


Law  
Firm  
Partner  
Moves  
in  
London



♦ May –  
June 2026  
Issue No. 93

Welcome to the 93<sup>rd</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. Our records go back to 2007, and this is [our methodology](#).

✦ **A Summary of the First Half of 2026**

This edition marks the midpoint of 2026 and, in addition to our usual bi-monthly report, we have included some facts and figures below comparing the partner-level recruitment activity in the first half of 2026 with that over the same period of the past ten years.

Whilst the **319** moves we recorded in the first half of 2026 fell **10%** short of [last year's record-breaking 353\\*](#), it nevertheless represents the second-highest total on record. Indeed, it comfortably exceeds the previous peak of **285** recorded in 2017, a figure boosted by the collapse of **KWM Europe** (the former **SJ Berwin** and, at the time, a Top 20 law firm) in December 2016.

Overall, the first half of 2026 is **8%** up on the rolling five-year average (**294**) and **18%** up on the ten-year average (**269**) for the same period.

\* Edwards Gibson recorded 4 additional moves following the publication of its 87<sup>th</sup> (June 2025) edition.





The most prolific hirers in the first half of 2026 were **Paul Hastings** and **Shoosmiths** which welcomed **10** partners each, followed by **Eversheds Sutherland (9)**, **King & Spalding (8)**, then **Latham & Watkins** and **Winckworth Sherwood** which hired **7** partners apiece.

Lastly, six firms hired a half-dozen partners each since January: **Akin**, **Broadfield**, **DLA Piper**, **Norton Rose Fulbright**, **Pinsent Masons** and **Stephenson Harwood**.

♦ **Top partner recruiters in London 2026 (inclusive of hires from non-partnership)\*\***

<b>Paul Hastings</b>	<b>10</b>	(7 laterals)
<b>Shoosmiths</b>	<b>10</b>	(8 laterals)
<b>Eversheds Sutherland</b>	<b>9</b>	(4 laterals)
<b>King &amp; Spalding</b>	<b>8</b>	(8 laterals)
<b>Latham &amp; Watkins</b>	<b>7</b>	(7 laterals)
<b>Winckworth Sherwood</b>	<b>7</b>	(5 laterals)
<b>Akin</b>	<b>6</b>	(6 laterals)
<b>Broadfield</b>	<b>6</b>	(4 laterals)
<b>DLA Piper</b>	<b>6</b>	(4 laterals)
<b>Norton Rose Fulbright</b>	<b>6</b>	(6 laterals)
<b>Pinsent Masons</b>	<b>6</b>	(2 laterals)
<b>Stephenson Harwood</b>	<b>6</b>	(4 laterals)

\*\* To 30<sup>th</sup> June 2026.

Over the same period, **DLA Piper** suffered the highest attrition, losing **11** serving partners to rivals followed by: **Clyde & Co (8)** and **Kirkland & Ellis (7)**.

✦ **Firms with largest attrition in London 2026 (partnership to partnership moves only)\*\***

<b>DLA Piper</b>	<b>11 †</b>
<b>Clyde &amp; Co</b>	<b>8 ‡</b>
<b>Kirkland &amp; Ellis</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>A&amp;O Shearman</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>CMS</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Goodwin</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Weil</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>WilmerHale</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Baker McKenzie</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Latham &amp; Watkins</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Paul Hastings</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Pinsent Masons</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Reed Smith</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>White &amp; Case</b>	<b>5</b>

\*\* To 30<sup>th</sup> June 2026.

† Excludes a move from DLA Piper's Leeds office to Brabners' London office.

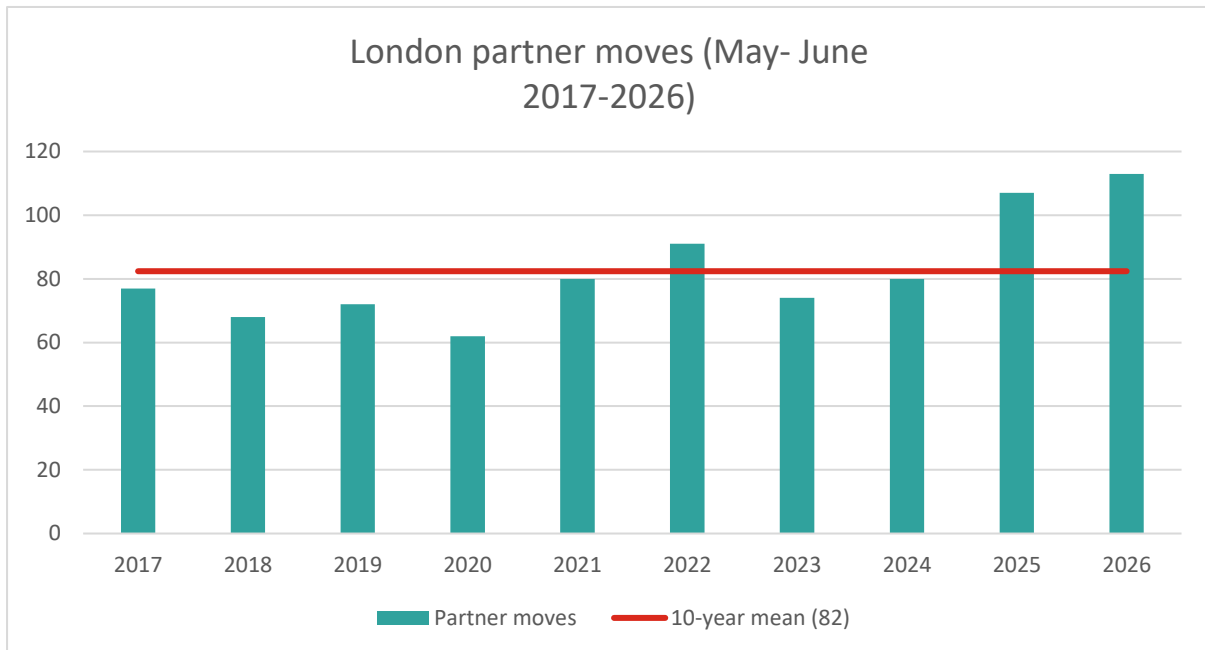
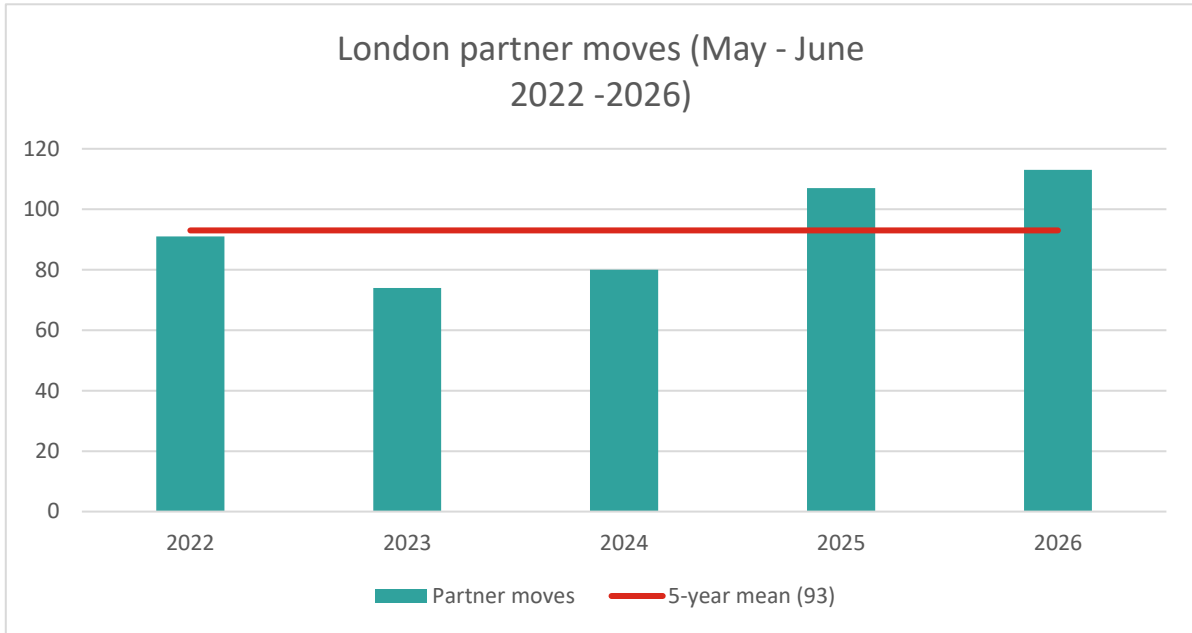
‡ Excludes a move from Clyde & Co's Singapore office to Stephenson Harwood's London office.

✦ **Other Fun Facts from the First Half of 2026**

- **31%** of all moves so far in 2026 were female (**99**).
- **4%** of all moves (**14**) were in-house lawyers moving into law firm partnerships.
- **20%** of all moves (**65**) were vertical hires (non-partners elevated to partnership upon moving from another law firm).

✦ **May – June 2026**

This bi-monthly round-up contains **113** partner moves, which is **6%** up on the **107** we saw for the same period last year; **22%** up on the cumulative five-year average (**93**); and **37%** up on the cumulative ten-year average of (**82**) for the same period.



The most coveted firm this edition was **King & Spalding** which hired **8** partners, all of whom were laterals. Up next was **Paul Hastings** which hired **5** partners (**3** laterals), followed by **Latham & Watkins**, **Mishcon de Reya** and **Stephenson Harwood** which hired **4** partners each. Lastly, eight firms: **Broadfield**, **Clyde & Co**, **Greenberg Traurig**, **Haynes Boone**, **Kennedys**, **Morgan Lewis**, **Morrison Foerster** and **White & Case** welcomed **3** partners apiece.

◆ **Top partner recruiters in London May – June 2026**

<b>King &amp; Spalding</b>	<b>8</b>	(8 laterals)
<b>Paul Hastings</b>	<b>5</b>	(3 laterals)
<b>Latham &amp; Watkins</b>	<b>4</b>	(4 laterals)
<b>Mishcon de Reya</b>	<b>4</b>	(2 laterals)
<b>Stephenson Harwood</b>	<b>4</b>	(3 laterals)
<b>Broadfield</b>	<b>3</b>	(2 laterals)
<b>Clyde &amp; Co</b>	<b>3</b>	(1 lateral)
<b>Greenberg Traurig</b>	<b>3</b>	(2 laterals)
<b>Haynes Boone</b>	<b>3</b>	(3 laterals)
<b>Kennedys</b>	<b>3</b>	(2 laterals)
<b>Morgan Lewis</b>	<b>3</b>	(3 laterals)
<b>Morrison Foerster</b>	<b>3</b>	(2 laterals)
<b>White &amp; Case</b>	<b>3</b>	(2 laterals)

On the other side of the coin, over the same period, **WilmerHale** recorded the highest attrition, losing 6 serving partners (see below).

◆ **Firms with largest attrition in May – June 2026 (partnership to partnership moves only)**

<b>WilmerHale</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Clyde &amp; Co</b>	<b>5 ‡</b>
<b>Baker McKenzie</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Covington &amp; Burling</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Morrison Foerster</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Reed Smith</b>	<b>3</b>

‡ Excludes a move from Clyde & Co's Singapore office to Stephenson Harwood's London office.



### ◆ Team hires May – June 2026

The most sizeable multi-partner team move this edition was **King & Spalding's** acquisition of a six-partner international arbitration and public law team from WilmerHale (see *The Born Defection* below). Following that was **Paul Hastings'** hire of a four-partner private equity real estate team (two laterals and two verticals) from Covington & Burling, and **Latham & Watkin's** acquisition of a three-partner corporate team from Morrison & Foerster.

Finally, two firms hired two partner teams: **Katten** (finance from Crowell & Moring); and **Morrison Foerster** (technology from Morgan Lewis).

### ◆ NAVigating a Fund Finance Frenzy

Five years ago, fund finance was well-established but, from a recruitment perspective, still a relatively occasional feature of the Big Law hire market. Since then, private capital managers have increasingly relied on financing tools to manage cashflow, support portfolio companies and bridge delays in returning capital to investors. As NAV, hybrid, GP and management company facilities have become more sophisticated, demand has grown for lawyers who understand both financing mechanics and fund structures. In short, fund finance has moved from back-office plumbing to front-office strategy — and the lateral hiring market is beginning to reflect that shift.

This edition sees seven firms (6% of all recorded moves) recruit fund finance partners. Most specialise predominantly—and some almost exclusively—in fund finance, illustrating how far the discipline has evolved from a niche subset of banking into a lateral market of its own. The firms hiring in the space are: **DLA Piper** from Cadwalader; **Haynes Boone** from Addleshaw Goddard; **Orrick** from McDermott Will & Schulte; **Paul Hastings** from Reed Smith; **Simmons & Simmons** from Reed Smith; **Weil** from A&O Shearman; and **White & Case** from Linklaters.

### ◆ Arbitration Appeal

This round-up is also notable for the exceptional level of activity in international arbitration, which accounted for **12\*** hires—more than **10%** of the entire London lateral market over the past two months. The standout move was **King & Spalding's** recruitment of a six-partner arbitration team from WilmerHale (see below). Beyond that headline-grabbing raid, the following firms also recruited in the space: **BCLP** from Fieldfisher, **CMS** from BCLP, **Fieldfisher** from Clyde & Co, **Gresham Legal** from King & Spalding, **Haynes Boone** from Signature and **Steptoe** from Clyde & Co.

\* The figure excludes **Stephenson Harwood's** hire of a construction disputes partner with a substantial international arbitration practice from Clyde & Co's Singapore office.

Long before litigation funding increased the portability of UK commercial litigation practices, international arbitration stood apart as one of the few disputes disciplines in which leading practitioners could carry significant books of business between firms. Indeed, because arbitration is inherently international, elite practitioners are often able to transport client relationships across borders, arbitral institutions and seats. Although most international arbitration hires do not fall into that category, for the fortunate few who establish a global reputation, the personal franchise can be as valuable as the firm platform itself.

✦ **The Born Defection**



Every so often, the London lateral market produces a move that feels less like partner recruitment and more like the transfer of an institutional asset. **King & Spalding**'s June 2026 hire of an eight-partner, market-leading international arbitration and public international law team from **WilmerHale** — spanning London, Washington DC and New York, and led by “Hall of Fame” lawyer and sometime published novelist **Gary Born** — firmly falls into that category.

In London, the Atlanta-spawned outfit welcomes a sextet of laterals, including Born, who joins as co-head of international disputes.

Even without Born, the London WilmerHale team — containing several market-leading individuals and comfortably Band 1 in its own right — is truly formidable. But because Born, who has been practising for more than 40 years, is the closest thing to a universally accepted “most famous arbitration lawyer” in the world today, the team is, perhaps unfairly, synonymous with him, with some in the market describing it as “the Gary Born show”.

“For King & Spalding — already Tier 1 by GAR — the move is less *Born Identity* than *Born Supremacy*.”

For King & Spalding, already ranked Tier 1 by GAR — the Global Arbitration Review and, in international arbitration the only ranking that really counts — the move is less *Born Identity* than *Born Supremacy*. Subject to the usual integration risks that come with absorbing culturally distinct, big-personality disputes laterals, it has the potential to place the firm’s arbitration practice in a league of its own.

That said, the hire is not entirely without risk for King & Spalding. Born is very senior — he has been in practice for more than 40 years — and, rightly or wrongly, a significant proportion of the team’s market value is linked to his name.

For WilmerHale’s London office, the consequences are sharper. In the US, the firm remains a formidable brand synonymous with quality and, although notionally full service, is primarily perceived as a disputes, regulatory and life sciences powerhouse rather than a competitor to Big Law’s private capital-driven transactional elite, which now operates on a different economic plane.

In London, the firm has played to those strengths, completely side-stepping [Big Law’s private capital lateral arms race](#) and instead focusing on three prestige pillars: IP/patent litigation, corporate crime, and international arbitration/public international law. It is a high-quality, low-growth model built around standout individuals, but one with clear concentration risk.

As recently as last year, WilmerHale could point to genuinely top-of-market individuals leading all three areas: **Justin Watts** (IP/patent litigation), **Stephen Pollard** (corporate crime), and **Gary Born** (international arbitration). However, with Watts and Pollard stepping back from the partnership over the past 18 months, and now the entirety of Born’s team defecting to King & Spalding, the vulnerability of that model has been exposed.

“For WilmerHale’s London office, the consequences are sharper — a high-quality, low-growth model built around standout individuals, but one with clear concentration risk.”

Growth in London has been sedate. Until very recently, the office had a reputation for making very few internal promotions and, on hiring, Edwards Gibson records just seven partner hires since its records began in 2007. Absent international arbitration, this historic lack of growth leaves the London office with just five partners (one of whom splits time between London and Brussels).

From a Mayfair base — in the UK version of Monopoly, the most expensive square — the economics of such a bonsai office will be challenging. The firm will need to scale up simply to balance the books, let alone retain its premium disputes brand outside of the US.

In a Big Law market increasingly defined by platform economics, momentum and depth matter as much as individual brilliance. Elite firms can still be built around star practitioners — but without sustained investment in growth, succession and breadth, even the most prestigious franchises risk being reduced, ultimately, to the sum of the individuals who leave. Right now, WilmerHale’s London office looks less like a curated disputes boutique and more like a case study in why law firms need to grow.

◆ **Other Fun Facts May – June 2026**

- **33%** of moves this edition were female (**37**).
- **One** firm hired from in-house or business: **EIP** (from M Squared)
- **23%** of all moves (**26**) were moves from non-partnership roles (either moves from in-house or non-partners elevated to partnership upon moving from another law firm).

[SCROLL BELOW FOR OUR FULL MAY - JUNE 2026 REPORT](#)

**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.**

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

- ✦ **Akin**  
Private equity specialist **Jonathon Hamill** arrives at the Texan-born firm from Sidley Austin as part of a four-partner transatlantic private equity team, including a New York-based trio. Hamill advises on leveraged buyouts, carve-outs, asset portfolio M&A, venture and growth capital investments, and joint ventures.
- ✦ **Alston & Bird**  
The Atlanta headquartered firm elevates corporate tax lawyer **Satvi Vepa** from Simmons & Simmons, where she was a counsel. Vepa, who is the US firm's first ever London tax partner, advises on the tax aspects of structured finance, securitisations, M&A, and corporate reorganisations.
- ✦ **Arnold & Porter**  
Antitrust disputes lawyer **Nicola Chesaites** – who has been practising as a freelance barrister after retiring from the partnership at Willkie in July last year – arrives at the Washington DC headquartered firm. Chesaites, who is dual English and Belgian qualified, advises claimants and defendants on competition and EU law litigation, with a particular focus on collective (class) actions.
- ✦ **BCLP**  
Prodigal Daughter! Fieldfisher international arbitration lateral **Ania Farren** returns to the firm she first joined as a partner in 2016. Farren counsels on international disputes and public international law matters, with a focus on commercial and investment treaty arbitrations.
- ✦ **Bevan Brittan**  
Two laterals defect to the national firm: corporate lawyer **Nick Fothergill** from Weightmans; and public law litigator **Oliver Wright** from Broadfield. Fothergill advises on M&A, joint ventures and reorganisations, with a particular focus in the energy and infrastructure sectors. Wright counsels local government and private sector clients on public law disputes and judicial review, as well as commercial litigation and reputation management.
- ✦ **Broadfield**  
Three new faces (two laterals and one vertical) for the A&M-backed platform firm which welcomes: corporate lawyer **Sean Wright** from Shoosmiths' Solent office; private client lateral **Sarah Sarwar** from Morr & Co; and IP specialist **Ash Von Schwan** from Baker McKenzie, where he was a senior associate. Wright advises on acquisitions, disposals and growth investments. Sarwar's practice covers international estate planning, succession structuring, and wealth preservation, alongside tax planning and trust structuring. Von Schwan counsels on non-contentious IP and commercial matters, with a focus on licensing arrangements and the IP aspects of corporate transactions.
- ✦ **Charles Russell Speechlys**  
Corporate private equity specialist **Nadim Meer** makes the switch to the international firm from Mishcon de Reya, where he was head of private equity. Meer advises founders and management teams on buyouts and growth capital investments, as well as counselling corporates on M&A, fundraising and joint ventures.
- ✦ **Cleary Gottlieb**  
New York, New York! Private funds lawyer **Nathan McKinnon** makes the switch from fellow New York firm Fried Frank. McKinnon, whose move follows on from that of fellow funds lateral **David Christmas**, [reported in our last edition](#), advises on fund formation across a range of alternative asset classes including private equity, credit, infrastructure and real estate, as well as GP-led secondary transactions
- ✦ **Clyde & Co**  
Three new recruits (one lateral and two verticals) for the global firm which adds: insurance litigator **Mark Ratcliff** from Womble Bond Dickinson;

planning specialist **Jamie McKie** from Travers Smith where he was the (non-partner) head of planning; and aviation disputes lawyer **Nick Roberts** from Norton Rose Fulbright, where he was a senior associate. Ratcliffe advises insurers on professional indemnity and financial lines matters, including coverage and management liability issues. McKie's practice focuses on development, regeneration and infrastructure planning matters. Roberts, who is a barrister and technically joins as a consultant whilst his SRA partnership approval comes through, covers aviation liability disputes, claims management and commercial litigation with an angle in the defence sector.

◆ **CMS**

Two new faces for the verein like international firm which welcomes: disputes lawyer **George Burn** from BCLP, where he was co-head of international arbitration; and fintech and finance specialist **Katherine Murray** from Avantia Law, which she co-founded, before serving as managing director of funds. Burn, who advises on both investment treaty and commercial arbitrations, covers disputes across the energy, natural resources, infrastructure and finance sectors. Murray specialises in institutional asset management and digital assets law, advising across the full lifecycle of digital assets and fintech.

◆ **Covington & Burling**

Making the switch to the Washington DC founded firm from Cooley is competition litigator **Mark Simpson**. Simpson counsels on contentious antitrust matters including investigations, follow-on damages claims and class actions.

◆ **DAC Beachcroft**

Commercial disputes and insolvency lateral **Paul Brehony** makes the move to the national firm from disputes boutique Signature Litigation. Predominately claimant focused, Brehony

specialises in commercial and insolvency related disputes with a sub-niche in finance.

◆ **DLA Piper**

Two finance hires (one lateral and one vertical) for the global firm which welcomes: **Andrew Bechtel** from Simpson Thacher; and **Rob McClean** from Cadwalader, Wickersham & Taft, where he was a special counsel. Bechtel advises on leveraged and acquisition financings, as well as structured credit solutions and subordinated debt/equity investments. McClean counsels lenders on all aspects of fund finance including subscription lines, NAV, hybrid, and GP facilities.

◆ **Dorsey & Whitney**

Corporate private equity specialist **Mark Churchman** defects to the Minneapolis founded outfit from Shoosmiths which he joined from Trowers as a lateral [eighteen months ago](#). Churchman, who has an angle in the TMT sector, advises on M&A joint ventures and shareholders' arrangements across all stages of company development.

◆ **Duane Morris**

The US firm swipes corporate specialist **Simon Gamblin** from Clyde & Co. Gamblin advises on public and private M&A, joint ventures, restructurings and financings in the life sciences, healthcare, technology, education, media and renewables sectors.

◆ **DWF**

The private equity owned firm welcomes two new faces (one lateral and one vertical): professional indemnity specialist **Jemma Brimblecombe** from Kingsley Napley; and commercial litigator **Chris Spelman** from Slaughter and May, where he was an associate. Brimblecombe advises insurers and individuals – including lawyers, accountants, insurance brokers and IPs - on professional negligence claims. Spelman covers financial services

litigation, investigations, class actions, securities and shareholder disputes.

✦ **EIP**

In-house commercial and IP lawyer **Stuart Malcolm** joins the London IP boutique firm from M Squared, where he was senior legal leader. Malcolm advises on commercial contracts, licensing, joint ventures, spin-outs, technology transfer, and the commercialisation of intellectual property.

✦ **Eversheds Sutherland**

Two new faces for the Anglo-American outfit which hires corporate lateral **Chrissy Findlay** from Pinsent Masons and elevates technology and sourcing lawyer **Nichola Donovan** from DLA Piper, where she was a legal director. Findlay advises on M&A, restructurings, and corporate governance with a strong focus on the banking, lending and payments sectors. Donovan advises on technology and digital transformation programmes, outsourcing, regulatory compliance and strategic partnership arrangements.

✦ **Fieldfisher**

Two additions (one lateral and one vertical) for the European firm which adds: energy disputes and international arbitration specialist **Richard Power** from Clyde & Co; and regulatory lawyer **Peter Hood** from King & Spalding, where he was a counsel. Power advises on disputes in the power, renewables and oil and gas sectors, including matters relating to power purchase agreements, grid access, emissions trading schemes, energy transition projects and greenwashing claims. Hood, who joins the regulatory team, covers disputes, public international law, sanctions and business and human rights.

✦ **Finnegan**

The US IP boutique swipes patent litigator and IP disputes lawyer **Jin Ooi** from Kirkland & Ellis. Ooi counsels on patent disputes, with a particular

focus on the life sciences, technology, and consumer products sectors.

✦ **Gibson Dunn**

The Los Angeles headquartered giant nabs private equity real estate specialist **Chris Slack** from Jones Day. Slack advises on M&A, joint ventures and private funds - including fund formation - in the real assets space.

✦ **Gilson Gray**

Corporate lawyer **Peter Millican** defects to the Scottish headquartered firm from Sherrards. Millican advises on a broad range of corporate and commercial matters.

✦ **Gowling WLG**

The Anglo-Canadian outfit swipes direct real estate lawyer **Sunita Chawla** from BCLP. Chawla, who has a particular focus on real estate development, advises investors across a range of schemes including retail, logistics, residential and mixed-use.

✦ **Greenberg Traurig**

Three hires for the global firm which welcomes: a two-partner direct real estate team - comprising lateral **Patrick Williams** and vertical **Freya Dear** from Fried Frank, where Dear was a special counsel; and corporate lateral **Robert Gray** from Baker McKenzie. The real estate duo advise on acquisitions and disposals, joint ventures and property financings, with Williams focused on investment strategies across sectors including build-to-rent and life sciences, and Dear having an angle on lettings, re-gears and structured investments. Gray counsels on M&A, joint ventures and carve-outs, with a focus on the industrial and agribusiness sectors and transactions involving the CEE and the Nordics.

✦ **Gresham Legal**

The London disputes boutique welcomes dual English and Russian qualified international arbitration specialist **Egishe Dzhazoyan** from King

& Spalding. Dzhazoyan has a particular niche acting against states in the CIS region in investment treaty cases.

◆ **Haynes Boone**

A trio of laterals for the Texan-headquartered outfit which bags: funds finance veteran **Jeremy Cross** from Addleshaw Goddard; international arbitration specialist **Philipp Kurek** from disputes boutique Signature; and tax lawyer **Alexandra Ueno-Park** from VWV. Cross counsels on loan finance, with a particular focus on funds, including subscription facilities, NAV financing, asset-backed structures, and financing lines for GPs and management companies. Kurek, who joins the firm's energy litigation practice, covers investment treaty and commercial arbitration in the energy and extractive industry sectors. Ueno-Park, who will lead the London tax offering at her new firm, advises on a broad range of direct and indirect corporate tax.

◆ **Herbert Smith Freehills Kramer**

The newly merged transatlantic firm hires competition litigator **Helen Fairhead** from Norton Rose Fulbright. Fairhead's practice covers contentious competition matters, with a particular focus on damages claims.

◆ **HFW**

Aviation finance specialist **Oliver Tebbit** decamps to the international trade firm from Watson Farley & Williams. Tebbit advises financiers, owners and operators on financings, leasing, regulatory and sale matters, as well as enforcement scenarios, with a particular focus on the corporate jet and helicopter markets.

◆ **Howard Kennedy**

Corporate lawyer **Caroline Urban** makes the switch to the London firm from MBM Commercial. Urban counsels on M&A, investment and buy-and-build strategies, with an angle in the technology sector.

◆ **Joseph Hage Aaronson & Bremen**

Double Tap! Following its dramatic three-partner raid on Quinn Emanuel in [March 2025](#), the elite disputes boutique returns to the US firm to swipe another contentious construction lateral in the form of **Elizabeth Wilson**. Wilson focuses on energy and construction disputes, particularly in the oil and gas, power, infrastructure, mining, IT and defence sectors.

◆ **K&L Gates**

A brace of laterals for the US firm which welcomes privacy and data specialist **Sarah Pearce** from Hunton Andrews Kurth; and aviation finance lawyer **Andrew Harper** from Reed Smith. Pearce advises on privacy and data protection compliance issues, focusing on regulatory compliance, incident response, and AI. Harper specialises in aircraft finance and leasing transactions, advising lenders, lessors and airlines on financings and acquisitions.

◆ **Katten**

The Chicago headquartered firm hires Crowell & Moring finance duo **Jennifer Kafcas** and **Alvino van Schalkwyk** to launch its London structured products and derivatives practice. Led by Kafcas, the pair specialise in the structuring of derivatives products including interest rate, foreign exchange, commodities and power hedging.

◆ **Kennedys**

Arriving at the insurance flavoured outfit are three new faces: aviation disputes specialist **Rob Ireland** from Clyde & Co; corporate lateral **Lowri Jones** from Cripps; and corporate crime specialist **Will White** from DLA Piper, where he was a legal director. Ireland, who is rejoining the firm after ten years, handles aviation related liability issues including claims relating to baggage, cargo, hull, personal injury issues and major catastrophes. Jones advises on corporate M&A, particularly in the insurance and financial services sectors. White counsels on contentious and compliance-

related matters, with a particular focus on regulatory and white-collar crime investigations.

◆ **King & Spalding**

Born again! Eight laterals for the Atlanta spawned outfit which welcomes: a leading six-partner international arbitration team from WilmerHale - led by international arbitration and public law savant **Gary Born** – alongside **Franz Schwarz**, who joins as head of civil law; **Steve Finizio**, **Charlie Caher**, **Jonathan Lim** and **Marleen Krueger**; as well as corporate real estate specialist **Raymond (Ray) Fang** from Goodwin; and antitrust lawyer **Jade-Alexandra Fearn**s from Paul Hastings. The arbitration sextet, who join alongside at least two US based arbitration laterals, advise on a mixture of international commercial disputes and public international law, with a general focus on financial services, energy, extractive industries, construction and insurance disputes. Fang covers the full spectrum of real estate private equity deals, including structured M&A, joint ventures, general partner (GP) stake investments and secondaries. Fearn's counsels on competition law and other regulatory matters, including foreign investment reviews and international sanctions, across an eclectic range of sectors.

◆ **Kirkland & Ellis**

Two hires for the world's highest-grossing firm: competition lawyer **Henry Mostyn** decamps from Cleary Gottlieb as part of a four-partner antitrust team move; and patent litigator and life sciences barrister **Tim Austen** arrives from specialist IP set Three New Square. Mostyn, who moves with three counterparts – including the co-head of its marquee EMEA competition practice in Brussels – focuses on merger control, anticompetitive agreements and abuse of dominance under UK and EU competition law. Austen specialises in patent, trademark and copyright litigation, with a particular focus on the life sciences sector.

◆ **Latham & Watkins**

Four laterals for the global leviathan which welcomes: a three-partner tech-focused M&A and private equity team from fellow West Coast firm Morrison Foerster comprising **Andrew Boyd**, who was London managing partner at his former firm, alongside laterals **Gary Brown** and **Luke Rowland** (with Boyd and Brown both Latham alumni); and commercial technology lawyer **Richard Offord** from Travers Smith. The Morrison Foerster team advise on M&A, joint ventures and reorganisations, with a particular focus on the technology, AI, fintech, semiconductor, media and digital sectors. Offord's practice covers data and technology transactions, advising on the commercial, IP and technology aspects of M&A and private equity deals.

◆ **McDermott Will & Schulte**

A brace of laterals for the Chicago headquartered firm which adds: corporate energy lawyer **Lewis McDonald** from Herbert Smith Freehills Kramer, where he was co-head of global energy; and commercial litigation specialist **Jessica Lee** from Brown Rudnick. McDonald advises on M&A, joint ventures and project developments across the oil and gas, power and renewables sectors. Lee counsels on disputes involving civil fraud, asset recovery and shareholders, with a specialism in crypto and blockchain.

◆ **Mishcon de Reya**

Four new faces for the London firm, including a data-flavoured trifecta for its innovation team: media, sports and data specialist **Richard McMorris** from Bird & Bird; dual-qualified (England & Hong Kong) TMT and privacy lateral **Paolo Sbuttoni** from Foot Anstey; and tech and data vertical **Aselle Ibraimova** from Reed Smith, where she was a counsel; alongside employment lawyer **Anna Byford** from Deloitte Legal, where she was a director. McMorris advises on the use, licensing and monetisation of data and content, including AI, tokenisation, digital identity and trust services. Sbuttoni and Ibraimova counsel on

data protection and cybersecurity compliance, AI and other emerging technologies, as well as technology transactions. Byford, who will lead the firm's "employment innovate" team, advises on both contentious and non-contentious employment matters.

✦ **Morgan Lewis**

Three hires for the Philadelphia spawned outfit which adds: corporate laterals **Phil Cheveley** from Covington & Burling and **Gemma Roberts** from Goodwin where she was co-chair of the London office; and corporate crime and investigations lawyer **Paul Feldberg** from Brown Rudnick. Cheveley, who joins as European head of M&A, advises on public company M&A and equity issues; his arrival marks his fourth lateral move in five years - having left Travers Smith for Shearman & Sterling [in 2021](#), Shearman & Sterling for Sidley Austin [in 2023](#), and Sidley Austin for Covington & Burling [in 2024](#). Roberts, who joins as head of European private equity, specialises in leveraged buyouts, M&A and joint ventures for private equity sponsors. Feldberg, who will lead the UK investigations and sanctions team, advises on corporate crime, sanctions and export controls.

✦ **Morrison Foerster**

Three in, three out. A trio of hires (two laterals and one vertical) for the West Coast firm's technology transactions practice, which adds: technology duo **Mike Pierides** and **Oliver Bell** from Morgan Lewis, where the latter was a senior associate; and corporate M&A lawyer **Will Holder** from Baker McKenzie. Pierides and Bell both advise on data privacy and technology-driven transactions, with Pierides focusing on cybersecurity, strategic restructurings and mandates involving emerging areas such as "GPU-as-a-service", while Bell has a particular emphasis on IT outsourcing. Holder counsels on M&A, leveraged buyouts, joint ventures and strategic investments, with an angle in the technology, media, consumer and sports sectors.

The arrivals offset the loss of a three-partner tech-focused corporate team - including the London managing partner - to Latham & Watkins (see above).

✦ **Norton Rose Fulbright**

A brace of laterals for the global verein which bags: insurance disputes specialist **Mandip Singh Sagoo** from Clyde & Co; and structured finance lawyer **Victoria Morton** from Paul Hastings. Sagoo advises insurers on multi-jurisdictional notifications and claims, in financial lines, D&O and W&I, with a particular niche in coverage matters arising from civil and criminal disputes and regulatory investigations. Morton focuses on securitisation and asset-backed financings, including private warehouse financings, forward flow arrangements, loan portfolio sales and public securitisations.

✦ **Orrick**

Arriving at the West Coast firm is finance lawyer **Polly O'Brien** from recently merged McDermott Will & Schulte. O'Brien, who was a partner at legacy Schulte Roth & Zabel, predominately advises sponsors on fund finance, specialty finance and litigation finance.

✦ **Osborne Clarke**

Two hires (one lateral and one vertical) for the Bristol headquartered outfit which hires: corporate lawyer **Justin Edgar** from DWF; and corporate real estate specialist **Philippa Rigby** from Pinsent Masons, where she was a senior associate. Edgar specialises in M&A, private equity and joint ventures, with a specific sector focus on TMT and financial services. Rigby advises on joint ventures, acquisition and disposal of SPVs, opco/propcos and JPUTs.

✦ **Payne Hicks Beach**

The Lincoln's Inn firm welcomes private client lawyer **Flora Hussey** from New Quadrant Partners. Hussey specialises in UK tax, wealth

management and succession planning for high-net-worth individuals and family offices.

✦ **Paul Hastings**

Five new faces - three laterals and two verticals - for the West Coast firm, which welcomes finance lawyer **Leon Stephenson** from Reed Smith, where he was head of fund finance and, after losing its entire London real estate offering last year, a four-partner corporate real estate team from Covington & Burling comprising: laterals **Lyndsey Laverack** and **Jade Williams-Adedeji**, alongside **Jack Mayall** and **José Maria Rodrigues**, both of whom were special counsel at their former firm. Stephenson counsels on all aspects of fund finance, including NAV, hybrid, secondary funds, capital call and GP facilities. Led by Laverack and Williams-Adedeji, the Covington quartet - which moved together as a team from Sidley Austin in 2024 - advise on M&A and private equity transactions involving real estate and infrastructure, including direct and indirect asset acquisitions and disposals.

✦ **Pillsbury**

Now you see me! Private client specialist **Matthew Sperry** decamps to the fellow New Yorker from Cadwalader ahead of its imminent tie-up with Hogan Lovells; his move follows a brief 10- month stint at Cadwalader which [he joined from Katten in September last year](#). Sperry advises family offices, high-net-worth individuals and trustees on international tax, trust, and estate planning.

✦ **Pinsent Masons**

The international firm elevates structured finance lawyer **Thomas Shen** from Simmons & Simmons, where he was a managing associate. Shen advises on capital markets, structured products and derivatives transactions, including structured notes, exchange trade products, OTC derivatives, repos, securities lending and hedging solutions.

✦ **Proskauer Rose**

Structured finance lateral **Konstantinos (Kos) Vavelidis** defects to the New York headquartered firm from DLA Piper. Vavelidis specialises in CLO transactions, as well as structured finance, derivatives, securitisation and asset-backed lending.

✦ **RPC**

The insurance flavoured outfit reinforces its specialist niche with the addition of insurance disputes lateral **Tom Mungovan** from DWF. Mungovan covers policy coverage disputes, with a focus on financial institutions, directors & officers, commercial crime, and professional negligence matters.

✦ **Sheppard Mullin**

Following its low-key City launch in 2011, the Los Angeles-headquartered c.50 Am Law ranked firm hires just its second ever London lateral in the form of Simmons & Simmons corporate lawyer **Gideon Sharp**, who becomes its new London managing partner. Sharp, who was co-head of international private equity at his former firm, advises on private equity M&A, joint ventures, consortium arrangements and auctions; the firm's commentary suggests that his arrival is a precursor to a broader London build-out.

✦ **Shoosmiths**

Two real estate focused hires for the national firm which welcomes: **Sarah Fitzpatrick** from Norton Rose Fulbright, where she was head of planning and who joins her new firm in the same capacity; and commercial property lateral **Andrew Miles** from US firm Steptoe. Fitzpatrick, who is an employed barrister, advises on the planning aspects of development, compulsory purchase, infrastructure and large-scale multi-use schemes. Miles covers real estate investment, development and landlord & tenant - his arrival completes a rolling raid on Steptoe which has seen Shoosmiths swipe three direct real estate

partners (two laterals and one vertical) from the US firm since December last year.

✦ **Signature**

Commercial litigator **Catherine Naylor** joins the disputes boutique from Gowling WLG. Naylor counsels on civil fraud disputes, asset tracing, offshore trusts and insolvency litigation, with a particular focus on matters in Brazil, the US and the Caribbean.

✦ **Simmons & Simmons**

Funds finance lateral **Chu Ting Ng** defects to the UK-based international firm from Reed Smith. Ting Ng, who is predominately lender-side, advises on a spectrum of funds finance products, including subscription line, NAV and hybrid facilities, as well as continuation vehicle and GP and co-investor financings.

✦ **Stephenson Harwood**

A quartet of arrivals (three laterals and one vertical) for the international firm which welcomes: patent litigator **Paul Inman** from Gowling WLG; energy/ energy disputes specialist **Charles Lockwood** from K&L Gates; construction disputes lawyer **Sean Hardy** from Clyde & Co's Singapore office; and insolvency disputes lawyer **Jamie Tilling** from Charles Russell Speechlys, where he was senior associate. Inman, whose background is in molecular biology and biochemistry, specialises in life sciences disputes including pharmaceutical and biotech patent infringement and revocation actions. Lockwood focuses on energy disputes and related engineering and construction matters across the upstream and midstream oil & gas and renewables sectors. Hardy covers infrastructure, energy and construction disputes, with a focus on Asia-based clients. Tilling counsels a range of market participants on insolvency disputes, with a particular angle on those involving fraud and asset recovery.

✦ **Steptoe**

International arbitration lateral **Loukas Mistelis** defects to the Washington DC headquartered firm from Clyde & Co. Mistelis advises on international arbitration and investment treaty matters in the energy, infrastructure, finance, aviation, construction, defence, mining, and natural resources sectors.

✦ **Stewarts**

The London disputes boutique elevates insurance and reinsurance litigator **Alexandra Lyons** from DLA Piper, where she was a legal director. Lyons, who will exclusively advise policyholders at her new firm, advises on coverage claims in the construction, energy, property and aviation sectors.

✦ **TLT**

In a vertical move, the Bristol headquartered outfit elevates real estate lawyer **Fosia Solomou** from Dentons, where she was a senior associate. Solomou advises on commercial property transactions including: acquisitions and disposals, development and joint ventures.

✦ **Vinson & Elkins**

Corporate energy and infrastructure lawyer **Michael Burns** makes the switch to the Houston headquartered firm from Ashurst, where he led the firm's EMEA energy and infrastructure M&A offering. Burns covers energy and infrastructure M&A, capital raises and joint ventures across the energy and infrastructure space, with strong coverage of traditional oil & gas alongside energy transition and digital infrastructure assets.

✦ **Weil**

The New York firm bags a brace of finance laterals this edition: **James Crooks** from Sidley Austin; and **Fiona Cumming** from A&O Shearman, where the latter was private sector lead and Global Co-Head of the firm's fund finance practice. Crooks counsels on leveraged financings, public takeover financings, asset backed financings and stressed

and distressed situations across a broad range of industry sectors. Cumming advises across the full spectrum of fund finance, including subscription line, GP and management company financings, and derivative financing solutions.

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

✦ **White & Case**

A trio of hires (two laterals and one vertical) for the New York firm which adds: energy and infrastructure specialist **Nick Rainsford** from Baker McKenzie; energy regulatory lawyer **Simon Stuttaford** from the Edinburgh office of Scottish firm Castletown Law; and funds finance vertical **Shao-Ling Angoh** from Linklaters, where she was a managing associate. Rainsford counsels infrastructure funds, pension funds, and corporates on infrastructure and energy M&A deals across the EMEA. Stuttaford, who is a nuclear sector specialist, advises on contracting structures and related corporate and regulatory matters. Angoh focuses on fund finance, corporate lending and margin lending, advising on a range of fund lending products including capital call and NAV facilities.

✦ **Willkie**

In a vertical hire, the New York outfit elevates restructuring lawyer **Nikita Kumar** from Simpson Thacher, where she was a counsel. Kumar advises on stressed and distressed situations, with a particular niche advising funds on private credit restructurings.

✦ **Winckworth Sherwood**

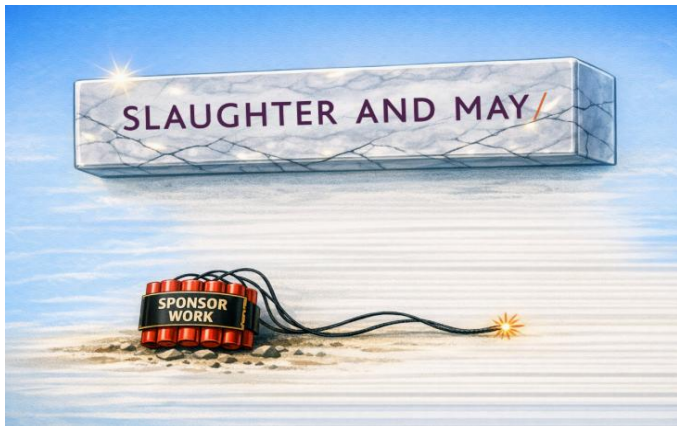
Arriving at the national firm is a two-partner insolvency team from JMW Solicitors comprising **Lee Ranford**, who joins as head of restructuring, and **David Fendt**. The duo counsel on matters involving personal and corporate insolvency, bankruptcy, administration and liquidation.



Uno Reverse - Kirkland vs Paul Weiss



Year End Big Law Tie Ups – and the standout is Hogan Lovells Cadwalader



The maybe (not-so) inviolate Slaughter and May



Two Big Law Summer Weddings ... and an Anniversary



What's behind the escalating three-year bull run in Big Law Partner Hires in London and is it sustainable?



"To: Cc or not Cc" – Clifford Chance's subversive new branding



Big Law Jenga: How Private Capital Stars Are Marking Elite Firms Unstable



No Accounting for the Big Four in Big Law



Freshfields' Non-Share Home Turf Handicap



Big Law's Brave "Few"



Paul Weiss – The Invasive Species!



"Memery Loss" London Law Firm Memery Crystal Sinks



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



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



◆ Paul Weiss – Blackjack!



◆ Parallels in Peril



◆ Beware the £1,000 fish, and the true meaning of MIPIM



◆ Breaking The Circle – Freshfields Pay Bonanza



✔ [Paul Weiss - Happy Birthday to BigLaw's Apex Predator](#)



✔ [The Pecking Order at MIPIM](#)



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