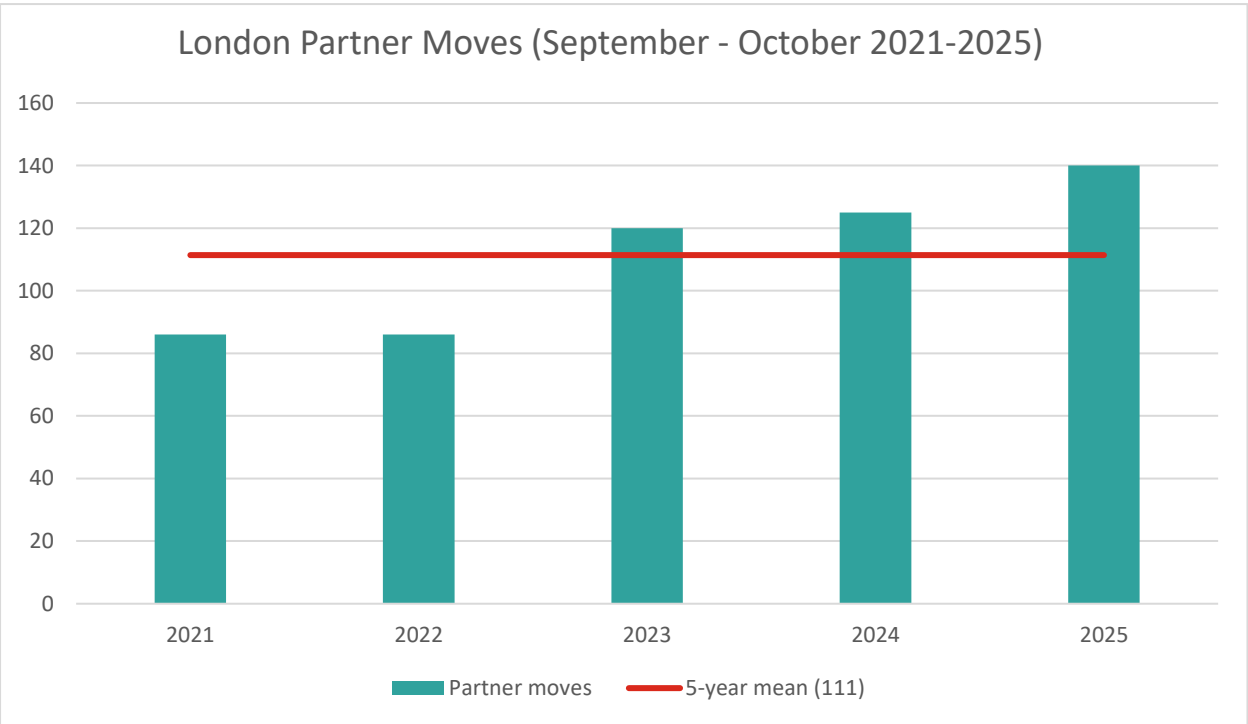


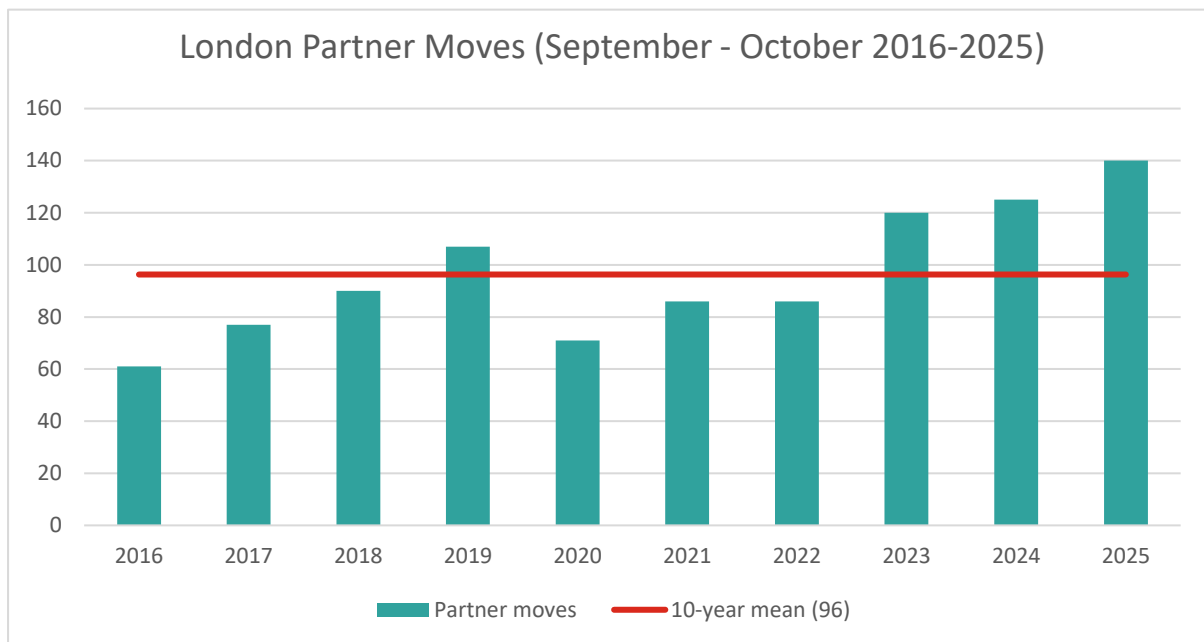
✦ September –
October 2025
Issue No. 89

Welcome to the 89th 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. Our records go back to 2007, and this is [our methodology](#).

September – October 2025

This bi-monthly round-up contains **140** partner moves, which is **12%** up on the **125** we saw for the same period last year; **26%** up on the cumulative five-year average (**111**); and **45%** up on the cumulative ten-year average of (**96**) for the same period. The numbers continue an escalating three-year record-breaking bull run of law firm partner hires in London.





The most coveted firms this edition were **Eversheds Sutherland** and **Orrick** which hired 6 partners apiece, followed by **Charles Russell Speechlys**, **Kirkland & Ellis**, **Pinsent Masons** and **Stephenson Harwood** which hired 4. In addition, 10 firms hired three partners each: **Addleshaw Goddard**, **Boodle Hatfield**, **Broadfield**, **Debevoise***, **Gateley**, **Michelman & Robinson**, **Shoosmiths**, **Simmons & Simmons**, **Simpson Thacher** and **White & Case**.

♦ **Top partner recruiters in London September – October 2025**

Eversheds Sutherland	6	(2 laterals)
Orrick	6	(5 laterals)
Charles Russell Speechlys	4	(1 lateral)
Kirkland & Ellis	4	(0 laterals)
Pinsent Masons	4	(4 laterals)
Stephenson Harwood	4	(4 laterals)
Addleshaw Goddard	3	(2 laterals)
Boodle Hatfield	3	(2 laterals)
Broadfield	3	(2 laterals)
Debevoise	3*	(3 laterals)

Gateley	3	(2 laterals)
Michelman & Robinson	3	(3 laterals)
Shoosmiths	3	(3 laterals)
Simmons & Simmons	3	(3 laterals)
Simpson Thacher	3	(2 laterals)
White & Case	3	(3 laterals)

A total of **19** firms hired two partners each: **Ashurst, Baker McKenzie, Bird & Bird, Cadwalader, CMS, Fladgate, Freeths, Hogan Lovells, Lewis Silkin, Michelmores, Milbank, Morgan Lewis, Paul Hastings, Proskauer, Reed Smith, Shakespeare Martineau, Squire Patton Boggs, Sullivan & Cromwell, and Watson Farley & Williams.**

* Edwards Gibson is unable to determine if one of the laterals in a two-partner funds team arriving at Debevoise from Goodwin is joining in London or New York (see full report).

On the other side of the coin, over the same period, **Paul Hastings** suffered the highest attrition, losing **7** lateral partners, followed by **Kirkland & Ellis** (which lost **6**), then **Goodwin** - which saw **5** partners decamp to rival firms in London (albeit two of these were from its New York office), and finally **Cadwalader** and **Travers Smith** (which lost **4** apiece).

◆ **Firms with largest attrition in September – October 2025 (partnership to partnership moves only)**

Paul Hastings	7
Kirkland & Ellis	6
Goodwin	5**
Cadwalader	4
Travers Smith	4
Eversheds Sutherland	3
EY Law	3

** Includes two lateral departures who moved from Goodwin's New York office to Debevoise in London.



◆ Team hires September – October 2025

The most sizeable multi-partner team move this edition was **Orrick**'s acquisition of a CLO and structured finance quartet from Cadwalader. The US firm also swiped an energy and infrastructure duo from fellow Los Angeles headquartered outfit Gibson Dunn.

Elsewhere, **4** firms hired two-partner teams with **Debevoise** snatching a private funds duo from Goodwin in New York*, and the others all departing from Paul Hastings to: **Milbank** (real estate finance); **Hogan Lovells** (corporate real estate); and **White & Case** (tax).

◆ Sullivan & Cromwell stirs

This round-up contains a cornucopia of high profile moves. Perhaps the most significant of these may prove to be **Sullivan & Cromwell**'s hire of Big Law heavyweights **Mike Francies**, the former long-term managing partner of Weil who returns to the fray after "retiring" from law last December; and restructuring specialist **Kon Asimacopoulos** from Kirkland & Ellis. Until this year the super elite New York firms' London office has been (almost) hermetically sealed; since 2007 (when our records began) it hired fewer than a half-dozen partners and did not lose a single lateral to rivals in London.

This all changed in 2025 when two high profile laterals (in restructuring and leveraged finance) [decamped to Gibson Dunn](#) and the firm [then hired financial services regulatory savant Barney Reynolds](#) from A&O Shearman (legacy Shearman & Sterling). Notwithstanding the departures, it is probable that the three recent hires (in particular the arrival of Francies) are indicative of further near-term expansion by the Wall Street firm in London in its core areas of private capital, restructuring, and leveraged finance. That being said, whilst the firm maintains its all-equity partnership structure, lateral hiring will remain relatively modest and we should not expect to see anything like another **Paul Weiss**-style build out.

✦ **Paul Hastings' Partner Peril**

This edition sees **Paul Hastings** lose **7** lateral partners in London: a two-partner corporate real estate team to Hogan Lovells; a two-partner real estate finance team (which includes the European Head of Real Estate) to Milbank; a two-partner corporate tax team (which includes the firm's Global Second Managing Partner and Vice Chair of International Tax) to White & Case; and a further corporate real estate lateral to Cleary Gottlieb.

These moves—which leave Paul Hastings' once-strong real estate offering with no partners in London—come on top of a slew of other significant departures in 2025. Year-to-date, the Los Angeles–spawned firm has lost a total of **16** serving partners (nearly 30% of its London line-up at the start of the year^{***}) to rivals, including: the Co-Chair of the London office; the Global Co-Chair of Corporate; the European Head of Funds; and now the Global Second Managing Partner and Vice Chair of International Tax, as well as the European Head of Real Estate.

Against this, so far in 2025, the firm has made four partner hires in London (three laterals and one vertical) and it appears to have internally promoted three.

^{***}According to The Lawyer, Paul Hastings had 56 partners in London in 2024.

✦ **Taxing times for Law Firm LLPs**

At the time of writing, the red-hot topic in the City is the mooted plans by the cash-strapped UK government to change the tax treatment of partnerships and, whilst there are no details as to what type of partnerships HMRC has in its cross-hairs, most commentators seem to suggest that the focus will be on Limited Liability Partnerships (LLPs). The plans, which may be announced in the 26 November 2025 budget, would likely require law firms to pay Employer National Insurance Contributions (NICs)—currently not applicable to LLPs. With the exception of **Slaughter and May** and **Jones Day**, virtually all Big Law firms in the UK are LLPs.

The broader implications and counter measures to the proposals are being extensively war gamed by law firm management and are of great concern to individual partners who stand to take a considerable financial hit if they are enacted. From a recruitment perspective there is also no doubt that the sharp reduction in law firm working capital would chill the lateral hire market.



In June Edwards Gibson published an article — [Freshfields’ Non-Share Home Turf Handicap](#) — which highlighted an obscure, but increasingly significant disparity in the existing tax legislation: the UK’s Salaried Member Rules already create a “home turf disadvantage” for UK LLPs compared to foreign LLPs, including some (albeit a minority) of US law firms. For example, as “foreign LLPs”, US LLPs are currently exempt from paying NICs on their non-share partners. We originally flagged that issue because, in light of the proliferation of two-tier partnerships among elite — and formerly all-equity — US LLPs, over the past two years the differential tax treatment of junior partners was starting to statistically impact the London hire market.

We were pleased that in October the *Financial Times* picked up on this issue and quoted Edwards Gibson in its article [Rachel Reeves’ tax plan could benefit US law firms over UK rivals](#) — the article highlighted that, if the new proposals are applied in the same way, the already unfair disparity between UK LLPs and US LLPs would be dramatically magnified.

✦ “To: CC or not CC”

Ever since the Global Financial Crisis, the private capital-powered charge on London by US law firms has left the UK’s Magic Circle looking a little less... magical in their home market. But if Clifford Chance’s new logo is anything to go by, the psychological toll might be far deeper than we thought.

Unveiled in September, the firm’s sleek new “Cc” branding is clean and modern, yet oddly familiar. We’re told that to some in-house counsel, it looks suspiciously like the email shorthand for being “cc’d.” Which, as every lawyer knows, usually means you’re looped in for visibility, not leading the charge. Indeed, some senior lawyers—but probably not too many Gen Z folks in marketing—may just about remember that “cc’d” is a quaint acronym for “carbon copied,” from the days of typewriters, when carbon paper was used to create duplicates and copies of letters were sent to additional recipients besides the primary one.



To be clear, Clifford Chance remains a legal powerhouse. Sure, like all its Magic Circle peers, it has lost ground in Europe over the past 15 years to more profitable, US-founded interlopers. Still, in a ruthlessly competitive legal services industry where every advantage counts, you have to admire those Clifford Chance rainmakers who have embraced going to market with a subliminal signal that hints at their firm's diminished role in Big Law's global elite. Respect!

✦ Other Fun Facts September – October 2025

- **34%** of moves this edition were female (**47**).
- **9** firms hired from in-house or business: **ADVANT Beiten** (from Standard Chartered Bank), **Charles Russell Speechlys** (from Babcock International Group and Interpath Advisory), **CMS** (from Pod Point), **DLA Piper** (from Canary Wharf Group), **Eversheds** (from Bechtel Corporation and Pepco Group), **Fenchurch Law** (from Ardmore Group); **McDermott Will & Schulte** (from Tristan Capital Partners), **Proskauer** (from Oaktree Capital Management), and **RPC** (from CloudPay).
- **29%** of all moves (**40**) were moves from non-partnership roles (either moves from in-house or non-partners elevated to partnership upon moving from another law firm).

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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 or +44 (0)7788 454 080

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

Please click [here](#) to understand our methodology for compiling Partner Moves

✦ **Addleshaw Goddard**

A trio of hires for the international firm as it adds real estate lawyer **Amit Unadkat** from CMS; capital markets specialist **Jonathan Malim** from Eversheds; and financial services and technology specialist **Chris Tart-Roberts**, who was the (non-partner) head of lawtech and chief knowledge & innovation officer at Macfarlanes. Unadkat acts for private equity firms and global investors on UK and cross-border European real estate transactions. Malim handles a range of domestic and international transactions, including bond offerings, private placements, regulatory capital, securitisations, and structured lending. Tart-Roberts helps financial services and private capital clients solve legal and regulatory challenges using advanced technologies.

✦ **ADVANT Beiten**

Willkommen! The Munich-headquartered firm launches its London office with the addition of corporate lawyer **Sebastian Diehl** from Standard Chartered Bank, where he was a senior legal counsel. Diehl, who is German qualified and a registered foreign lawyer, advises on cross-border M&A transactions for strategic and financial sponsors as well as on private equity and venture capital transactions.

✦ **A&O Shearman**

In a vertical move, the transatlantic giant elevates New York qualified finance/ debt capital markets lawyer **Pierre Brulé** from Weil Gotshal, where he was a counsel. Brulé, who will split his time across the firm's London and Paris offices, handles high yield bonds, acquisition financing, restructurings and liability management transactions.

✦ **Ashurst**

Two new faces for the silver circle firm which welcomes disputes lateral **Harriet Jones-Fenleigh** from Norton Rose Fulbright; and employment specialist **Daniel Ornstein** from Simmons & Simmons. An employed barrister, Jones-Fenleigh covers a wide range of dispute resolution

including commercial and finance litigation, civil fraud, asset tracing, commodities disputes and arbitrations. Ornstein advises on labour disputes and employment-related litigation in courts and tribunals, with a particular focus on the financial services sector.

✦ **Baker McKenzie**

A brace of laterals for the global verein which bags: corporate tax specialist **Sam Trowbridge** from Kirkland & Ellis; and corporate lawyer **Helen Johnson** from CMS, where she led the retail practice. Trowbridge covers the tax aspects of cross border private equity and M&A transactions. Johnson, whose practice focuses primarily on consumer products and financial services, joins the M&A team.

✦ **BCLP**

The Anglo-American firm elevates antitrust lawyer **Christine Graham** from Cooley, where she was a special counsel. Graham primarily focuses on non-contentious matters including merger control and foreign direct investment reviews, with a particular angle in the technology and life sciences sectors.

✦ **Bird & Bird**

The avian eponym bolsters its energy and infrastructure offering with the addition of two vertical hires: **Jenny Murray** from Norton Rose Fulbright, where she was of counsel; and **Eleanor Kerslake** from DLA Piper, where she was a legal director. Murray advises on commercial energy and construction contracts, as well as offtake agreements, power purchase agreements, and project finance documentation. Kerslake covers projects, PPP/PFI and other infrastructure development deals in the infrastructure, defence, transport, and emergency services sectors

✦ **Boodle Hatfield**

The London private wealth and real estate firm welcomes three new faces in the form of: real estate lateral **Neil Biswas** from Trowers &

Hamlins; corporate specialist **David Davies** from Kingsley Napley; and private client lawyer **Dom Rothbarth** from Taylor Wessing, where he was a senior associate. Biswas focuses on real estate investment and development, with particular expertise in social housing, regeneration and funding structures. Davies, advises entrepreneurs, family offices and venture-backed companies on corporate transactions, governance and fundraising, with a focus on the technology and impact sectors. Rothbarth specialises in structuring, succession and estate planning.

✦ **Broadfield (formerly BDB Pitmans)**

Joining the recently rebranded “global firm” are three arrivals: corporate laterals **David Ramm** from Crowell & Moring, and **James Duncan** from Winckworth Sherwood; together with direct real estate vertical **Paul Cole** from Clyde & Co, where he was a legal director. Ramm, who will lead the corporate team in London, covers private equity, venture capital and M&A, with a primary focus on the technology sector. Duncan specialises in corporate M&A and structuring, often advising on regulated business and investment funds, especially in the real estate sector. Cole counsels on real estate investment, development projects, and landlord and tenant matters.

✦ **Browne Jacobson**

TMT savant **Chris Holder** arrives at the national firm from Bristows, where he led the AI group. Holder who was one of the UK’s first specialist IT outsourcing lawyers, advises the public and private sectors on: outsourcing, systems integration, cloud computing, AI, robotics, swarm technologies and general commercial IT contract issues.

✦ **Burges Salmon**

Privacy and TMT specialist **Hamish Corner** decamps to the Bristol headquartered firm from Shoosmiths. Corner counsels on technology

transactions, cross-border data transfers, data breaches and regulatory investigations.

✦ **Cadwalader**

New York’s oldest firm welcomes two arrivals in the form of private client lateral **Matthew Sperry** from Katten, and finance vertical **Andro Atlaga** from King & Spalding, where he was a counsel. US qualified Sperry, who will split his time between London and New York, advises family offices, high-net-worth individuals and trustees on international tax, trust, and estate planning. Atlaga, who is New York qualified, counsels on international capital markets and cross-border leveraged finance transactions, with a particular focus on high-yield bond financings.

✦ **Charles Russell Speechlys**

A quartet of new faces for the London-headquartered firm which adds: private funds lawyer **Matthew Griffin** from Mayer Brown, where he was head of funds and investment management for Europe; restructuring and insolvency specialist **Libby Elliott** from KPMG spin-off Interpath Advisory, where she was head of risk and legal; corporate lawyer **Gustina Singgih** from Babcock International, where she was deputy general counsel; and litigation vertical **Jue Jun Lu** from DLA Piper, where she was a legal director. Griffin advises on fund formation and fund investments (including secondaries), acting for sponsors, institutional investors, and sovereign wealth funds. Elliott, who was previously a partner at KPMG, Stephenson Harwood and Dentons, handles domestic and cross-border restructurings, insolvency matters, large scale litigation and risk management. Singgih advises on M&A, joint ventures and financing transactions, with an angle in the aerospace, defence, engineering and financial services sectors. Lu, a solicitor-advocate, specialises in international arbitration and cross-border commercial disputes, with a strong focus on Asia and Chinese-related matters.

✦ **Cleary Gottlieb**

The New York firm launches a London real estate offering with the arrival of corporate real estate specialist **Stephen Nicolas** from Paul Hastings. Nicolas advises on both private equity and direct real estate transactions covering acquisitions, disposals, joint ventures and management agreements, including for hotels.

✦ **CMS**

A pair of fresh faces for the international firm which welcomes in-house energy and infrastructure lawyer **Daniel Kaufman**, who was most recently consulting at electric vehicle infrastructure companies Pod Point (where he was formally group general counsel) and VEV; and construction disputes vertical **Sunil Mawkin** from A&O Shearman, where he was a counsel. Kaufman advises investors, energy utilities, automotive OEMs, fleet operators and EV charging networks on transactions, projects and regulation across the future mobility ecosystem. Mawkin, a solicitor-advocate, counsels on disputes (both litigation and international arbitration) around construction, energy and infrastructure, with a particular focus on the natural gas and renewable sectors.

✦ **Collyer Bristow**

The London firm elevates employment lawyer **Karen Mortenson** from Shoosmiths where she was a legal director. Mortenson covers all aspects of employment law including the people-related aspects of corporate transactions on mergers, acquisitions and investments.

✦ **Crowell & Moring**

The Washington DC headquartered firm strengthens its London finance offering with the elevation of **Tom Dell'Avvocato** from Squire Patton Boggs, where he was a director. Dell'Avvocato advises on domestic and cross-border asset-based lending, leveraged finance and specialty finance matters.

✦ **DAC Beachcroft**

Professional indemnity specialist **Tim Barr** arrives at the insurance flavoured outfit from Womble Bond Dickinson. Barr handles regulatory, disciplinary and risk-related issues across all lines of professional indemnity.

✦ **Debevoise & Plimpton**

Hiring Spree! The historically uber conservative white-shoe firm welcomes three laterals: a two-partner private funds team comprising **Krishna Skandakumar** and **Natalia Kubik** from Goodwin's New York office (although it currently remains unclear whether Kubik, who is dual English and New York qualified, will be based in the London or New York office); and corporate insurance specialist **Hugo Laing** from Eversheds Sutherland. Skandakumar, who joins as co-chair of the private funds transactions group, and Kubik advise private equity sponsors and investors on secondaries transactions and related liquidity solutions including continuation vehicles, LP portfolio sales, tender offers and recapitalisations. Laing advises public and private insurers and private equity sponsors active in the insurance market on M&A, Part VII transfers, distribution arrangements and risk transfer matters.

✦ **Dentons**

Derivatives and structured products specialist **Karine Imbrosciano** joins the global verein from Paris headquartered Gide. Imbrosciano, who is dual UK and French qualified, advises on OTC derivatives and structured products, offering legal structuring and transactional support under both English and French law.

✦ **DLA Piper**

Boosting its private equity real estate offering, the global leviathan welcomes in-house corporate real estate lawyer **Anthea Bamford** who, until last year, was a director and corporate legal counsel at Canary Wharf Group (CWG). Bamford, who prior to joining CWC was a partner

at legacy BLP and Weil Gotshal, focuses on real estate M&A, joint ventures and other equity-sharing arrangements and associated management agreements, both for operational real estate assets/portfolios and development projects.

✦ **Duane Morris**

The US firm hires **Duncan Speller** from Willkie Farr & Gallagher where he was co-head of international arbitration. Speller, a barrister who also sits as an arbitrator, will co-head Duane Morris's international disputes group, where he will primarily advise on institutional and ad hoc commercial arbitrations.

✦ **DWF**

Finance lateral **Don Brown** decamps from Stephenson Harwood to join the once-listed, now private equity owned, international firm. Brown advises lenders and borrowers on secured lending, especially asset-based lending, asset finance, on-lending and other forms of speciality finance.

✦ **Euclid Law**

After retiring from partnership in April last year, Baker McKenzie's one-time London head of competition, **Keith Jones**, re-emerges at the London anti-trust boutique following a stint as an independent consultant. Jones, who arrived at Euclid Law in May this year, advises on all aspects of competition law, and economic regulation, including merger control, abuse of dominance, restrictive agreements and competition litigation.

✦ **Eversheds Sutherland**

A hexad of hires (two laterals, two verticals and two from in-house) for the international firm which welcomes: corporate tax savant **Kevin Cummings** from legacy McDermott Will & Emery, where he was UK head of tax; construction disputes specialist **James Holden** from White & Case; energy and infrastructure disputes lawyer **John Lurie** from Bechtel Corporation, where he

was a principal counsel and regional head of legal for EMEA; corporate lawyer **Kashif Siddiqui** from Pepco Group, where he was head of legal; privacy specialist **Karishma Brahmhatt** from A&O Shearman, where she was a counsel; and structured finance specialist **Martin Corrigan** from Latham & Watkins, where he was an associate. Cummings advises on a wide range of corporate tax, including cross-border structuring, capital markets and portfolio-level M&A with particular expertise in private capital, banking and wider financial services. Holden, a solicitor-advocate who returns to the firm at which he trained after a dozen years, focuses on construction and infrastructure disputes across a number of sectors. Lurie advises on bespoke contract forms, risk management, project finance, and dispute resolution through ICC, LCIA, and UNCITRAL arbitration. Siddiqui covers public and private M&A, joint ventures and investments across Europe and the Middle East, with sector expertise in renewables, retail, fintech and private equity. Brahmhatt specialises in privacy and commercial technology including: data compliance, digital transformation, data strategy, data ethics and AI. Corrigan handles structured finance transactions and corporate lending across a wide range of asset classes including performing and non-performing mortgage loans, digital and traditional infrastructure and car rental fleets.

✦ **Fenchurch Law**

Prodigal Son! Returning to the policy holder insurance boutique where he was previously an "associate partner" is in-house lawyer **Rob Goodship** from design & build contractor Ardmore Group, where he was head of risk, insurance & compliance. Goodship will focus on policy holder insurance disputes in the construction and property sectors.

✦ **Fieldfisher**

Corporate lawyer **Karen O'Grady** makes the move to the European firm from West End media

outfit Sheridans. O'Grady advises on M&A, venture capital and private equity transactions, acting for growth companies, funds, family offices and entrepreneurs across sectors including technology, media, energy and hospitality.

✦ Fladgate

Two disputes laterals for the punchy London firm which welcomes: international arbitration expert **Timi Balogun**, from Squire Patton Boggs; and **Tatiana Menshenina** from Withers, where she led the CIS disputes practice. Balogun, who is dual English and Nigeria qualified and joins as head of Africa, is widely regarded for his expertise in investment treaty arbitration and cross-border disputes across sub-Saharan Africa, representing African governments, state entities, and corporates in the energy infrastructure and natural resources sectors. Menshenina, a solicitor-advocate who is dual English and Russian qualified, advises on commercial disputes and arbitrations across several sectors - including digital finance, crypto assets, technology, construction, and private wealth - with a particular angle on matters with a CIS (especially Russia/ Ukraine) flavour.

✦ Fox Williams

Disputes lateral **Sarah Murray** joins the City firm from Stevens & Bolton, where she was head of commercial litigation. Murray advises on an array of commercial disputes with a particular angle in fraud and asset recovery matters.

✦ Freeths

One lateral and one vertical hire for the national firm which welcomes employment specialist **Melanie Stancliffe** from Cripps; and financial services lawyer **Sushil Kuner** from Gowling WLG, where she was a principal associate. Stancliffe advises both employers and employees on a wide range of contentious and non-contentious employment and partnership matters. Kuner, who will lead the firm's financial services regulatory practice, covers regulatory

investigations, enforcement, and advisory work across the financial services sector.

✦ Gateley

A trio of hires (two laterals and one vertical) for the listed firm which welcomes: technology specialist **Prakash Kerai ("PK")** from Shoosmiths; offshore disputes lawyer **Ulrich Payne**, who re-emerges after decamping from Cayman Islands firm Appleby last year; and restructuring and finance vertical **Liam Mills**, who relocates from the Dublin office of DLA Piper, where he was a director. Kerai handles commercial contracts and technology arrangements, including FinTech, blockchain, outsourcing and digital assets. Payne, who spent more than a decade in the Cayman Islands, where his practice focused on Cayman and BVI matters, advises on international arbitration and litigation for high-net-worth individuals and multijurisdictional finance and corporate entities. Mills, who is dual-qualified in England and Ireland, advises on financial restructurings, special situations and private credit, with experience spanning recapitalisation, liability management and strategic investments in distressed assets.

✦ Gibson Dunn

Swapping one Los Angeles spawned giant for another is corporate energy lateral **Simon Tysoe** from Latham & Watkins. Tysoe advises on cross-border M&A, joint ventures, and project development across the energy value chain including upstream, midstream, downstream oil and gas as well as broader infrastructure transactions.

✦ Gowling WLG

In a vertical hire, the Anglo-Canadian firm elevates finance and regulatory lawyer **Georgios Chic** from Watson Farley & Williams, where he was a senior consultant. Chic focuses on the regulatory and transactional aspects of derivatives, structured products, and debt capital

markets, with additional exposure to leveraged finance, high yield, and structured debt.

✦ **Hogan Lovells**

Corporate real estate duo **Michael James** and **Edward Meadowcroft** decamp to the global firm from Paul Hastings. The pair, who have worked together for over a decade, advise on private equity real estate covering structured acquisitions and disposals, joint ventures, real estate finance and fund investments with a particular niche in the hotels sector.

✦ **Hugh James**

The Cardiff headquartered outfit elevates litigation lawyer **Danielle Cahill** from Clifford Chance, where she was a senior associate. Cahill specialises in private client and international trust disputes.

✦ **Irwin Mitchell**

The national firm grows its construction practice with the addition of **Vijay Bange** from Duane Morris, where he was head of construction and co-chair of international arbitration. Bange, who joins as head of construction and engineering, advises on contentious construction and engineering disputes in the property, infrastructure, manufacturing, engineering, energy and pharmaceuticals sectors.

✦ **K&L Gates**

Making the switch to the Pittsburgh spawned international firm is funds lateral **Marianna Tothova** from Dechert. Tothova, who is dual-English and Luxembourg qualified, advises on private fund investments across various asset classes with a focus on debt and private equity, alongside UCITS, ELTIFs and fund-related regulatory compliance including AIFMD II and loan origination.

✦ **King & Spalding**

The Atlanta headquartered outfit restocks its corporate tax offering with **Russell Warren** from Travers Smith, where he was head of tax. Warren, a Travers Smith lifer, handles transactional tax matters advising financial sponsors, corporate groups and financial institutions on a range of matters including: real estate tax, tax structuring, management equity plans and tax investigations.

✦ **Kingsley Napley**

Private client specialist **Paul Davidoff** arrives at the London firm from New Quadrant Partners. Davidoff advises high net worth individuals, families and trustees on UK and international tax, trusts and estate planning, with expertise in residence and domicile rules, offshore structuring and cross-border succession.

✦ **Kirkland & Ellis**

A quartet of vertical hires for the Chicago spawned powerhouse which elevates: corporate tax lawyers **Caroline Inker** from Paul Weiss, where she was a counsel; and **Tomás McGrath** from Slaughter and May, where he was an associate; as well as private funds specialist **Robert Phillips** from Linklaters, where he was a managing associate; and financial services regulatory specialist **Tasmin Patel** from Latham & Watkins, where she was an associate. Both Inker and McGrath cover the tax aspects of M&A, corporate finance and corporate reorganisations, with Inker having a particular angle on the latter. Phillips advises sponsors on the structuring, formation and operation of private investment funds. Patel advises on the regulatory aspects of private wealth products that target high net-worth, semi-professional and retail investors.

✦ **Latham & Watkins**

Non-contentious IP specialist **Lydia Torne** makes the switch to the global leviathan from Simmons & Simmons. Torne handles transactions involving intellectual property, including licensing, collaboration agreements, joint ventures,

consortium and commercialisation agreements, with a particular angle on life sciences and digital health, alongside broad regulatory compliance in the life sciences sector.

✦ **Lewis Silkin**

Two new faces for the London firm which welcomes: immigration specialist **Rose Carey** from Charles Russell Speechlys, where she headed the immigration group; and IP litigator **Scott Foster** from Canadian boutique Seastone IP, which he founded. Carey advises corporates, high-net-worth individuals and families on immigration matters having a particular niche in global talent strategies, appeals and judicial reviews. Foster, who is dual UK and Canadian qualified, specialises in patent disputes and broader contentious IP matters, including trade secrets, copyright and trademarks.

✦ **Mantle Law**

The Abu Dhabi headquartered construction and arbitration disputes boutique elevates construction litigator **Glen Rosen** from Pinsent Masons, where he was a senior associate. Rosen specialises in litigation, arbitration and mediation within the construction and engineering industry.

✦ **Mayer Brown**

Corporate private equity specialist **Tessa Agar** decamps from fellow US firm Goodwin. Agar advises private equity sponsors and their portfolio companies on cross-border and domestic acquisitions, disposals, joint ventures and follow-on financings.

✦ **McDermott Will & Schulte**

The newly merged US firm welcomes in-house real estate finance lawyer **Owen Jones** from private equity outfit Tristan Capital Partners, where he was an executive director. Jones advises on senior and mezzanine financing, development funding and loan restructurings,

with a focus on cross-border debt investments across the UK and continental Europe.

✦ **Michelman & Robinson**

Following its [low-key London debut in June](#), the Los Angeles headquartered firm continues its London build out with a trio of corporate crime and investigations laterals from three different law firms: **John Gibson**, from Cohen & Gresser, where he was head of white collar and investigations; **Ruth Paley**, who decamped from Eversheds Sutherland in April this year; and **Polly Sprenger** from Addleshaw Goddard. Lily Dou also joins as a partner from Addleshaw Goddard, where she was forensic accounting director, however, in accordance with [our methodology](#), as a non-lawyer, Dou's move is not included in our statistics. All three laterals advise on complex economic crime, investigations, and regulatory matters.

✦ **Michelmores**

A pair of laterals for the Exeter-headquartered outfit which welcomes: litigation lawyer **Jennifer Morrissey** from claimant disputes boutique Marcus Parker; and employment specialist **Jo Mackie** from Burlingtons. Morrissey has a particular focus on financial services litigation and large shareholder actions. Mackie handles a mix of contentious and non-contentious employment matters for corporates and individuals.

✦ **Milbank**

The Wall Street firm launches a European real estate finance offering with a market leading team comprising laterals **Miles Flynn** and **Rehan Hanif** from Paul Hastings, where Flynn led the European real estate practice. The duo specialise in real estate finance across the UK and Europe focusing on senior and mezzanine debt, and intercreditor agreements advising banks, debt funds and private equity sponsors on the financing of commercial real estate in Europe (including back leverage) and on CMBS transactions.

✦ **Mishcon de Reya**

The London firm strengthens its corporate bench with the addition of **Phil Robinson** from Withers. Robinson counsels on venture capital and technology transactions, with a particular focus on supporting founders and high-growth companies from incorporation and early-stage funding, through to exit.

✦ **Morgan Lewis**

Disputes lawyer **Christian Tuddenham** and regulatory life sciences specialist **Jacqueline (Jackie) Mulryne** make the switch from fellow US firms Jenner & Block and Arnold & Porter, respectively. Tuddenham advises on commercial litigation, particularly in civil fraud and multijurisdictional matters involving the Middle East, India, Pakistan, and common law off-shore jurisdictions. Mulryne, an Arnold & Porter lifer, provides regulatory, policy, and compliance advice to clients in the pharmaceutical, medical technology, cosmetics, and foods sectors.

✦ **Morrison Foerster**

US qualified financial services regulatory and fintech specialist **Joshua Kaplan** makes the switch from fellow West Coast outfit Wilson Sonsini. Kaplan, who joins the corporate team at his new firm, focuses on early-stage companies targeting the US operating in the fintech and financial services sectors, counselling them on regulatory, venture capital, corporate, and finance matters.

✦ **Northridge**

The sport-focused boutique appoints Bird & Bird lifer **Claire Barker** as head of sports finance. Barker advises lenders and borrowers on finance structures, player transfer finance, ticket receivables, media rights, and stadium financing across football, cricket, tennis, and motorsport.

✦ **Orrick**

Double-Tap! The LA headquartered outfit welcomes two separate teams this edition in the form of a CLO and structured finance quartet

from Cadwalader comprising: **David Quirolo**, **Daniel Tobias**, **Claire Puddicombe** and **Alexander Collins**; and energy and infrastructure duo **Anna Howell** and **Mitasha Chandok** from Gibson Dunn, where Chandok was an of counsel. The Cadwalader team, led by onetime London managing partner Quirolo, covers structured finance and represents investment banks, asset managers and investors on a range of structured finance transactions, focusing primarily on CLOs, CFOs and asset-based lending facilities. The Gibson Dunn duo cover M&A, project financing, joint ventures and restructuring matters across the oil & gas, LNG, energy transition, power, mining and infrastructure sectors, with Howell appointed as Orrick's global head of oil & gas.

✦ **Paul Hastings**

Anti-trust lateral **Sally Evans** and finance vertical **William Lam** jump ship to the West Coast firm from fellow US giants Kirkland & Ellis and Latham & Watkins, respectively. Evans, who is English and Brussels (A-List) qualified, and will split her time between London and Brussels, advises on merger control, cartel investigations, foreign direct investment and compliance matters. Lam, who arrived at the firm in May this year, advises on a broad range of debt finance with a particular focus on leveraged and acquisition financings.

✦ **Penningtons Manches Cooper**

The London and South-East focused firm hires property litigation lawyer **Sarah Finch** from Hamblins. Finch acts for institutional landlords, developers and investors on commercial and mixed-use property disputes, including lease renewals, dilapidations, tenant default and site clearance strategies.

✦ **Pinsent Masons**

A quartet of laterals for the international firm as it welcomes: equity capital market specialist **Nicholas Holmes** who joins as head of ECM from Ashurst, where he held the same title; US securities lawyer **Dinesh Banani** from HSF

Kramer; restructuring specialist **Edward Smith** from Travers Smith; and pensions lawyer **Dan Naylor**, also from Travers Smith. Holmes advises on IPOs, placings, rights issues and related ECM matters. US qualified Banani, who joins as head of US securities, covers equity and debt capital markets including IPOs, rights issues, secondary share placings, bond offerings and structured financings. Smith handles restructuring scenarios, including directors' duties, financial and operational restructurings, distressed M&A and formal insolvency matters. Naylor, who led the risk transfer offering at his previous firm, advises on pensions risk transfers, scheme restructurings and long-term security arrangements.

✦ Proskauer

Two hires for the New Yorker which welcomes: corporate private equity specialist **Martin Graham** from Oaktree Capital Management, where he was a managing director; and corporate tax lawyer **Daniella (Dannii) Abel** from Weil, where she was a counsel. Graham, who joins the transactional private equity team, will cover M&A, hybrid capital and restructuring transactions across various markets and sectors. Abel, a Proskauer *alumna*, advises on tax matters across finance, M&A and funds, with a particular angle in structuring private fund investments, carried interest and co-investment arrangements.

✦ Reed Smith

A brace of laterals for the international firm which bags: corporate M&A lawyer **Andrew Houghton**, from Proskauer; and international arbitration specialist **Michael Darowski**, from newly merged firm McDermott Will & Schulte. Houghton advises private capital sponsors, companies and management teams on cross-border buyouts, growth capital investments and acquisitions, with a particular focus on the financial services and technology sectors. Darowski specialises in international and commercial arbitration

covering the energy and natural resources, financial, transportation and telecoms sectors.

✦ Ropes & Gray

Corporate private equity lateral **Cataldo Piccarreta** swaps Milan for London joining the Boston headquartered blue-blood from Latham & Watkins as its new co-head of European private equity transactions. Piccarreta, who is dual English and Italian qualified, advises on cross-border buyouts and strategic transactions; his move is part of a wider team defection from Latham which sees the Massachusetts firm launch a Milan offering.

✦ RPC

Prodigal Daughter. Joining the employment, engagement & equality team at the insurance flavoured firm is in-house lawyer **Charlotte White** from CloudPay, where she was general counsel. White, who was previously a senior associate at RPC, will utilise her in-house experience to advise on employment law.

✦ Shakespeare Martineau

Two laterals for the national firm which adds property litigation lawyer **Jonathan Warren** from Teacher Stern, where he was co-head of real estate; and reclaims disputes specialist **David Vaughan** from Irwin Mitchell. Warren handles landlord and tenant litigation, risk analysis, and alternative dispute resolution. Vaughan has an eclectic disputes practice across a range of sectors; he returns to Shakespeare Martineau after decamping in March 2023 for West End firm Collyer Bristow, before going on to join Irwin Mitchell less than a year later.

✦ Shoosmiths

Three new additions for the national firm which welcomes: corporate lawyer **Geoff Dragon** from Mishcon de Reya; technology specialist **Sarah Reynolds** from EY Law, where she was head of UK emerging technology and responsible AI; and

employment lateral **Harry Abrams** from JMW Solicitors. Dragon, who specialises in venture capital transactions, advises on venture-backed investments and employee equity incentives with a particular focus on the emerging technology and life sciences sectors. Reynolds advises on the sourcing, deployment, and commercialisation of new technologies. Abrams handles a mix of contentious and non-contentious employment matters.

✦ **Simmons & Simmons**

A trio of laterals for the international firm which swipes: pensions lawyer **Amrit Mclean** from DLA Piper, where she was head of pensions de-risking; derivatives specialist **Joseph Wren** from Travers Smith; and corporate private equity lawyer **Gemma Phillips** from Addleshaw Goddard. Mclean, who retains her title as global head of pensions de-risking, has a niche advising on pensions risk transfer (PRT) transactions, particularly on the buy-side for insurers. Wren, a Travers Smith lifer advises private markets firms, asset managers and institutional investors on derivatives and securities financing, with a particular focus on trading requirements in private equity, credit, infrastructure and real estate. Phillips counsels both management teams and private equity houses on M&A, equity arrangements and restructurings.

✦ **Simpson Thacher**

Three fresh faces (two laterals and one vertical) for the elite New Yorker which bags: private funds lawyer **Sam Brooks** from Macfarlanes; corporate private equity specialist **Nick Appleton** from Kirkland & Ellis; and energy and infrastructure specialist **Eleanor Milne** from A&O Shearman, where she was a counsel. Brooks counsels sponsor clients on a broad range of private fund matters including structuring, terms, investor negotiations and service agreements. Appleton focuses on the structuring of private equity deals, leveraged buyouts, commercial contracts and general corporate advisory matters. Milne

advises sponsors, lenders and government bodies on energy and infrastructure projects, with a particular angle on renewable energy and emerging clean technologies.

✦ **Skadden**

Corporate tax specialist **Katie Leah** defects to the Wall Street firm from Goodwin. Leah advises on the transactional tax aspects of private equity M&A, real estate and private funds as well as VAT, stamp taxes, management packages, and share incentive schemes.

✦ **SGR (Smith, Gambrell & Russell)**

The US firm hires reinsurance lateral **Simon Kilgour** from CMS. Kilgour advises reinsurers on wordings, inspections, inwards and outwards coverage disputes and collections.

✦ **Squire Patton Boggs**

Two additions for the global verein which nabs commercial disputes lifer **Miles Robinson**, from Mayer Brown and corporate crime and investigations vertical **Adina Ezekiel** from Paul Hastings, where she was a legal director. Robinson, who spent nearly three decades at Mayer Brown and left as the firm's co-head of product liability, covers a broad range of commercial disputes with a sub-specialism in defending product liability claims. Ezekiel, who also sits as a Recorder in the Crown Court, advises on bribery and corruption, extradition, investigations, public law, and anti-money laundering.

✦ **Stephenson Harwood**

A quartet of new faces for the international firm which welcomes corporate private equity lateral **Paul Barron** from King & Spalding; shipping veteran **Nick Austin** from Reed Smith; real estate lawyer **John Danahy** from Bird & Bird; and project finance specialist **Indraj Mangat** from EY Law. Barron advises on all aspects of private equity transactions including acquisitions, disposals,

bolt-ons, consortium arrangements, minority investments and management equity plans. Austin, who joins as head of maritime and offshore, counsels shipowners, operators, insurers and commodity traders in shipping and international trade disputes as well as advising on charterparty and other marine contracts. Danahy, who [only joined Bird & Bird last year](#) from King & Wood Mallesons, covers both traditional real estate and energy and infrastructure related real estate transactions, with a particular angle in the nuclear sector. Mangat, who prior to a brief stint at EY Law, was a long-time partner at Eversheds Sutherland, counsels sponsors, infrastructure funds, equity investors and banks on renewable energy projects.

✦ **Stewarts Law**

International arbitration and litigation specialist **Rovine Chandrasekera** arrives at the disputes focused boutique from Stephenson Harwood, where he was global head of international arbitration and one time managing partner of its Dubai office. Chandrasekera covers a broad range of commercial disputes with specialisms in fraud, asset recovery, sanctions and cross-border enforcement matters.

✦ **Sullivan & Cromwell**

In what may well prove to be the most significant hires this edition, the Wall Street firm welcomes two Big Law heavyweights: storied private equity lawyer **Mike Francies**, the former long-term managing partner of Weil who returns to the fray after “retiring” from law last December; and restructuring specialist **Kon Asimacopoulos** from Kirkland & Ellis, who joins as both co-head of Sullivan & Cromwell’s London office and its global restructuring practice. Francies, who was one of the first ever magic circle partners to join a US law firm in the late 1990’s, is one of the most prominent private equity M&A lawyers in London, a vocation he will continue at his new home. Asimacopoulos advises companies and

investors on national and cross-border financial restructuring and insolvency matters.

✦ **Sullivan & Worcester**

Trade finance specialist **Robert Parson** makes the move to the Boston headquartered firm from Squire Patton Boggs. Parson advises banks, non-bank investors, fintechs, credit insurers and traders on structured trade, inventory finance and the digitalisation of trade documents.

✦ **Taylor Wessing**

The international firm bolsters its banking & finance team with the addition of **Max Millington** from Pinsent Masons. Millington advises sponsors, borrowers and management teams on private debt transactions including leveraged and acquisition finance, corporate finance, financial restructurings and special situations.

✦ **Vinson & Elkins**

In a vertical hire, the Houston-headquartered firm elevates aviation/asset finance specialist **Ainsley Ierland** from A&O Shearman, where she was a senior associate. Ierland advises on structured finance and capital markets transactions, with a specialism in cross-border aviation finance.

✦ **Watson Farley & Williams**

A brace of laterals for the international firm which bags: real estate finance lawyer **Kumar Tewari** from Katten, where he was head of banking; and energy regulatory and trading specialist **Jean-Pascal Boutin** from EY Law. Tewari, who joins his new firm as head of real estate finance, advises on senior and mezzanine loan structures, including back-leveraged loan and loan-on-loan structures within the real estate space. Boutin focuses on renewable energy projects advising on energy regulations and licensing and trading credits with a particular angle on the energy, nuclear, district heating, EV and storage sectors.

✦ **Wedlake Bell**

Private client lawyer **Sophie St John** joins the City firm from Broadfield (formerly BDB Pitmans). St John handles UK legal and tax issues connected to estate planning, succession planning and wealth protection and preservation.

✦ **White & Case**

The New York firm welcomes three laterals: a two partner corporate tax team comprising **Arun Birla** and **Jiten Tank** from Paul Hastings (where Birla was the global second managing partner and vice-chair of international tax); and energy and infrastructure specialist **Serra Tar** from Kirkland & Ellis. The tax duo counsel institutional clients, family offices and asset managers on the tax aspects of M&A, private equity, real estate, joint ventures and financings. Tar advises on domestic and cross-border project development, M&A, joint ventures, equity investments and commercial transactions across the renewable, power and gas sectors.

✦ **Willkie Farr & Gallagher**

Corporate private equity lawyer **Hamesh Khatkar** makes the switch to the New York firm from Kirkland & Ellis. Khatkar advises private equity sponsors and sovereign wealth funds on cross-border M&A and corporate transactions spanning a range of sectors including technology, real estate and digital infrastructure.

✦ **Winckworth Sherwood**

Making the switch to the national firm is finance lateral **Sarah Whitty** from Pinsent Masons, where she was head of social housing finance. Whitty has a broad social housing finance practice advising lenders in bilateral and syndicated lending, joint ventures, and development financing.

✦ **Winston & Strawn**

The Chicago spawned outfit hires its [second real estate finance lateral this year](#) in the form of **Richard Semple** from Goodwin. Semple counsels sponsors, borrowers and lenders on cross-border real estate finance matters including origination, syndication, securitisation, restructuring and distressed debt investing.

Corrections:

In our previous edition (July–August, Issue No. 88), Edwards Gibson incorrectly included the hire of Julian Smart who joined DAC Beachcroft from Clyde & Co. Mr. Smart was reported joining DAC Beachcroft’s London office. In fact, Mr. Smart joined the firm’s Bristol office and, in accordance with our methodology, should not have been included in our report.

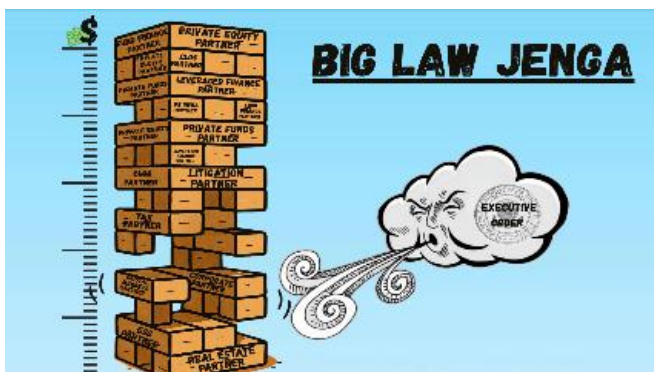
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- Two Big Law Summer Weddings ... and an Anniversary



- Freshfields' Non-Share Home Turf Handicap



- Big Law Jenga; Why Private Capital Stars are a Tragedy for the Rule of Law



- No Accounting for the Big Four in Big Law



- "Memery Loss" London Law Firm Memery Crystal Sinks



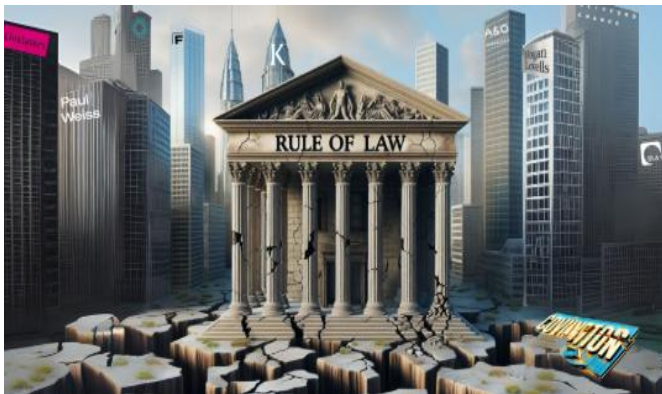
- Big Law's Brave "Few"



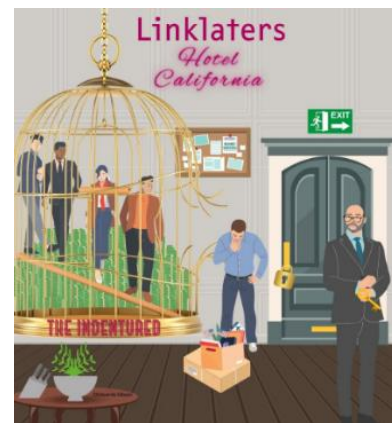
✦ Paul Weiss – The Invasive Species!



✦ Breaking The Circle – Freshfields Pay Bonanza



✦ The financial success of Big Law is predicated entirely on the Rule of Law



✦ Linklaters – Welcome to the “Hotel California” of Big Law

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✦ So, it's A&O Shearman!



✦ Paul Weiss – Blackjack !



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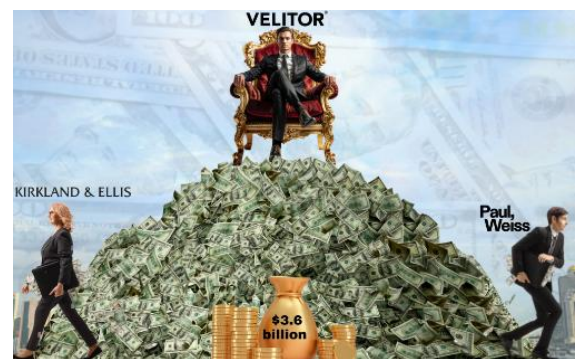
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Scott Gibson
Director
scott.gibson@edwardsgibson.com
+44 (0) 7788 454080



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

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