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Dan McCourt Fritz KC

Year of Silk: 2023 Year of Call: 2007

"Brilliant in the courtroom"

Chambers & Partners UK Bar, 2025

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Practice Overview

Described as “*a leading light at the Bar*” and “*a decisive and authoritative leader*”, Dan is a go-to silk across a wide range of heavyweight chancery commercial specialisms. Dan’s practice is centred on three inter-related areas – civil fraud, trust disputes and company law – and spans a range of jurisdictions notably the Cayman Islands, the BVI, Bermuda, Gibraltar and the Channel Islands.. Across the broad spectrum of his practice, Dan has developed extensive expertise in committal proceedings (representing both applicants and respondents), having acted in many of the leading civil contempt cases over the past 15 years.

Dan is consistently commended for his ability as an oral advocate: the current directories describe him as “*brilliant in the courtroom*” and his advocacy as “*superb*”. His recent appearances include appeals in the Supreme Court and the Privy Council, numerous appeals in the Court of Appeal, lengthy trials in the English High Court and overseas, arbitrations involving extensive cross-examination, and heavy interlocutory applications, including in particular for search orders, freezing orders and proprietary injunctions. Whilst Dan is a consummate trial advocate, his creativity and nimbleness on his feet make him especially sought after for appeals both in England and overseas.

Dan strives to be the complete modern silk: he leads from the front, is exceptionally hands on, always on top of the detail and colleagues and clients find him “*an absolute joy to work with*”.

Areas of Expertise

Private Client Trusts and Probate

Dan’s trust and fiduciary litigation practice spans a wide range of jurisdictions in addition to England, encompassing both private and commercial disputes. Dan’s expertise in civil fraud makes him particularly well equipped to deal with cases involving allegations of dishonesty or bad faith against trustees, directors or other fiduciaries, whilst his strength in company law makes him highly sought after in matters involving complex corporate structures. Dan also has a specialist interest in beneficiary derivative claims and hybrid derivative claims.

A substantial proportion of Dan’s work concerns ultra high net worth private trust litigation and related advice. His current or recent involvement in such matters includes cases in the Cayman Islands, Bermuda, Gibraltar, the BVI, Guernsey and Jersey. The vast majority of Dan’s cases in this area are confidential, but his most significant cases in the public domain include the following in recent years:

Re Equity Trust (England, 2020-2024). Dan acted for the Defendants to claims in respect of allegedly fraudulent breaches of duty in relation to property transactions within a Jersey trust structure with a total value of £226 million. The claims were dismissed following a two-week trial in the Chancery Division: see [2023] EWHC 968 (Ch). Dan then appeared for the Defendants in the Court of Appeal, which dismissed the Claimants’ appeal: see [2024] EWCA Civ 571. The case raised the interesting question of whether and in what circumstances a corporate trustee may be vicariously liable for breaches of duty by an employee who is acting as director of a company within the trust structure.

Re Shah (England and Jersey, 2022-2024). Dan acted for the Defendants to derivative claim brought by the new trustee of a family trust in its capacity as shareholder of companies within the trust structure against directors of those companies (who included beneficiaries of the trust). A central issue in the case was the extent to which a trustee should be liable for acquiescing in alleged breaches of duty by directors of companies within the trust (where ex hypothesi breaches reduced the value of the companies and therefore of the trust). The claims were compromised on confidential terms.

Kazzaz v Standard Chartered (Guernsey, 2022-2024). Dan assisted the Defendant trust company in its successful

defence of a claim for breach of trust and negligence in connection with two family trusts. That claim was dismissed following an 8-day jurat trial ([2023] GRC 0490); Dan then assisted in resisting the Plaintiffs' subsequent appeal, which was dismissed in toto: see [2024] GCA 058. The case clarified the circumstances in which claims by a new trustee against a former trustee may be time-barred, with the Guernsey Court of Appeal also giving important guidance as to the nature of a trustee's duty to act *en bon père de famille*, the admissibility of the judgment of a foreign court in Guernsey proceedings and the high threshold for appellate interference with findings of fact made by jurats.

St John's Trust Company v Medlands (Bermuda, 2019-2022). Dan acted for the Protector of the multi billion dollar 'B Trust' in a multi-faceted dispute that included successfully resisting the former trustee's attempt to challenge its removal in the Court of Appeal for Bermuda: see [2021] CA (Bda) 20 Civ. That appeal concerned the novel question of how principles of natural justice apply in the context of trust administration proceedings (the trustee having contended that it had a right to be heard in respect of its removal).

Re Volpi (The Bahamas and England, 2019-2022). Dan acted for and advised the trustee of a number of ultra high value trusts, setting aside an ex parte disclosure order obtained against it in England and subsequently assisting in a challenge to an arbitral award in the Supreme Court of the Bahamas.

Company

Dan has a market leading company law practice both in England and overseas, with a focus on shareholder disputes, derivative claims and claims based on breaches of directors' duties, often in an insolvency context. In addition to a wide range of advisory and first instance work, Dan is regularly instructed on company law matters in the Court of Appeal and has recently appeared in both the Supreme Court and the Privy Council. Dan's most notable cases include:

Zedra v THG plc (ongoing). Dan appeared on behalf of the respondents in this landmark case in which the Supreme Court held by a majority that no limitation period applies to unfair prejudice petitions: see [2026] UKSC 6; [2026] 2 WLR 479. In an earlier strand of the litigation Dan's clients struck out the majority of the allegations against them in the Court of Appeal on the ground that there was no maintainable basis pleaded for the allegation that the respondent directors had acted in bad faith [2021] EWCA Civ 904; [2021] BCC 970.

Re The Port Fund (ongoing). Dan acts for the Plaintiffs, who were the limited partners and majority investors in a Cayman exempted limited partnership (ELP) that they allege to have been managed fraudulently. The case has raised novel and important points of principle in relation to ELPs, with Dan's clients succeeding twice in the Cayman Islands Court of Appeal and on one occasion in the Privy Council: see [2024] UKPC 32; [2025] 1 BCLC 647. Dan appeared for the Plaintiffs in a three month trial in the Cayman Islands in 2026; judgment is awaited.

Re YSI (2024-2026). Dan acted for the majority shareholder of a 'unicorn' social gaming company, which brought a 9 figure derivative claim in Gibraltar against the co-founder minority shareholder, the company's sole de jure director and related entities. Dan's client was granted 'stage two' permission to pursue the claims following a heavily contested 5 day hearing. The proceedings were then compromised on confidential terms.

Loveridge v Loveridge (2020-2024). Dan appeared in two successive appeals in the Court of Appeal concerning the nature and scope of the unfair prejudice jurisdiction. In the first Dan's clients successfully overturned an injunction that excluded them from managing companies of which they were the majority owners, vindicating the general principle that a majority of shareholders should be permitted to rule their company: see [2020] EWCA Civ 1104; [2022] BCLC 314. In the second appeal the court struck out the recast petition against Dan's clients on the ground that the alleged conduct was not properly characterised as unfairly prejudicial: see [2021] EWCA Civ 1697; [2022] BCC 324.

Re BIG (2021). Dan acted for the successful appellant in the first case before the Court of Appeal to consider the impact of the Supreme Court's decision in *Sevilleja v Marex* on the rule in *Prudential* (also referred to as the rule

against reflective loss). The court accepted the argument (which had been described at first instance as “*ingenious but wrong*”) that a cause of action conferred on a company by the Contract (Rights of Third Parties) Act 1999 could not engage the rule in *Prudential* to bar a claim under the relevant contract by a shareholder.

Civil Fraud

Dan is widely recognised as a leading civil fraud silk both domestically and overseas. He has acted and advised in relation to continuous stream of complex and high value fraud litigation, most recently a three-month trial in the Cayman Islands (*The Port Fund*, discussed below) that concluded in May 2026.

Dan is praised in the major directories for his skill as both a trial lawyer (with his cross examination being noted as a particular strength) and an appellate advocate. He also has substantial experience of obtaining and challenging freezing injunctions, proprietary injunctions and search orders. Dan’s fraud practice has also led to his developing highly sought after expertise in committal proceedings, the product of Dan’s involvement in many of the leading contempt cases of the last 15 years. Dan’s recent notable cases include the following:

Re The Port Fund (Cayman Islands, 2020-ongoing). Dan acts for the Plaintiffs, who were the limited partners and majority investors in a Cayman exempted limited partnership (ELP) that they allege to have been managed fraudulently. The case has raised novel and important points of principle in relation to ELPs, with Dan’s clients succeeding twice in the Cayman Islands Court of Appeal and on one occasion in the Privy Council: see [2024] UKPC 32; [2025] 1 BCLC 647. Judgment is awaited following the three month trial in which Dan appeared for the Plaintiffs.

Re YSI (Gibraltar, 2024-2026). Dan acted for the majority shareholder of a ‘unicorn’ social gaming company, which brought a 9 figure derivative claim in Gibraltar against the co-founder minority shareholder and entities associated with him, based on alleged fraudulent breaches of fiduciary duty and unlawful means conspiracies. Dan’s client was granted ‘stage two’ permission to pursue the claims following a heavily contested 5 day hearing. The proceedings were then compromised on confidential terms.

Isbilen v Turk (England, 2020-2026). Dan acted for the Claimant in a multi-jurisdiction £50m fraud claim. The case is an object lesson in the perils of failing to comply with ‘tracing relief’ disclosure obligations contained in a proprietary injunction. Unprecedentedly, Dan succeeded in obtaining a search and imaging order against D1 some 12 months after proceedings were served on him: see [2022] EWHC 572 (Ch). Dan then deployed the material uncovered by that means in a successful committal application heard over 10 days before defeating D1’s appeal against the resulting order: see [2024] EWCA Civ 568.

Re Equity Trust (England, 2020-2024). Dan acted for the Defendants to claims in respect of allegedly fraudulent breaches of duty in relation to property transactions within a Jersey trust structure with a total value of £226 million. The claims were dismissed following a two-week trial in the Chancery Division: see [2023] EWHC 968 (Ch). Dan then appeared for the Defendants in the Court of Appeal, which dismissed the Claimants’ appeal, holding that there was no basis to interfere with the trial judge’s finding that the Defendants had acted honestly: see [2024] EWCA Civ 571.

Re Black Capital (England, 2022-2024). Dan acted for an individual who was alleged to have been a partner in a business that was claimed to have been run as a Ponzi scheme, causing tens of millions of loss. Dan successfully opposed a winding up petition in respect of the alleged partnership, set aside the appointment of a provisional liquidator and (before the Court of Appeal) successfully appealed against a freezing order made against Mr Ubhi: see [2023] EWCA Civ 417; [2023] 4 All ER 530.

Russell v Cartwright (England, 2018-2020). Dan acted for the Defendants to a £35m unlawful means conspiracy claim by their former business partner, who alleged that they had dishonestly induced him to sell his stake in their property development business. Following a 10 day trial in the claims were dismissed in their entirety, with the judge concluding that the Claimant had given dishonest evidence under cross-examination by Dan: see [2020] EWHC 41

(Ch).

Commercial Litigation

Chancery

International and Offshore

Recommendations

Chancery: Commercial (Chambers and Partners, UK 2021-2025)

Fraud: Civil (Chambers and Partners, 2021-2025)

Offshore (Chambers & Partners, 2024-2025)

Company (Chambers & Partners, UK 2024-2025)

Dispute Resolution: Commercial Chancery (Chambers & Partners Global, 2022-2023)

Fraud: Civil (The Legal 500, 2019-2025)

Company and Partnership (The Legal 500, 2017-2025)

Offshore (The Legal 500, 2022)

Fraud: Civil (Who's Who Legal: UK Bar 2018-2022)

Quotes

"Dan is a leading light at the Bar. His strength is that he has an encyclopaedic knowledge of the law and a memory that puts us all to shame." (Chambers & Partners UK Bar, 2026)

"Dan is brilliant on his feet and a decisive and authoritative leader." (Chambers & Partners UK Bar, 2026)

"Dan goes toe to toe with far more senior silks and excels. His advocacy is superb, and he is the kind of guy you want on your team." (Chambers & Partners UK Bar, 2026)

"Dan is calm and good at responding to questions from the bench. He is very good at thinking on his feet because of the way he prepares." (Chambers & Partners UK Bar, 2026)

"Dan is fiercely bright and thinks outside the box to secure positive outcomes for his clients. He is also very personable and has a good manner with clients." (Chambers & Partners UK Bar, 2026)

"Dan is very good on his feet." (Chambers & Partners UK Bar, 2026)

"Dan has an encyclopaedic knowledge of the law and a memory that puts us all to shame. He memorised everything presented in court. With clients, he adapts his style to gain their confidence." (Chambers & Partners UK Bar, 2026)

"Dan McCourt Fritz KC is robust, charming and incredibly clever. He is a gifted advocate who is incredibly easy to work with." (Chambers & Partners UK Bar, 2026)

"I trust his judgement, both legally and commercially, absolutely. He is patient and both sensible and measured in his advice." (Chambers & Partners UK Bar, 2026)

"He knows the law really well and is a really good advocate." (Chambers & Partners UK Bar, 2026)

"Dan is excellent when on his feet and has stepped up to being a silk seamlessly." (Chambers & Partners UK Bar, 2026)

"Dan McCourt Fritz KC has an encyclopaedic knowledge of the law, and is able to effortlessly memorise everything presented in court." (Chambers & Partners UK Bar, 2026)

"He is brilliant and persuasive, and his court craft is excellent." (Chambers & Partners UK Bar, 2026)

"He is really bright, easy to work with and has a very good, calm advocacy manner." (Chambers & Partners UK Bar, 2026)

"A high quality junior who has stepped up to KC seamlessly and is very good on his feet." (Chambers & Partners UK Bar, 2026)

"His advocacy is superb." (Chambers & Partners UK Bar, 2026)

"He is really strong, punchy and backs himself, which is good." (Chambers & Partners UK Bar, 2026)

"Dan is super bright, very client-friendly, pragmatic and easy to deal with." (Chambers & Partners UK Bar, 2026)

"Dan is an excellent advocate. He is very persuasive but also great at analysing large amounts of information and distilling it into key issues. His advocacy is direct and focused." (Chambers & Partners UK Bar, 2025)

"Dan is extremely pleasant to work with and is an absolute team player. His technical ability is brilliant and he does not overcomplicate things." (Chambers & Partners UK Bar, 2025)

"Dan is fantastic. He fights the client's corner, is very creative and is not afraid to take a chance and push for outcomes that more conservative people may shy away from." (Chambers & Partners UK Bar, 2025)

"Dan is exceptionally intelligent and shows good commercial judgement. He is a very good advocate, knows the law extremely well and is able to apply it. He's also very friendly and easy to work with." (Chambers & Partners UK Bar, 2025)

"He is very persuasive but also great at analysing and distilling large amounts of information. He doesn't shy away from key issues in his advocacy, which is direct and focused, sharp and persuasive." (Chambers & Partners UK Bar, 2025)

"He is so clever, very commercial and great with lay clients. He is brilliant in the courtroom and has a real punch about him." (Chambers & Partners UK Bar, 2025)

"Dan is a gifted advocate. charming and very insightful." (Chambers & Partners UK Bar, 2025)

"Dan is really perceptive and fights the client's corner. He is a brilliant lawyer and very creative." (Chambers &

Partners UK Bar, 2025)

"Dan's pleadings and written submissions are thorough and robust." (Chambers & Partners UK Bar, 2025)

"Dan is extremely capable. He will go extremely far as a silk." (Chambers & Partners UK Bar, 2025)

"Dan is very hardworking, with outstanding technical ability." (The Legal 500, 2025)

"He's very punchy and all over the detail." (Chambers & Partners UK Bar, 2024)

"Dan provides very pertinent advice which points clients in the right direction." (Chambers & Partners UK Bar, 2024)

"Dan is definitely someone to watch in the space." (Chambers & Partners UK Bar, 2024)

"Very experienced, and an absolute joy to deal with." "Dan is fantastic. He is personable and is absolutely on top of things. His advocacy is incredibly impressive." (Chambers & Partners UK Bar, 2023)

"His written work is superb, and he functions brilliantly within a large team." (Chambers & Partners UK Bar, 2023)

"Dan is incredibly clever, tactically very sound and an engaging advocate who can handle difficult situations well" (Chambers & Partners UK Bar, 2023)

"Dan is extremely bright and has an extremely promising future ahead. His advocacy is persuasive and skilful beyond his years." (The Legal 500, 2023)

"Dan is a robust advocate who fights the client's corner and who inspires confidence from the client and the tribunal." (The Legal 500, 2023)

"An excellent junior who has an expert's grasp of offshore commercial fraud work and a piercing intellect. He is also a real team player who rolls up his sleeves when the pressure is on." (The Legal 500, 2023)

"He's magnificent in court and his advocacy is exceptional" (Chambers & Partners, 2022)

"Dan really does have it all. He is charming, hard-working, humble and immensely intelligent" (The Legal 500, 2022)

"Grasps all the details with lightning speed" (Chambers & Partners, 2022)

"Someone who drafts simply and beautifully" (Chambers & Partners, 2022)

"He works incredibly hard, is a delight to work with and is very responsive and bright" (Chambers & Partners, 2022)

"An absolute pleasure to work with and a barrister who is very good at his craft" (Chambers & Partners, 2022)

"A great all rounder. He is excellent at drafting as well as advocacy and is an asset to any team" (The Legal 500, 2022)

"He is very hard-working." "He is user-friendly, sharp and bright." "A rising star and an absolute pleasure to work with." (Chambers and Partners, 2021)

"Clients absolutely love him and he's very good at drafting. He's also very strong technically and he knows this subject very well." "He's excellent - very easy to deal with and brilliant at what he does." (Chambers and Partners, 2021)

"He has a fierce intellect and is a brilliant advocate, and is also superb with clients and, which really marks him out." (The Legal 500, 2021)

"A collaborative team player who is great on detail." (The Legal 500, 2021)

"Fantastic to lead and work with" (Who's Who Legal, 2020)

Education & Qualifications

Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge - BA Neuroscience (First Class, ranked joint 1st)

City University - LLB Hons. (First Class); GDL (Distinction)

Senior Scholar, Gonville and Caius College

Shelford Scholarship (2007), Lord Mansfield Scholarship (2006) and Lord Bowen Scholarship (2005), Lincoln's Inn

City University Scholarship (2005)
