

Law Firm Partner Moves in London



May – June
2025 Issue No. 87

Welcome to the 87th 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 2025

This edition marks the midpoint of 2025 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 2025 with that over the same period of the past five years.

The first half of 2025 has seen a continuation and seemingly dramatic acceleration of [last year’s record year for partner hires](#). There were a total of **349** announced partner moves, up on the 268 we saw last year, and **25%** higher than the rolling five-year average for the same period (279).



The most prolific hirer in the first half of 2025 was **Fladgate** which, aided in large part by the collapse of London firm Memery Crystal, welcomed **12** partners (all of whom were laterals), succeeded by **Kirkland & Ellis** and **White & Case** which both hired **10** each, then **Edwin Coe** and **Paul Weiss** with **7** partners apiece.

Lastly, ten firms hired a half-dozen partners each since January: **Akin Gump**, **Baker McKenzie**, **Clifford Chance**, **DWF**, **Gibson Dunn & Crutcher**, **Greenberg Traurig**, **Jones Day**, **Osborne Clarke**, **Shoosmiths** and **Simmons & Simmons**.

✓ **Top partner recruiters in London 2025 (inclusive of hires from non-partnership)***

Fladgate	12	(12 laterals)
Kirkland & Ellis	10	(3 laterals)
White & Case	10	(5 laterals)
Edwin Coe	7	(7 laterals)
Paul Weiss	7	(5 laterals)
Akin Gump	6	(5 laterals)
Baker McKenzie	6	(6 laterals)
Clifford Chance	6	(3 laterals)
DWF	6	(6 laterals)
Gibson Dunn & Crutcher	6	(6 laterals)
Greenberg Traurig	6	(4 laterals)
Jones Day	6	(5 laterals)
Osborne Clarke	6	(6 laterals)
Shoosmiths	6	(5 laterals)
Simmons & Simmons	6	(5 laterals)

* To 30th June 2025.

Unsurprisingly, over the same period, the now defunct **Memery Crystal** suffered the highest attrition, losing **18** serving partners to rivals followed by: the recently merged **A&O Shearman (16**)**; insurance flavoured **Kennedys (10)**; and **White & Case (9)**.

✓ **Firms with largest attrition in London 2025 (partnership to partnership moves only)***

Memery Crystal	18
A&O Shearman	16**
Kennedys	10
White & Case	9
Paul Hastings	7
Akin	6
BCLP	5
DLA Piper	5
Kirkland & Ellis	5
Mayer Brown	5
Orrick	5
Stephenson Harwood	5

* To 30th June 2025.

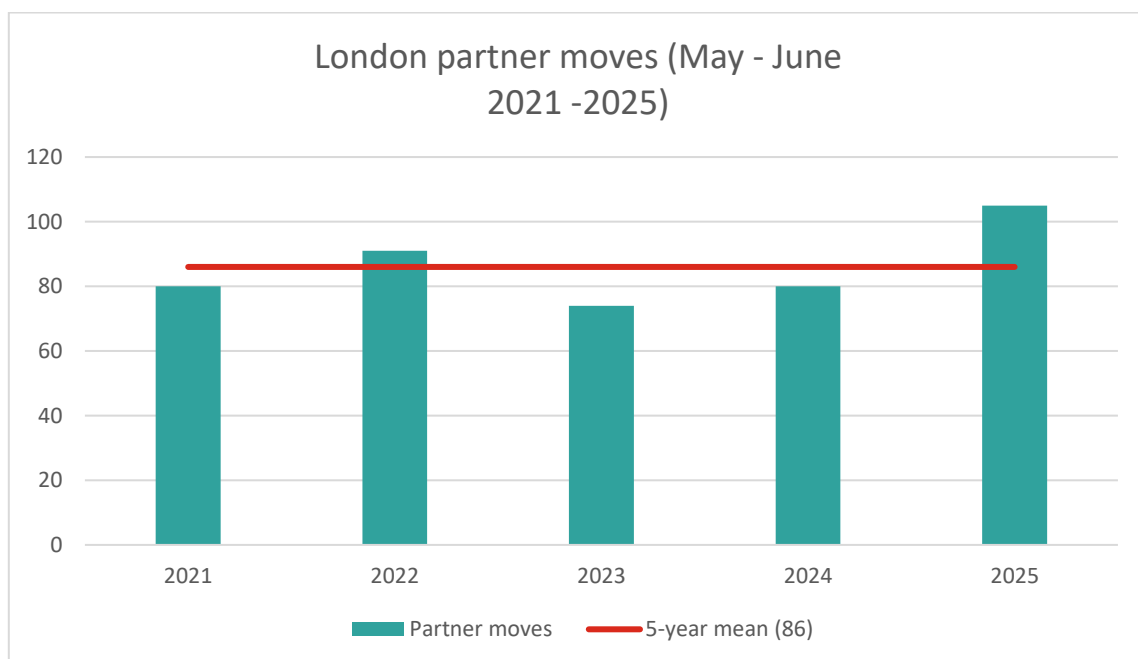
** Includes a lateral departure who moved from A&O Shearman's Singapore office to Hogan Lovells in London.

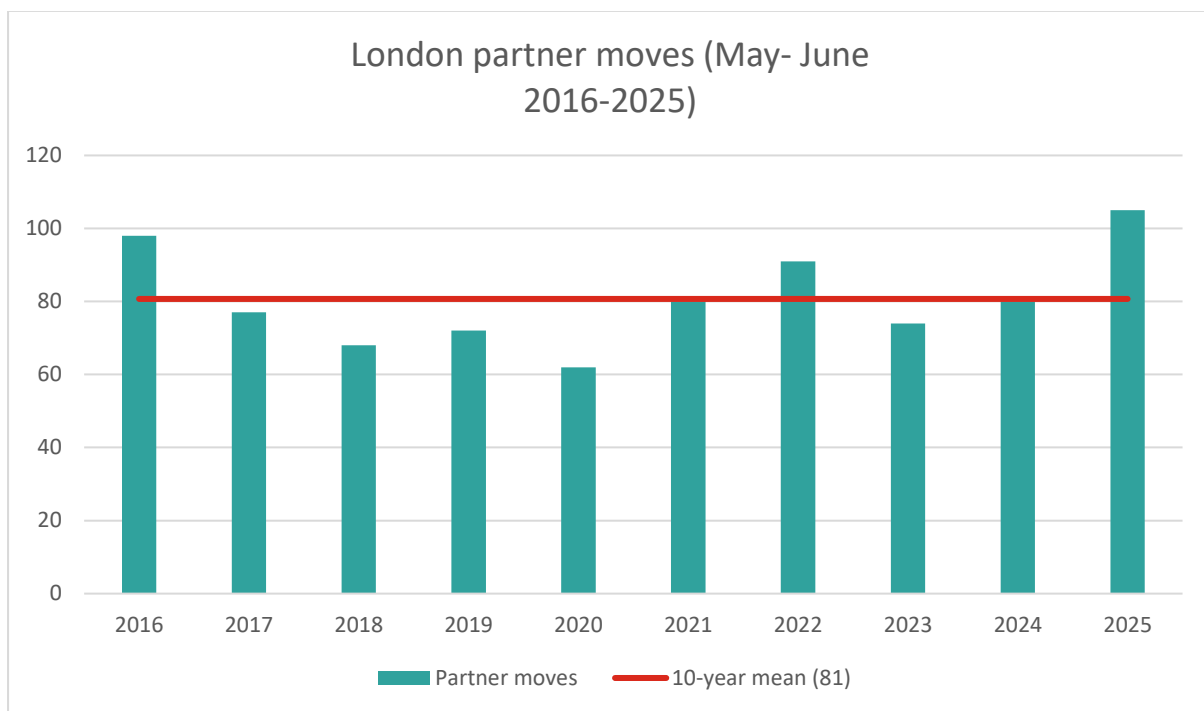
Other Fun Facts from the First Half of 2025

- **31%** of all moves so far in 2025 were female (**108**).
- **3%** of all moves (**10**) were in-house lawyers moving into law firm partnerships.
- **19%** of all moves (**67**) were vertical hires (non-partners elevated to partnership upon moving from another law firm).

May – June 2025

This bi-monthly round-up contains **105** partner moves, which is **31%** up on the **80** we saw for the same period last year; **22%** up on the cumulative five-year average (**86**); and **30%** up on the cumulative ten-year average of (**81**) for the same period.





The most covetous firms this edition were **Addleshaw Goddard**, **Baker McKenzie**, **Pinsent Masons** and **White & Case** which hired **4** partners each. Next up was **BCLP**, **Dechert**, **Greenberg Traurig**, **Jones Day** and **Osborne Clarke** which hired **3** partners apiece.

📌 **Top partner recruiters in London May – June 2025**

Addleshaw Goddard	4	(3 laterals)
Baker McKenzie	4	(4 laterals)
Pinsent Masons	4	(4 laterals)
White & Case	4	(2 laterals)
BCLP	3	(3 laterals)
Dechert	3	(2 laterals)
Greenberg Traurig	3	(1 laterals)
Jones Day	3	(3 laterals)
Osborne Clarke	3	(3 laterals)

In addition, **11** firms hired 2 partners each: **Akin**, **Ashurst**, **Baker Botts**, **Broadfield** (formerly BDB Pitmans), **Gibson Dunn & Crutcher**, **Kirkland & Ellis**, **Linklaters**, **Morrison & Foerster**, **Paul Weiss**, **Squire Patton Boggs** and **Taylor Wessing**.

On the other side of the coin, over the same period, **A&O Shearman** recorded the highest attrition, losing **8** serving partners (including a lateral move from its Singapore office to Hogan Lovells in London).

✦ **Firms with largest attrition in May – June 2025 (partnership to partnership moves only)**

A&O Shearman	8*
Deloitte Legal	4
Herbert Smith Freehills Kramer	3
Howard Kennedy	3
Kennedys	3
Kirkland & Ellis	3
Orrick	3
Paul Hastings	3

* Includes a lateral departure who moved from A&O Shearman's Singapore office to Hogan Lovells in London.



✦ **Team hires May – June 2025**

The most sizeable multi-partner team moves this edition were: **Pinsent Masons'** hire of a three-partner IP team from Deloitte Legal; and **White & Case's** acquisition of a three-partner (one lateral and two verticals) private equity team from Ropes & Gray. All three of the Deloitte Legal émigrés are former **Kemp Little** partners and they are the latest in a long line of departures from the Big Four accounting firm of Kemp Little alumni following Deloitte's seemingly disastrous acquisition of the 27 partner TMT boutique in 2021.

Finally, **6** firms hired two partner teams: **Baker Botts** (capital markets from Dechert); **Broadfield** (private equity from Trowers & Hamlin); **Dechert** (structured finance/CLOs from Orrick); **Jones Day** (product liability litigation from Kennedys); **Morrison & Foerster** (private equity from Herbert Smith Freehills Kramer); **Paul Weiss** (TMT and restructuring from A&O Shearman).

✦ **US firm launches in (North) London**

This edition sees the launch of Los Angeles headquartered full-service law firm **Michelman & Robinson** (M&R). The firm, which falls outside of the AmLaw 200, is a comparative minnow by Big Law standards. Nevertheless, despite having fewer than 40 partners, it boasts 7 Stateside offices. Unusually for a US firm, it has opened its London outpost in leafy North London.

✦ **The “Kirklandisation” of Big Law; yet more of US Big Law’s holdouts drop all equity partnerships**

A Stateside phenomenon, which has begun to impact the UK recruitment market over the last few years, has been the (initially clandestine and selective) abandonment by uber conservative US law firms of their once sacrosanct all equity partnership models. Over the past eighteen months the trend has accelerated with elite New York firms, such as **Cleary Gottlieb, Cravath**, and **Paul Weiss** overtly adopting a non-share tier of partnership. In the past two months, some of the final holdouts, such as **Debevoise & Plimpton**, have seemingly bowed to the inevitable and have either announced plans to adopt a non-share class of partnership, or are actively considering it.

The changes are an offensive/defensive play forced on the US elite as a direct result of an increasingly widespread recruitment tactic, first used to phenomenal success by that arch-disrupter **Kirkland & Ellis** in its more than decade-long rapid expansion.

Whilst all-equity partnerships convey many advantages to elite law firms, in a world where most competitors have converted to two-tier partnerships, they are structurally inflexible and, due to the high bar to entry, make rapid partner expansion problematic and prohibitively expensive; particularly when hiring teams. By contrast having a non-share partnership cadre enables a firm to dangle the carrot of day-one partnership to talented senior associates from rivals at limited cost. It can also help (partially) inoculate a law firm against losing its best senior non-partners by giving those lawyers the partnership badge without overly diluting profits per equity partner. Indeed, the savings made have enabled law firms to stretch their equity spread to hire (and retain) increasingly expensive full equity laterals; this phenomenon is in no small part behind the rise of the \$20 million p/a lateral.

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✦ **Freshfields’ non-share home turf handicap**

With virtually every elite US law firm now converting to a two-tier partnership structure, it has been widely reported that **Freshfields**, the most successful of the UK founded law firms Stateside, is actively considering following suit. Indeed, in order to remain competitive in the US recruitment market, this is now likely inevitable.

Unhappily for Freshfields, the obscure workings of UK tax law—specifically the [Salaried Member Rules](#), actively disadvantage UK-structured LLPs (limited liability partnerships) compared to US LLPs. The Salaried Member Rules are there, in broad terms, to treat ‘fixed share’ partners as employees and tax them as such, which is a higher tax burden than for true ‘equity’ partners. This means that if Freshfields introduces a non-equity tier to its partnership, it will face higher like-for-like costs and an increased administrative burden in its home market compared to several of its US rivals in London. This would be the case even if Freshfields were to hire the same lawyer on exactly the same headline compensation. This paradoxical “home turf disadvantage”, which applies to all UK LLPs* arises because the Salaried Member Rules do not apply to foreign LLPs (which include US law firm LLPs).

Unfortunately, for UK law firms, the Salaried Member Rules mean that UK law firms are required to pay an additional 15% in Employer’s National Insurance Contributions on the compensation of all their non-equity partners (not to mention statutory pensions contributions**) – taxes which many US law firms in the UK avoid simply by virtue of being foreign LLPs.

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Whilst UK taxpayers may feel aggrieved at being denied scores of millions of pounds in revenue from all those foreign LLPs, in practice, the tax take from the UK equivalents is not significant. This is because many UK law firms stay on the right side of the Salaried Member Rules through a series of not-too-expensive, yet painful-to-administer, statutory “workarounds” which create, at least the illusion of, real partnership for their fixed-share partners and so legitimately avoid HMRC (the UK’s revenue service) triggering a finding of “disguised employment”.

These statutory exemptions involve a combination of either: (i) tying a proportion of a given partner’s overall compensation (no less than 20%) to the financial performance of the firm; (ii) (often) funding an individual partner’s capital contributions (their “skin in the game”); and (iii) providing the partner with at least the semblance of influence over the law firm’s business, for example, by granting them limited voting rights.

Fortunately for Freshfields, and its UK peers, the majority of US law firms in London have subsidiaries which are structured as UK LLPs and so are subject to exactly the same Salaried Member Rules as UK law firms. Nevertheless, for those US firms which are not — which less-fortunately for Freshfields includes its most bitter rival — there is an advantage in being exempt from the Salaried Member Rules.

The advantage of foreign LLPs in the UK market extends beyond a mere administrative cost fillip. In today’s fiercely competitive recruitment landscape—where even marginal gains can prove decisive — the ability of a law firm to offer an incoming non-share partner an “all-in” compensation of, say, £500,000 without requiring a capital contribution of at least £100,000 is a significant edge in the war for talent. This is especially pertinent given that recent law firm collapses have shown there is a non-

negligible risk of losing such contributions entirely. That risk is only likely to grow with the exponential rise of law firm “star culture,” [which has rendered elite firms increasingly structurally fragile](#).

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✦ “In UK LLP stepped in so far ...”

So, if being structured as a US LLP in the UK is such an advantage for US law firms in London, why were so many structured as UK LLPs in the first place? And why don’t more US law firms in London convert back to US LLPs? – after all, with the exception of **Jones Day**, they will almost certainly be structured as US LLPs at home.

The answer to the first question is that, for most US law firms, the decision to set up in London as a UK LLP would have been made before the Salaried Member Rules came into force (April 2014), so the rules were not factored in. Indeed, many US firms were initially set up as small outposts staffed by Stateside partners on rotation in London solely to practice US law on European deals. At the time, many US firms likely had zero intention of ever launching an English law practice. As such, had there even been some minor tax or administrative advantage for the US subsidiary to be structured as a UK LLP, it may not have been significant enough to warrant the confusion of an additional legal entity. Regardless, with hindsight, those US firms which remained as US LLPs seemingly got lucky!

The answer to the second question is that any structural or legal entity change made on the basis of reducing tax might trigger targeted anti-avoidance tax rules.

✍ **And it's probably going to get (slightly) worse ...**

Over the past two years, the (often covert) adoption of two-tier partnerships by elite US law firms has started to impact the overall number of partner hires in London. Scores of lawyers have already joined US law firms which, under [their old all-equity structures, simply could not have hired them as day-one partners](#). The seemingly final abandonment of all equity partnerships by virtually the entirety of US Big Law's holdouts is likely to manifest itself in more day-one partner hires at many of these firms in London. Unfortunately for UK LLPs (Freshfields and most US law firms included), it is probable that at least some of these new two-tier partnerships will be structured as US LLPs in London. Them's the breaks!

* Alone amongst UK founded Big Law firms **Slaughter and May** is not structured as an LLP.

** UK employers are legally required to make pension contributions for eligible employees under the automatic enrolment rules established by the Pensions Act 2008.

✍ **Other Fun Facts May – June 2025**

- **33%** of moves this edition were female (**35**).
- Two firms hired from in-house or business: **Dechert** and **Greenberg Traurig** (from GIC and Spheres respectively).
- **17%** of all moves (**18**) 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 2025 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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✦ **A&O Shearman**

Prodigal Son... the magic circle firm re-hires lateral **George Knighton** from Skadden, where he was co-head of the UK corporate practice. Knighton, who covers public and private M&A, private equity transactions and restructurings, was previously a partner at legacy Allen & Overy before decamping to Skadden as part of a [two-partner team hire in 2019](#).

✦ **Addleshaw Goddard**

A quartet of new faces (three laterals and one vertical) for the international firm which welcomes: private funds lawyer **Steven Ward** from Squire Patton Boggs, where he was European head of funds; finance and regulatory disputes lateral **James Southworth** from Eversheds Sutherland in Manchester; aviation finance specialist **Barbara Pansadoro** from HFW; and corporate finance lawyer **Robbie Hay** from Milbank, where he was a senior associate. Ward focuses on the formation, operation and regulation of private investment funds across a range of asset classes including: private equity, real estate, debt, infrastructure, CLOs and hedge. Southworth, who will split his time between the London and Manchester offices, advises on dispute resolution and contentious regulatory and investigation matters, predominantly in the financial services sector. Pansadoro, who is dual English and Italian qualified, and will lead the aviation finance offering at her new firm, covers the full lifecycle of aviation finance, leasing, and restructuring. Hay counsels a broad range of private equity firms, management teams, and other stakeholders on corporate transactions, including control acquisitions, leveraged buyouts, and minority investments.

✦ **Akin**

A brace of laterals for the Texas born firm which bags: disputes lawyer **Jonathan Brierley** from White & Case; and IP and technology transactions specialist **Natasha Ahmed** from Orrick. Brierly primarily advises on international arbitration in the energy, infrastructure and construction space. Ahmed covers IP and commercial contracts with a focus on AI and emerging technologies.

✦ **Ashfords**

The Exeter-headquartered firm hires banking and finance lawyer **Deborah Rowntree** from Bevan Brittan as its new London office head. Rowntree, who also headed up the London office at her previous firm, predominately covers real estate finance and has an angle on healthcare finance.

✦ **Ashurst**

Two joiners (one lateral and one vertical) for the silver circle firm which welcomes: direct real estate specialist **Todd Wu** from Mishcon de Reya, and corporate private equity lawyer **Christy O'Connell** who was counsel at Cleary Gottlieb. Wu covers real estate investment and large-scale development, in the BTR, student accommodation, logistics and energy and infrastructure sectors; his hire is a team follow-on with fellow real estate lawyer **Lee Foxcroft** [reported in our previous edition](#). O'Connell advises private equity sponsors, infrastructure investors and other financial investors on a range of transactions including leveraged buy-outs, investments, joint ventures and reorganisations.

✦ **Baker Botts**

Texas two-step. A two-partner capital markets team comprising laterals **Patrick Lyons** and **Jennifer Rees** defect to the Houston-born firm from Dechert. The duo have an emerging markets focus advising

sovereign and quasi-sovereign issuers, energy companies, financial institutions, life science and healthcare companies on a wide range of capital markets transactions including: IPOs, debt offerings, ESG bonds, rights issues, and privatizations.

✦ **Baker McKenzie**

The global Verein bolsters its London bench with a quartet of laterals in the form of: private funds specialist **Nick Benson** from Latham & Watkins; restructuring lawyer **Kevin Heverin** from A&O Shearman; IP litigation specialist **Indradeep Bhattacharya** from Eversheds Sutherland; and energy and infrastructure lawyer **James Wyatt** from K&L Gates. Benson advises sponsors and investors on the formation and operation of funds across the private capital spectrum, including GP-led and LP-led secondaries, fund sponsor transactions and customised investment mandates. Heverin, who is legacy Allen & Overy, counsels on restructurings, workouts, debt financings, special situations investing and insolvency matters. Bhattacharya covers IP and patent disputes as well as providing transactional support for high-tech business, particularly in the life sciences sector. Wyatt advises on project development, project finance, construction and M&A with a focus on the low-carbon and energy transition space.

✦ **BCLP**

Three hires for the global firm which bags: corporate tax specialist **Simon Letherman** from A&O Shearman; finance lawyer **Lerika Le Grange** from Taylor Wessing; and corporate real estate specialist **Sean Scanlon** from Arnold & Porter. Letherman, who led the tax team at legacy Shearman & Sterling, covers an eclectic mix of tax including M&A, debt finance, capital markets and restructuring. Le Grange, who is dual English and South Africa qualified, advises on

acquisition and corporate finance, asset-based lending, DCM and litigation funding. Scanlon advises on M&A, joint ventures, reorganizations and fundraising with a particular focus on the real estate investment sector.

✦ **Beale & Co**

The construction and insurance flavoured firm welcomes contentious construction lateral **David Nitek** from newly merged Herbert Smith Freehills Kramer (HSF Kramer). Nitek advises contractors, subcontractors and consultants on construction related litigation, arbitration, adjudication and alternative forms of dispute resolution.

✦ **Bird & Bird**

The technology focused outfit welcomes real estate and hotels specialist **Simon Price** from Mayer Brown, where he was head of hospitality. Price advises on real estate investments, joint ventures and global hospitality transactions.

✦ **Broadfield**

The newly rebranded firm, formerly BDB Pitmans, hires corporate duo **Mark Metcalfe** and **Sarah Souter** from Trowers & Hamlin, which they [joined last year from Gateley in Reading](#). The pair, who return to their former firm, having both trained at legacy Pitmans, cover a mix of venture capital and private equity acting for management teams, entrepreneurs and investors.

✦ **Brown Rudnick**

Private-client specialist **Sarah Gogan** arrives at the Boston born firm from Harbottle & Lewis. Gogan, who joins the global litigation and brand & reputation management team at her new firm, advises individuals facing political persecution, international criminal proceedings, extradition and asset seizure; as

well as UK immigration, nationality, asylum, and human rights law.

✦ **Burges Salmon**

Corporate real estate specialist **Jonathan Cantor** joins the Bristol-headquartered outfit from Dentons. Cantor advises on indirect real estate including property joint ventures, real asset funds, and the buying and selling of entities which own real estate assets.

✦ **Cadwalader**

In a vertical hire, the New York firm elevates infrastructure finance lawyer **Rebecca Crowley** from Latham & Watkins, where she was a counsel. Crowley advises sponsors, corporate borrowers, and lenders on a broad range of capital structures, in the energy and infrastructure sectors.

✦ **Charles Russell Speechlys**

Planning specialist **Josh Risso-Gill** makes the switch to the international firm from CMS. Risso-Gill specialises in real estate planning encompassing highway, compulsory purchase and listed building matters.

✦ **Cleary Gottlieb**

Corporate tax lateral **Robert Sharpe** defects to the New York firm from Kirkland & Ellis. Sharpe counsels on the tax aspects of a range of matters – including GP stakes transactions, preferred equity financings, continuation funds, M&A transactions and corporate finance.

✦ **CM Murray**

The employment and partnership boutique adds employment lateral **Emma Sangeelee** from Edwin Coe. Sangeelee, who advises senior executives and employers on contentious and non-contentious employment matters, has a particular expertise in discrimination and whistle-blowing.

✦ **Dechert**

Three hires for the US firm which welcomes: a two-partner structured credit and CLO team comprising laterals **Sushila Nayak** and **James Jirtle**, from Orrick where Nayak, was co-head of structured finance; and private equity specialist **Jarlath Pratt**, who was managing director and assistant general counsel at Singaporean sovereign wealth fund GIC. Nayak and Jirtle cover structured credit and CLOs with Nayak, who is dual New York and English qualified, focusing on cross-border financing transactions including securitisations of esoteric assets and private debt. Jirtle advises arrangers and managers on CLOs and compliance with European securitisation regulations. Pratt will focus on private equity, infrastructure and M&A.

✦ **Dentons**

The global leviathan is joined by finance lateral **Ellis Lawson** from US firm Sullivan & Worcester. Lawson advises on structured trade finance, emerging markets and green lending, with a particular focus on borrowing base, receivables and supply chain finance, acting for banks, private credit providers, DFIs and borrowers.

✦ **DLA Piper**

The global firm welcomes corporate insurance specialist **Charles Rix** from Keystone Law. Rix, who was one-time global head of the insurance industry group at Hogan Lovells, advises on a wide range of matters within the insurance industry, including: M&A, regulatory and business restructurings.

✦ **DMH Stallard**

Corporate specialist **Jeff Elway** joins the South-East firm from Gowling WLG where he was a senior counsel. Elway, who retired from the partnership at Gowling WLG in 2023,

advises on equity capital markets, M&A and equity investments into private companies.

✦ **Druces**

Corporate lawyer **Nigel Gordon** makes the switch from fellow London firm Fladgate. Gordon, who has an angle in natural resources and healthcare, specialises in capital markets (predominantly AIM), and M&A.

✦ **DWF**

The private equity owned outfit welcomes shipping lawyer **Andrew Purssell** from Kennedys; his arrival marks the fifth shipping lateral to join DWF from Kennedys following on from its [four-partner team raid announced in February](#). Purssell covers marine insurance litigation including coverage disputes and recovery actions, charterers' liability claims, reinsurance, commodities, freight liability and international trade disputes.

✦ **Edwin Coe**

The London firm hires litigation lateral **Alex Shirtcliff** from Blake Morgan. Shirtcliff covers civil fraud, asset recovery and judgment enforcement, as well as general commercial disputes.

✦ **Enyo Law**

Litigation lawyer **Brandon O'Neil**, who is dual New York and English qualified, joins the specialist disputes firm from A&O Shearman. O'Neil, who is legacy Allen & Overy, specialises in cross-border disputes with a particular focus on asset recovery, judgment/award enforcement and investigations.

✦ **Fieldfisher**

Real estate finance lateral **Annalie Croney** defects to the European firm from the legal arm of PwC, where she led the London

banking team. Croney a PwC "lifer" has a range of banking and financial restructuring experience with a particular angle on real estate finance.

✦ **Fladgate**

Private client specialist **Emily Osborne** defects to the London firm from Stephenson Harwood. Osborne specialises in international tax and private wealth advisory, providing counsel to high-net-worths, family offices and trustees.

✦ **Forsters**

Private funds lawyer **Noel Ainsworth** arrives at the mid-town firm from Shoosmiths where he was a legal director. Ainsworth, a former Simmons & Simmons and Morgan Lewis partner, has experience of a wide range of private funds but will focus on real estate and real asset funds at his new home.

✦ **Freshfields**

Infrastructure lateral **Alistair ("Ally") McKechnie** arrives at the magic circle firm from Paul Hastings, following on from team members [Jessamy Gallagher and Stuart Rowson who made the move back in February](#). McKechnie advises on infrastructure, energy and transport finance, with a particular angle in cross-border acquisition financings.

✦ **Gibson Dunn**

Double Cameron! The Los Angeles firm welcomes two laterals, in completely different practice areas, with the same surname: asset finance lawyer **James Cameron** from Milbank; and real estate specialist **Hayden Cameron** (presumably no relation) from A&O Shearman. James Cameron, who joins as co-head of transportation and space, advises on financing and leasing transactions involving aircraft, ships, rolling stock and other

movable infrastructure. Hayden Cameron covers investment platforms, JVs and co-investments in the real assets space, along with direct and indirect acquisitions and disposals of real estate assets.

✦ **Gilson Gray**

The recently launched London office of the Scottish firm snatches **Rajan Shori** from Hugh James as its new English law head of real estate. Shori advises on a mix of commercial real estate and real estate finance matters, with a focus on the latter.

✦ **Greenberg Traurig**

A trio of new faces for the top 20 global firm in the form of: new head of employment, **Virginia Allen** from EY Law, where she was also head of employment; corporate private equity lawyer **Chris Buck** from investment firm Spheres, where he was general counsel; and corporate private equity vertical **Tom Rodzoch** from Weil, where he was a counsel. Allen advises on all aspects of contentious and non-contentious employment including cross-border transaction support, advisory, global employment structures, High Court disputes, whistleblowing, discrimination and global investigations. Buck, who returns to private practice after two years, will advise sponsors, investors and portfolio companies on a range of corporate matters including leveraged buyouts, M&A and joint ventures. Rodzoch counsels private equity funds and corporates on M&A, capital markets, restructurings and general corporate and commercial matters.

✦ **Hausfeld**

Competition litigator **Belinda Hollway** makes the switch from fellow US disputes boutique Scott + Scott, where she was co-head of the London office. Hollway specialises in contentious competition law across a range

of industries, with a particular focus on cartel investigations and damages litigation.

✦ **Herbert Smith Freehills Kramer (HSF Kramer)**

The newly merged Anglo-American outfit hires its first London lateral under its new badge welcoming property litigation lawyer **Alison Hardy** from Ashurst. Hardy who was head of real estate disputes at Ashurst and joins her new firm in the same capacity, covers all aspects of property litigation including development disputes, property insolvency and JV disputes.

✦ **Jones Day**

Three lateral additions for the Ohio-born firm as it welcomes: corporate M&A specialist **Piero Carbone** from DLA Piper; and product liability duo **Samantha Silver** and **Nathalie Smyth** from Kennedys. Carbone advises on a range of transactions including: leveraged buyouts, and reorganizations. Silver and Smyth counsel on product liability disputes, with a particular focus on the pharma/ life sciences, medical devices and consumer products sectors.

✦ **K&L Gates**

In a vertical hire, real estate finance specialist **Gareth McCarter** arrives at the US firm from Taylor Wessing, where he was a senior counsel. McCarter covers the financing of operational real estate assets (such as hotels, senior living and student accommodation), senior and mezzanine structures, and preferred equity lending.

✦ **King & Spalding**

The Atlanta spawned outfit elevates finance lawyer **Dan Marcus** from Latham & Watkins, where he was a counsel. Marcus advises on transactions across a wide array of structures and asset classes, with a particular focus on the intersection between securitisation and fund financing.

✦ **Kirkland & Ellis**

A brace of laterals for the Chicago headquartered outfit which bags: Luxembourg qualified private funds lawyer **Thibaut Partsch** from Elvinger Hoss Prussen in Luxembourg; and debt finance specialist **Sindhoo Vinod Sabharwal** from Paul Hastings. Partsch specialises in the structuring and operation of private equity, credit, infrastructure and real asset funds together with their regulation. Sabharwal advises corporates and PE sponsors on leveraged buyouts as well as corporate and investment grade financings and restructurings.

✦ **Lewis Silkin**

TMT lawyer **Rupam Davé** makes the switch to the London firm, from Harbottle & Lewis. Davé advises a range of market participants – including tech businesses, media platforms, independent studios and video games developers, on commercial technology, data protection, consumer law, licensing and digital advertising.

✦ **Linklaters**

The magic circle firm bags a brace of finance laterals: **Peter Hayes** from Paul Hastings; and **Angel Quek** from Latham & Watkins. US qualified Hayes focuses his practice on debt finance, in particular acquisition and leveraged finance together with related restructuring matters. Quek represents private equity sponsors, portfolio companies, borrowers, and other financial institutions on a broad range of financial transactions, with a particular angle on acquisition and leveraged finance.

✦ **Mayer Brown**

Capital markets specialist **Kevin Ng** joins the Chicago headquartered firm from White & Case. Ng focuses on advising corporate trustees and agents on international bond

issues, working closely with leading European high yield specialists.

✦ **McDermott Will & Emery**

Anti-trust specialist **Omar Shah** decamps to the Chicago headquartered firm from Morgan Lewis. Shah advises on merger control and FDI matters as well as cartel and antitrust investigations and competition litigation.

✦ **Michelman & Robinson (“M&R”)**

Hello (North) London! The Los Angeles headquartered full-service firm makes its London debut in Hamstead Heath with the hire of litigation lawyer **Daniel Burbeary**, most recently at London disputes boutique Cooke Young and Keidan. Burbeary, who left the partnership at Cooke Young and Keidan in October 2022, advises on commercial litigation with a focus on fraud, asset recovery, and cross-border enforcement.

✦ **Michelmores**

The Exeter-headquartered outfit adds real estate lateral **Matthew White** from Birketts. White has experience in all aspects of commercial property law, with a particular focus on commercial leases.

✦ **Milberg London**

Competition litigator **Zena Prodromou** arrives from the Brussels office of fellow disputes boutique Quinn Emanuel, where she was an of counsel. Prodromou covers both anti-trust litigation and international commercial disputes.

✦ **Mills & Reeve**

The Cambridge spawned national firm welcomes insurance disputes lawyer **Alice Wilson** from Weightmans. Wilson specialises in property and business interruption claims.

✦ **Mishcon de Reya**

Planning specialist **Ian Ginbey** arrives at the London firm from Clyde & Co. Ginbey, who joins the real estate team, covers both contentious and non-contentious planning matters, including compulsory purchase, judicial review, enforcement, and environmental impact assessment.

✦ **Morrison & Foerster**

A two-partner private equity team comprising corporate lawyer **David D'Souza** and debt finance specialist **Ambarish Dash** defect to the US firm from Herbert Smith Freehills. D'Souza covers M&A, incentive arrangements, JVs and restructurings. Dash primarily advises on syndicated credit, acquisition finance and leveraged finance transactions.

✦ **Mourant**

The Jersey-headquartered firm welcomes private funds specialist **Brad Hillson** from Kirkland & Ellis as its new global head of private capital. Hillson, who will focus on offshore matters, covers all aspects of investment funds including fund formation and structuring, as well as follow on transactions and reorganisations.

✦ **Norton Rose Fulbright**

Disputes lateral **Duncan Bagshaw** joins the global verein from Howard Kennedy. Bagshaw specialises in international arbitration, with a particular focus on the energy sector and Africa-related commercial disputes.

✦ **Ontier**

The Iberian flavoured global firm hires dual English and New York qualified international arbitration lateral **Claire Morel de Westgaver** from BCLP. Morel de Westgaver, who arrived at her new firm in February, has a particular

angle in disputes relating to technology, IP and cyber.

✦ **Orrick**

In a vertical hire the US firm elevates incentives specialist **Rebecca Servian** from Latham & Watkins, where she was an associate. Servian advises a broad range of clients on share and cash-based incentive plans aimed at recruiting, retaining and motivating staff.

✦ **Osborne Clarke**

A trio of hires for the Bristol-headquartered outfit which welcomes back corporate lateral **Matthew Edwards**, after his brief sojourn to US rival Brown Rudnick, [which he joined in February this year](#); corporate tax specialist **James Meakin** from Howard Kennedy, where he was head of tax; and corporate lawyer **Richard Porter** from A&O Shearman in Singapore. Edwards advises on M&A, joint ventures, IPOs, securities and venture capital matters, with a focus on the life sciences sector. Meakin covers an eclectic range of tax matters, in particular, in relation to M&A, real estate and real estate finance. Porter, who is legacy Shearman & Sterling, advises on corporate transactions, including public and private M&A, joint ventures, and restructurings, media and comms, and energy transition sectors.

✦ **Paul Weiss**

Double Tap! The rapacious New Yorker snatches a brace of laterals from A&O Shearman in the form of: TMT lawyer **Tom Levine**; and restructuring specialist **Nick Charlwood**. Levine focuses on commercial, regulatory and IP matters, advising on both stand-alone projects as well as corporate transactions in the tech and telecoms sectors. Charlwood covers cross-border debt restructurings, insolvencies and special

situations. Both Levine and Charlwood were legacy Allen & Overy partners.

✦ **Pillsbury**

Corporate lateral **Sarah Melaney** joins the US firm from Withers. Melaney, who joins the emerging companies and venture capital practice, advises high-growth companies and investors on investment rounds, scale-ups, exits and general corporate governance matters.

✦ **Pinsent Masons**

Four laterals join the international firm this edition; Deloitte Legal's exodus continues as a trio of IP émigrés arrive from the Big Four accounting firm in the form of: **Paul Garland**, **Rachael Barber** and **Jeremy Harris**; and pensions specialist **Anna Taylor** is welcomed from Taylor Wessing. Garland, who was onetime global head of IP and technology at Deloitte Legal, provides strategic IP advice to technology businesses and assists them with the protection and enforcement of their IP rights and other digital assets. Barber covers branding, design, trademark and copyright matters, with a particular angle in the luxury, retail and fashion industries. Harris counsels on both the protection and enforcement of IP rights, and software and technology related disputes. Taylor advises companies, investors, lenders and trustees in relation to UK pension schemes.

✦ **Reed Smith**

Richard Kovalevsky KC joins the white-collar criminal defence and investigations practice from US disputes boutique Cohen & Gresser, where he was head of criminal defence. Kovalevsky represents individuals and corporates in a wide variety of white-collar criminal disputes, regulatory and internal investigations, and civil litigation, with a particular focus on financial crime.

✦ **Rosenblatt**

Having recently freed itself from its now defunct holding company RGB Holdings, the litigation boutique adds **Mo Haque KC** from New York firm Curtis, which he [joined less than two years ago from CANDEY](#). Haque advises on commercial litigation and international arbitration across a range of sectors including: energy, cryptocurrency, real property construction and engineering.

✦ **RPC**

Data and cyber specialist **Cavan Fabris** arrives at the international firm from Deloitte Legal, where he was head of data privacy. Fabris has experience across private practice, government and in-house advising on legal challenges, global compliance and data governance projects.

✦ **RWK Goodman**

The national firm welcomes insolvency specialist **James Roberts** from Francis Wilks & Jones. Roberts covers contentious and non-contentious insolvency and disputes, with a focus on restructurings, administrations, CVAs, liquidations and personal insolvency solutions.

✦ **Shakespeare Martineau**

Property disputes specialist **Stephen Scott** arrives at the national firm from Howard Kennedy. Scott covers property litigation related to development, asset management, business lease renewals, rent reviews, dilapidations and insolvency.

✦ **Shoosmiths**

A vertical hire for the national firm which elevates corporate lawyer **Wei Wu** from Dentons where she was a senior associate. Wu, who is English and Hong Kong qualified, advises on M&A, joint ventures and corporate reorganisations with a particular niche in China related matters.

✦ **Simpson Thacher**

The elite New Yorker welcomes private funds lateral **Joanne ("Jo") Mak** from Kirkland & Ellis. Mak specialises in secondaries transactions including continuation funds, portfolio sales, structured, synthetic and stapled secondaries, and fund recapitalizations.

✦ **Squire Patton Boggs**

Two vertical hires for the global verein which elevates: financial services regulatory and funds lawyer **Ayesha Corrine Singh** from EY Law, where she was a director; and construction disputes specialist **Ciaran Williams** from Vinson & Elkins, where he was a counsel. Singh advises on financial services regulations, including FSMA, MiFID II, SFDR, AIFMD, and ESG compliance, as well as some aspects of private funds; her hire [follows that of fellow EY financial services regulatory émigré Monica Gogna](#), after the Big Four outfit announced a series of redundancies in its legal arm in March. Williams covers all forms of construction and engineering disputes with a particular angle on energy and infrastructure.

✦ **Stephenson Harwood**

International arbitration savant **Stuart Dutson** defects to the international firm from Simmons & Simmons, where he was global co-head of international arbitration. Dutson covers both commercial and investment treaty disputes with a focus on the TMT, energy, infrastructure, aviation and financial services sectors.

✦ **Sullivan & Cromwell**

In a rare lateral hire, the New York firm welcomes financial services regulatory savant **Barnabas ("Barney") Reynolds** from A&O Shearman, where he was co-head of financial institutions. Reynolds, who is legacy Shearman & Sterling, has a practice spanning

banking, fintech, digital assets and enforcement advising global institutions on UK and EU regulatory frameworks, cross-border transactions and crisis response.

✦ **Taylor Wessing**

A brace of laterals for the international firm which bags: financial services regulatory lawyer **William Garner** from Charles Russell Speechlys, where he was head of financial services regulation and funds; and commercial property litigator **Emma Chadwick** from Winckworth Sherwood, where she was head of property disputes. Garner specialises in the wholesale, trading and markets segment of the financial services sector. Chadwick, who joins her new firm as head of real estate disputes, advises on contentious real estate matters across the development, telecoms, private client and social housing sectors.

✦ **TLT**

The Bristol headquartered outfit hires commercial property lawyer **Neal Bhattacharyya** from DWF. Bhattacharyya counsels on real estate investment, development and asset management matters.

✦ **Weightmans**

The insurance flavoured national firm welcomes pensions lateral **Neil Bhan** from Capsticks, where he was head of pensions. Bhan advises on all aspects of pensions law, with a focus on public sector pensions and a particular angle on the NHS pension scheme.

✦ **White & Case**

Four hires (two laterals and two verticals) for the New York firm, which welcomes: a three partner private equity team comprising lateral **Helen Croke** and two counsels elevated to partnership on the move- **Laura Kayani** and **Nick Matthew**; and Ashurst's

global head of competition, **Euan Burrows**. Croke specialises in UK and international private equity and M&A, including acting for institutional investors, corporates and founders. Kayani advises private equity sponsors and portfolio companies on cross-border deals, carve-outs and restructurings. Matthew, who is currently on secondment with Bain Capital, focuses on sponsor-side M&A, joint ventures, co-investments and restructurings. Burrows, a competition litigation specialist, counsels on anti-trust disputes, competition law investigations, UK subsidy control, procurement challenges and regulatory litigation (including judicial review).

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

✦ **Winston & Strawn**

In a vertical hire, the Chicago headquartered firm elevates financial services regulation lawyer **Yulia Makarova** from Cooley, where she was a special counsel. Makarova has a particular angle advising businesses operating in the distributed ledger, blockchain, and digital assets sectors.

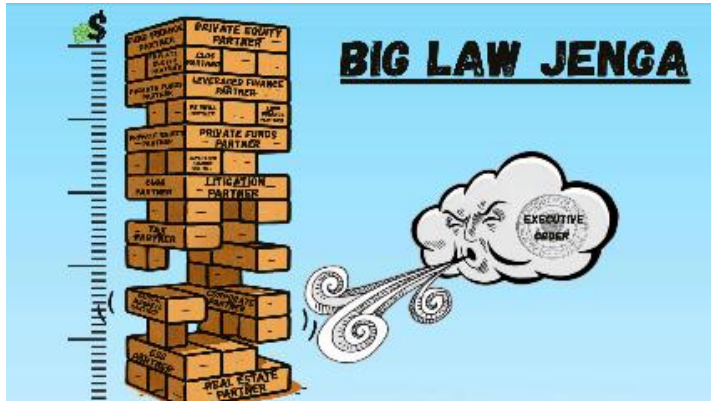
✦ **Womble Bond Dickinson**

The Anglo-American verein welcomes energy and infrastructure partner **Colin Graham** from Gide Loyrette Nouel. Graham advises on corporate and commercial projects and M&A with a specialisation in international oil & gas, LNG, power and resources.

Correction:

*In our previous edition (April–May, Issue No. 86), Edwards Gibson incorrectly included the hire of **Robert Payne** who joined Travers Smith from CMS. Although Mr. Payne joined Travers Smith as Head of Property Disputes, he did not join as a partner and so should not have been included in our report.*

A selection of recent Edwards Gibson articles:



- 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 Crashes



- Big Law's Brave "Few"



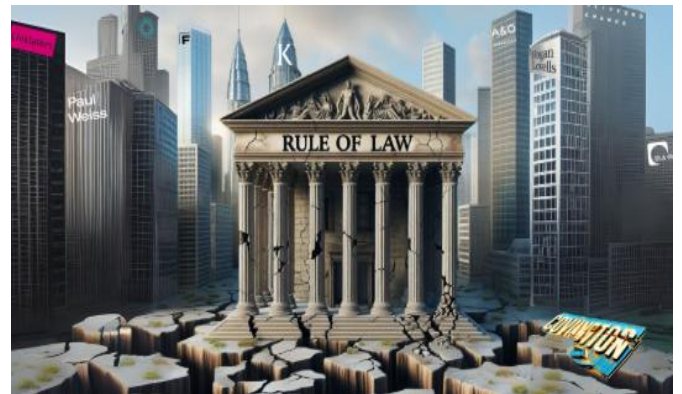
- MIPIM 2025 Doppelgänger Style!



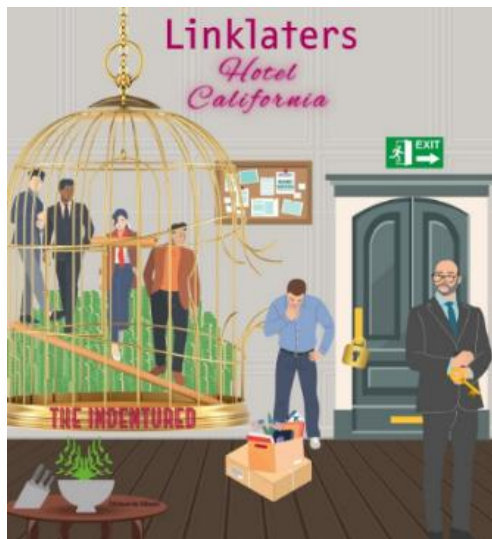
- Paul Weiss – The Invasive Species!



✓ 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 !



✓ Parallels in Peril



- ✦ A lawyer's progress to partnership...it's closing



- ✦ Paul Weiss - Happy Birthday to BigLaw's Apex Predator



- ✦ The Pecking Order at MIPIM



- ✦ Kirkland & Ellis and Paul Weiss Exchange Blows



- ✦ And you thought \$20 million was a lot for a lawyer...



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

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