

JAMES WIBBERLEY

CALL: 2009

"He is astute, insightful and very intelligent, with a calm and measured approach. His case analysis and tactical insight is well beyond his year of call."

LEGAL 500 2022

Email: james.wibberley@guildhallchambers.co.uk

Tel: 0117 930 9000



James is a commercial specialist with experience of dealing with a wide range of disputes within the County Court, High Court and Court of Appeal. He has a particular interest in cases that throw up novel or complex points of law and regularly deals with cases that straddle the divisions between his main practice areas.

James has twice appeared in the Supreme Court in *Swynson Limited v Lowick Rose LLP* [2017] UKSC 21 (professional negligence; assessment of damages) and *Gavin Edmondson Solicitors Limited v Haven Insurance Co Limited* [2018] UKSC 21 (costs; solicitor's equitable lien). He is recommended in Chambers and Partner and the Legal 500 in the fields of Commercial Dispute Resolution, Professional Negligence, and Costs and Litigation Funding.

PRACTICE AREAS

- Business Protection
- Commercial
- Professional Negligence & Indemnity
- Costs & Litigation Funding
- Technology & Construction
- Banking & Finance

BUSINESS PROTECTION

James has a mixed commercial and employment practice and focuses primarily on cases that fall along the boundaries between these two areas of law. As well as more mainstream contractual disputes and claims involving restrictive covenants, James is regularly brought in to advise on cases involving the appropriation and misuse of confidential information, allegations of breach of fidelity and/or fiduciary duty and the economic torts (e.g. inducing a breach of contract, causing loss by unlawful means etc) as well as infringement of database rights. Recent cases include representing a national HR consultancy in the enforcement of post-termination restrictions against a former franchisee, acting for an IFA being sued for breaching his restrictive covenants following the sale of his business to a national network and advising a major firm of solicitors on the recruitment of a partner of a competitor firm. James has experience of business protection disputes in a wide range of industries; not just financial services and the law, but also advertising, human resources, sales and even hairdressing.

Within the Employment Tribunal, James primarily deals with unfair dismissal and disability discrimination disputes as well as a growing number of harassment and victimisation claims. James has a keen interest in non-employment related discrimination and believes that this is likely to be a growth area for employment and discrimination lawyers in the coming years.

COMMERCIAL

James has a broad commercial practice focussing primarily on banking and financial services, company/shareholder, partnership, professional negligence, supply of goods and services, and contractual disputes. James also has a keen interest in cases involving restraint of trade, breach of confidence and breaches of fidelity or fiduciary duty, and is regularly brought into cases that straddle his different practice areas such as claims following the sale/purchase of companies or the collapse of business relationships. He also has experience of dealing with more esoteric commercial work such as intellectual property disputes (including passing off and trade mark infringement) and defamation claims brought by commercial organisations.

Most of James' work is within the High Court and James has experience of acting as sole counsel in cases worth up to £20 million. Recent work includes acting for the purchaser of a multi-million pound waste management business in a claim for misrepresentation against its former owners, representing a soft toy company facing a \$4million claim for an alleged breach of an exclusive manufacturing agreement, and representing a financial advisor in restraint of trade proceedings following the sale of this IFA business to a national network.

PROFESSIONAL NEGLIGENCE & INDEMNITY

James has a growing professional negligence practice and is regularly instructed (on both the Claimant and Defendant side) to deal with claims involving:

- Solicitors & Barristers
- Financial Advisors
- Insurance Brokers
- Surveyors
- Construction Professionals

Much of James' professional negligence work dovetails with his other areas of practice. He is regularly involved in cases where disputes have arisen about advice on costs exposure or litigation funding; often where coverage said to be provided by BTE or ATE is refused. James also deals with more conventional insurance disputes, again sitting alongside his more mainstream commercial practice.

James has a growing construction practice. In addition to dealing with claims for defective works, he is regularly asked to advise on issues of design and valuation, both for self-builders and commercial lenders. He is acutely aware of the multifaceted nature of construction litigation.

COSTS & LITIGATION FUNDING

James has a strong interest in all areas of costs and litigation funding. In addition to dealing with more conventional inter partes costs disputes such as drafting pleadings and attending detailed assessment hearings, James has experience of providing generic advice on the enforceability of funding arrangements, and is regularly asked to advise on issues of coverage and indemnity relating to BTE and ATE insurance agreements.

There is a significant overlap between this area of James' practice and his wider commercial work. James is therefore ideally placed to advise on solicitor - own client disputes and professional negligence cases involving disputes around the advice given about funding arrangements and/or costs liability.

James has experience of wasted costs and non-party costs applications both in commercial (including applications for costs against directors of insolvent companies) and personal injury disputes. He also deals with disputes surrounding the costs of insolvency proceedings.

James is regularly instructed on behalf of the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change to run arguments on the correct level of success fee in NIHL cases following the decision of the High Court in *Patterson v MOD* [2012] EWHC 2767.

TECHNOLOGY & CONSTRUCTION

James deals with a wide range of construction disputes arising from both residential and commercial developments. These disputes include claims for payment, delay and disruption, and defective workmanship as well as more niche matters such as the enforcement of adjudication awards and representing clients at arbitration hearings. James also has experience of dealing with disputes under the Party Wall Act 1996 and claims in nuisance and/or negligence for damage caused to neighbouring properties. As well as acting for private clients, corporations and local authorities, James also handles cases for and against public liability insurers.

James' recent experience includes acting for a large farming partnership in a £2.5 million damages claim following the installation of a defective biomass heating system, representing a software development company in a dispute surrounding the development of a custom iPad app, acting for a developer suing the insurers of an (insolvent) groundworks subcontractor after the incorrect demolition of supporting wall caused damage to a row of neighbouring properties, and representing a heating contractor after the (allegedly) incorrect installation of a woodburning stove resulted in a fire destroying the property. James also has experience of more routine cases such as disputes over the quality of residential building work (where he has handled cases worth up to £500,000), claims against tradesmen for leaks and fires, and claims for defective cavity wall insulation.

In addition, James' wider professional negligence practice regularly involves claims against Architects, Quantity Surveyors and Project Managers. James also has experience of dealing with claims against solicitors involved in the purchase and sale of development land (for example failure to advise on restrictions on development and/or listed building status).

BANKING & FINANCE

James has a broad banking and financial services practice advising and representing lenders, insurers, advisors, payment intermediaries and consumers alike.

The majority of James' banking work falls into two categories: (i) claims involving (allegedly) negligent advice or the mis-selling of financial products (both prof-neg and FISMA claims); and (ii) the enforcement of loan agreements, guarantees, mortgages and other securities. James has a particular interest in cases involving allegations of misrepresentation, fraud or undue influence, or where there is a dispute about the authority of an intermediary under section 39 of the FISMA and/or the common law principles of agency. James also undertakes non-contentious work such as advising on whether financial arrangements constitute collective investment schemes.

James' recent experience includes representing an international lender in a 260+ claimant group action for the mis-sale of high-cost-short-term credit loans, acting for a niche lender seeking to enforce personal guarantees worth over £1.5 million, and advising a For-ex trader being sued for over-gearing investments. He also has experience of more esoteric issues affecting banks and financial institutions such as claims under the Data Protection Act and GDPR.

RECENT CASES

- Swynson Ltd v Lowick Rose LLP (formerly Hurst Morrison Thomson LLP) (in liquidation) [2017] UKSC 32, [2017] 2 WLR 1161
 - Gavin Edmondson Solicitors Limited v Haven Insurance Company Limited [2018] UKSC 21, [2018] 3 All ER 273
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RECOMMENDATIONS

LEGAL 500 2022

Commercial Litigation

'He is astute, insightful and very intelligent, with a calm and measured approach. His case analysis and tactical insight is well beyond his year of call.'

Ranked: Tier 1

Professional negligence

'James is approachable and meticulous. He is great at diving down into the detail but then presenting his decisive and direct advice in a concise, client-friendly manner. Insightful and good at thinking outside the box.'

Ranked: Tier 2

Costs

Ranked: Tier 1

LEGAL 500 2021

Commercial Litigation

'Quickly grasps the key legal issues of a case, and always remains sympathetic to a client's overall commercial objectives.'

Ranked: Tier 1

Costs

'He is a pleasure to work with; very knowledgeable, able to provide forthright, concise advice in a friendly and approachable manner. A fine advocate, always meticulously prepared and tenacious with his arguments.'

Ranked: Tier 1

CHAMBERS UK 2021

Costs Litigation

Experienced in costs and litigation funding, he advises on such matters as own-client disputes and the enforceability of funding arrangements. He also assists with detailed assessments and CFAs. His practice further covers costs issues arising out of professional negligence claims.

Strengths: "He's bright, very approachable and on top the papers." "Very analytical and able to grasp complex issues very quickly, he gives logical, easy-to-digest advice. On his feet he's witty, articulate and likeable."

Recent work: Appeared in *Lefton v Debenhams Ottoway* solicitor, acting for the claimant/paying party in a solicitor and own-client costs dispute following the successful conclusion of a £1 million-plus unfair prejudice claim.

Professional Negligence

Offers skilful representation of claimants and defendants in claims involving solicitors, surveyors, financial advisers and insurance brokers.

Strengths: "He is lovely with clients – he speaks the same language as them. His drafting is excellently succinct."

Recent work: Acted for the claimant in a claim against her former solicitors for failure to advise her of the limitation period for bringing a claim against her former financial adviser.

Commercial Dispute Resolution

His practice includes disputes arising from professional negligence and breach of contract. He specialises in the financial services sector. He is also adept at handling contractual disputes concerning fraud and misrepresentation, and offers expertise in restrictive covenants and other business protection matters.

Strengths: "He gave very clear and commercial advice, and he is very user-friendly." "He is really good in terms of analysis and is nice to deal with, so I can see why he is regularly instructed in complex cases." "I was very impressed with his advocacy, particularly his cross-examination."

Recent work: Acted for the claimant in *Power Electric Generators v Fawsitt Holden Energy*, a case considering whether the vendor of an Ofgem-accredited generator was obliged to fund Ofgem accreditation in order to obtain the full asking price for the device.

LEGAL 500 2020

Commercial, Banking, Company & Chancery

"Combines a sharp intellect with user-friendliness and good client manner."

Costs

"A very effective advocate."

CHAMBERS UK 2019

Costs

Experienced in costs and litigation funding, he advises on such matters as own-client disputes and the enforceability of funding arrangements. He also assists with detailed assessments and CFAs. His practice further covers costs issues arising out of professional negligence claims.

"James is ideal for cases dealing with technical issues and is particularly impressive on his feet. He has an outstanding ability to grasp complicated points and consider their immediate and wider implications."

Recent work: Instructed by the claimant in *Price v AMBRU Health Board*, a test case concerning the correct application of the 2% cap on the costs of the costs budgeting process and the status of the Guidance Notes issued by the Civil Procedure Rules Committee to accompany Precedent H.

Professional Negligence

Junior with a growing professional negligence practice. He is often seen acting for both claimants and defendants. He is adept at handling claims involving solicitors, financial advisers and insurance brokers.

"He's technically very good and is very responsive."

Commercial Dispute Resolution

His practice includes disputes arising from professional negligence and breach of contract. He specialises in the financial services sector. He is also adept at handling contractual disputes concerning fraud and misrepresentation.

"He's commercial, pragmatic and not afraid to get off the fence." "James has always been very friendly, approachable and flexible - it's his down-to-earth attitude as well as his knowledge which makes him a hit with clients."

Recent work: Acted for Bord na Móna on a £10 million claim for fraudulent misrepresentation and breach of warranty following the purchase of a UK-based compost business by a utilities provider owned by the Irish government.

LEGAL 500 2019

Commercial, Banking, Insolvency & Chancery

He provides no-nonsense and pragmatic advice.

Costs

Incredibly sharp on his feet.

CHAMBERS UK 2018

Commercial Dispute Resolution

Leading Junior (Up and coming Individual)

His practice includes disputes arising from professional negligence and breach of contract. He specialises in the financial services sector.

Strengths: "Approachable, technically excellent and great to work with." "He is commercial, pragmatic and not afraid to get off the fence."

Recent work: Advised the claimant in a case against Octopus Investments, which concerned loss arising from misrepresentation, negligent mis-statement and breach of contract.

Costs Litigation

Leading Junior - Band 4

Experienced in costs and litigation funding, he advises on such matters as own-client disputes and the enforceability of funding arrangements. He also assists with wasted costs and non-party costs applications.

Strengths: "His knowledge is first-rate and comprehensive. He is a pleasure to instruct and deal with as his knowledge on costs is matched by his enthusiasm."

Recent work: Acted in *Gavin Edmondson Solicitors Limited v Haven Insurance Company Limited*, a test case involving the direct settlement of six personal injury claims by a defendant insurer.

Professional Negligence

Leading Junior (Up and Coming Individual)

Junior with a growing professional negligence practice. He is often seen acting for both claimants and defendants. He is adept at handling claims involving solicitors, financial advisers and insurance brokers.

Strengths: "He's enthusiastic and exceedingly bright. He's very willing and digs deep." "He seems experienced beyond his age - he's highly articulate and very considered."

LEGAL 500 2017

Commercial, Banking, Insolvency & Chancery Law

Leading juniors

'A fantastic "hands-on" barrister.'

CHAMBERS UK 2017

Commercial Dispute Resolution

Leading Junior (Up and coming Individual)

Handles matters including restrictive covenants and costs disputes. Sources note the quality of his written advice.

Strengths: "He was pragmatic, gave clear advice and negotiated a good settlement."

Recent work: Advised the claimant, Bank of Ireland, in a professional negligence dispute against Mortimer & Carey concerning valuation reports on buy-to-let flats.

Costs Litigation

Leading Junior - Band 4

Experienced in costs and litigation funding, he advises on such matters as own-client disputes and enforceability of funding arrangements. He also assists with wasted costs and non-party costs applications.

Strengths: "He's extremely knowledgeable and it's hard to beat him."

LEGAL 500 2016

Commercial, Banking, Insolvency & Chancery Law

Leading juniors

'He is very practical and approachable.'

LEGAL 500 2015

Commercial, Banking & Insolvency

Leading juniors

'He is extremely approachable and happy to talk through options.'

EDUCATION:

- LLB, Nottingham Law School - First Class
 - History (Modern), Keble College Oxford, First Class
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RECENT NEWS

- Our Employment & Discrimination Team is delighted to announce that Anna Williams has accepted an offer of tenancy at Guildhall Chambers
 - Debbie Grennan appointed as South West representative for the Employment Lawyers Association for 2020-2022
 - Members of Guildhall provided training to NHS England, Department of Health & Local Government
 - Supreme Court rules costs payable in the event of direct settlements between claimants and insurer
 - Res inter alios acta? Hugh Sims QC and James Wibberley successfully resist appeal in £15m professional negligence claim - June 2015
 - ELA Masterclass - Employment Claims in the Civil Courts 2015 -Jan 2015
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Guildhall Chambers, 23 Broad Street, Bristol BS1 2HG Tel: 0117 930 9000 DX: 7823 Bristol

james.wibberley@guildhallchambers.co.uk | www.guildhallchambers.co.uk