



serle court

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Paul Adams

Year of Call: 2008

“Paul stands out as being the most gifted individual in his generation. Outstanding intellect; outstanding court performer; caring and devoid of ego.”

The Legal 500

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Practice Overview

Paul has a broad commercial chancery practice covering most of chambers' core practice areas. He seeks to bring a rigorous, commercial and creative approach to the cases in which he is instructed.

Commended in the directories as 'strategic', 'creative' and 'all over the bigger picture', Paul is often instructed to act as sole counsel in difficult, complex and high-value cases, often with prominent silks on the opposing side.

Paul is equally happy working as part of a team in larger cases, and is noted in the directories to be 'completely on top of all the detail', to have a 'dazzling' ability to process vast amounts of complex information, and to be a 'real team player'.

Paul's recent cases have included high-profile company, civil fraud and commercial disputes and nine-figure trust, professional negligence and insolvency claims.



Areas of Expertise

Civil Fraud

Paul has extensive experience of civil fraud litigation, on both the claimant and the defendant side. This includes obtaining and resisting/discharging freezing and other interim injunctions, and taking hard fought cases all the way from inception to trial and beyond. Paul is equally comfortable acting as leader, as sole counsel or as junior in large cases.

Culgoa Ltd v Basement Investments Ltd (2025-ongoing): Acting for the claimant in a claim arising out of a transfer of certain investments from one company to another.

DUK v UGX & Ors (2024-2025): Acting for two proposed defendants to a derivative claim on behalf of two BVI companies. These substantial proceedings have so far included disputes over freezing and proprietary injunctions, joinder of proposed defendants to the claimant's application for permission to bring derivative claims, disclosure, and the permission application itself.

L v F & Ors (2024-ongoing): Acting for two defendants in this claim alleging deceit in respect of the financial soundness of a company.

In Media Trust SpA v BGB Weston Ltd & Ors (2024-2025): Acted for the respondent in an application for permission to bring contempt proceedings arising out of alleged false statements.

Harrington & Charles Trading Co Ltd & Ors v Mehta & Ors [2022] EWHC 1810 (Ch); [2022] EWHC 2960 (Ch); [2023]

EWHC 307 (Ch); [2023] EWHC 609 (Ch); [2023] EWHC 998 (Ch); [2023] EWHC 2420 (Ch): Acted for the First to Fourth Defendants in this c. \$1 billion civil fraud claim relating to Indian gold and jewellery companies. The claimants alleged that gold or the proceeds of gold was misappropriated from these companies before being, in part, laundered through a network of English companies. The English companies had since been put into liquidation and used as claimants in the litigation. Paul appeared as sole or junior counsel at several substantial hearings, including relating to freezing injunctions, a jurisdiction dispute, a contested consolidation application, and strike out and summary judgment applications.

Frain v Reeves [2023] EWHC 73 (Ch): Acted for the first defendant in committal proceedings brought on the basis of alleged false statements of truth in witness statements and disclosure statements. Successful in contending that permission to pursue committal proceedings should be refused.

Glenn & Anor v Watson & Ors [2018] EWHC 2016 (Ch); [2018] EWHC 2483 (Ch); [2023] EWHC 1830 (Ch): Represented the claimants in this very substantial piece of fraud litigation, which included various interlocutory hearings during 2016 and 2017, a three-month trial before Nugee J between May and July 2017 and various further hearings concerning the implementation and enforcement of the claimants' judgment in 2018-2023. The case related to an investment joint venture, Project Spartan, which was pursued through a BVI company. Nugee J delivered a 187-page trial judgment in favour of the second claimant, holding that the first defendant had procured the execution of the Project Spartan agreements by deceit, breach of fiduciary duty and the offering of inducements to the second claimant's director.

Company

Paul is an established and well-regarded company litigation specialist and is consistently recognised in the legal directories in this field. Paul has particular experience of director duty claims, derivative claims and unfair prejudice actions. Paul has acted in substantial company cases in several overseas jurisdictions including BVI, Jersey and Gibraltar.

Culgoa Ltd v Basement Investments Ltd (2025-ongoing): Acting for the claimant in a claim arising out of a transfer of certain investments from one company to another.

DUK v UGX & Ors (2024-2025): Acting for two proposed defendants to a derivative claim on behalf of two BVI companies. These substantial proceedings have so far included disputes over freezing and proprietary injunctions, joinder of proposed defendants to the claimant's application for permission to bring derivative claims, disclosure, and the permission application itself.

L v F & Ors (2024-ongoing): Acting for two defendants in this claim alleging wrongful trading and deceit in respect of the financial soundness of a company.

Re O Ltd (2024): Acted for two respondents to an unfair prejudice petition who were directors but not shareholders of the company concerned.

Harrington & Charles Trading Co Ltd & Ors v Mehta & Ors [2022] EWHC 1810 (Ch); [2022] EWHC 2960 (Ch); [2023] EWHC 307 (Ch); [2023] EWHC 609 (Ch); [2023] EWHC 998 (Ch); [2023] EWHC 2420 (Ch): Acted for the First to Fourth Defendants in this c. \$1 billion civil fraud claim in which the claimants were companies in liquidation (and their liquidators) and the claims included various company law claims, including for breach of director duties and under sections 212 and 213 of the Insolvency Act 1986. Paul appeared as sole or junior counsel at several substantial hearings, including relating to freezing injunctions, a jurisdiction dispute, a contested consolidation application, and strike out and summary judgment applications.

Glenn & Anor v Watson & Ors [2018] EWHC 2016 (Ch); [2018] EWHC 2483 (Ch); [2019] EWCA Civ 1759; [2023]

EWHC1830 (Ch): Represented the claimants in this substantial piece of litigation, which included various interlocutory hearings during 2016 and 2017, a three-month trial before Nugee J between May and July 2017, an appeal to the Court of Appeal and numerous further hearings concerning the implementation and enforcement of the claimants' judgment during 2018-2023. The case related to a joint venture, Project Spartan, which was pursued through a BVI company. Nugee J delivered a 187-page trial judgment in favour of the second claimant, holding that the first defendant had procured the execution of the Project Spartan agreements by deceit, breach of fiduciary duty and the offering of inducements to the second claimant's director. The judge also held that the second claimant's director had lacked authority to commit the second claimant to certain loan agreements.

Kea Investments Ltd v Spartan Capital Ltd & Anor (2015-2017): Acted for the petitioner in this just and equitable winding up application in the Companies Court. This aspect of the dispute settled during trial.

Novatrust Ltd v Kea Investments Ltd & Ors [2014] EWHC 4061 (Ch). Acted for the defendants in these proceedings relating to a BVI investment joint venture company. The claimant commenced proceedings in England, seeking to advance personal claims and also derivative claims on behalf of the joint venture company. The defendants successfully challenged jurisdiction: HHJ Pelling QC accepted that by reason of section 184C of the BVI Business Companies Act 2004 the claimant required the permission of the BVI court to commence a derivative claim on behalf of a BVI company. He also held that the claimant's personal damages claims were barred by the 'no reflective loss' rule and that the claimant's claims for declarations were unreal or served no practical purpose. The claimant appealed to the Court of Appeal but the appeal was compromised during the appeal hearing. The proceedings then continued to trial and settled during trial.

Sukhoruchkin & Others v Van Bekestein & Others [2013] EWHC 1993 (Ch); [2014] EWCA Civ 399: Acted for the defendants in this substantial dispute over a Cayman investment fund. The litigation raised issues concerning the reflective loss principle and double derivative claims.

Apex Global Management Limited v Fi Call Limited (2012-2013): Acted for one of the shareholders in Fi Call Limited in this case involving two unfair prejudice petitions (a petition and a cross-petition), with allegations of serious wrongdoing on both sides. The case raised issues as to, among other things, (i) the extent to which relief can be sought by an unfair prejudice petition against a person who is neither a shareholder nor a director of the relevant company (see [2014] BCC 286), (ii) whether hearings may be held in private where a party alleges that the proceedings represent an attempt at extortion through adverse publicity (see [2013] EWHC 223 (Ch); [2013] 1 WLR 2993 (CA)), and (iii) the extent to which members of the family of a ruling monarch are entitled to assert sovereign immunity (see [2013] EWHC 587 (Ch); [2014] 1 WLR 492 (CA)).

Commercial Litigation

Paul regularly acts in substantial pieces of commercial litigation and has particular expertise in commercial disputes featuring allegations fraud, other trusts or chancery aspects, and multi-jurisdictional elements. Paul is equally comfortable acting as leader, as sole counsel or as junior in large cases.

Culgoa Ltd v Basement Investments Ltd (2025-ongoing): Acting for the claimant in a claim arising out of a transfer of certain investments from one company to another.

DUK v UGX & Ors (2024-2025): Acting for two proposed defendants to a derivative claim on behalf of two BVI companies. These substantial proceedings have so far included disputes over freezing and proprietary injunctions, joinder of proposed defendants to the claimant's application for permission to bring derivative claims, disclosure, and the permission application itself.

L v F & Ors (2024-ongoing): Acting for two defendants in this claim alleging wrongful trading and deceit in respect of the financial soundness of a company.

Harrington & Charles Trading Co Ltd & Ors v Mehta & Ors [2022] EWHC 1810 (Ch); [2022] EWHC 2960 (Ch); [2023] EWHC 307 (Ch); [2023] EWHC 609 (Ch); [2023] EWHC 998 (Ch); [2023] EWHC 2420 (Ch): Acted for the First to Fourth Defendants in this c. \$1 billion civil fraud claim relating to Indian gold and jewellery companies. The claimants alleged that gold or the proceeds of gold was misappropriated from these companies before being, in part, laundered through a network of English companies. The English companies had since been put into liquidation and used as claimants in the litigation. Paul appeared as sole or junior counsel at several substantial hearings, including relating to freezing injunctions, a jurisdiction dispute, a contested consolidation application, and strike out and summary judgment applications.

Glenn & Anor v Watson & Ors [2018] EWHC 2016 (Ch); [2018] EWHC 2483 (Ch); [2023] EWHC 1830 (Ch): Represented the claimants in this substantial piece of litigation, which included various interlocutory hearings during 2016 and 2017, a three-month trial before Nugee J between May and July 2017 and various further hearings concerning the implementation and enforcement of the claimants' judgment in 2018-2023. The case related to a joint venture, Project Spartan, which was pursued through a BVI company. Nugee J delivered a 187-page trial judgment in favour of the second claimant, holding that the first defendant had procured the execution of the Project Spartan agreements by deceit, breach of fiduciary duty and the offering of inducements to the second claimant's director.

Richards v Kulczyk & Ors [2022] EWHC 863 (Ch). Acted for the claimant in these proceedings which included claims in contract, unjust enrichment and under *Re Diplock*. Four of the defendants were served outside the jurisdiction and the Fifth Defendant disputed jurisdiction on the ground that the claims did not have a real prospect of success. In April 2022 the jurisdiction challenge was dismissed in relation to all claims. The proceedings subsequently settled.

Watson v Kea Investments Ltd [2019] EWCA Civ 1759: Acted for the successful respondent in this appeal concerning the fixing of rates of equitable interest where the defendant is liable as a constructive trustee. The Court of Appeal approved an approach which focussed on the return that the claimant would have made on proper trustee investments.

Private Client Trusts and Probate

Paul has substantial experience of private client, trusts and probate matters, particularly those involving allegations of fraud and/or significant company or commercial elements. Paul has acted in cases in numerous overseas jurisdictions including Jersey, BVI, Bermuda, Gibraltar and New Zealand.

Re Jesus Fellowship Community Trust (2024-ongoing): Acting for the trustees of a substantial trust which is being wound up after becoming mired in public controversy for several years. The trustees are applying to court for directions that they run a claims procedure and then be at liberty to distribute.

BNU v ATH (2024-2025): Acting for one of the heirs of a wealthy individual in a dispute over the administration of his BVI estate.

Re C Trusts (2021-2023): Acting for a settlor/beneficiary of various UK and offshore trusts in respect of a multi-faceted dispute with the protector of the trusts.

Re X and Y Trusts (2018-2022): Acted for the trustee of two trusts. Successful in obtaining a variety of directions, declarations and Benjamin orders.

Re the RS Trust (2018-2019): Acted for the protectors of a Bahamian trust which was the subject of directions

Professional Negligence

Paul has a strong record of success in professional negligence disputes, particularly on the claimant side. Paul has particular experience of professional negligence claims against solicitors, financial advisers and banks.

S v X (2024-ongoing): Acting for the claimant in this eight-figure professional negligence claim against a firm of solicitors.

E v X (2022-2023): Represented the claimant in a claim against a firm of solicitors based on negligent advice on the validity of a guarantee signed by a company director.

C v X (2018-2021): Represented the claimant in this claim against a firm of solicitors for, among other things, negligent misstatement. After several interlocutory hearings, the case settled.

F v G (2018): Acted for claimants who purchased a residential property in reliance on building regulations certification issued by the defendant approved inspector. Initially, claims were made against the inspector in deceit. The claimants then sought to amend to introduce claims in negligent misstatement. The defendant resisted the amendment, contending that as a matter of law it owed no duty of care. The amendment was allowed. Subsequently the case settled.

C v R Bank (2015): Acted for a care home group which had been missold an interest rate swap and suffered consequential losses as a result.

S v T Bank (2014): Advised a defendant bank on a claim against it under MCOB.

K v L Bank (2013-2014): Acted for a defendant bank facing a professional negligence claim arising out of an investment scheme. The case settled following a mediation.

P & GR v K (2009-2012): Acted for the claimants in this nine figure professional negligence claim against an investment bank. The claimants lost very substantial amounts of money during the financial crisis, when their heavily leveraged portfolio of investments plummeted in value and margin calls made by the bank forced the claimants to sell near the bottom of the market. The claimants alleged that the bank ought to have advised them to reduce risk and leverage. After a very detailed exchange of pre-action correspondence, the case settled without proceedings being used.

Insolvency

Paul's Insolvency work includes:

L v F & Ors (2024-ongoing): Acting for two defendants in this wrongful trading claim.

Harrington & Charles Trading Co Ltd & Ors v Mehta & Ors [2022] EWHC 1810 (Ch); [2022] EWHC 2960 (Ch); [2023] EWHC 307 (Ch); [2023] EWHC 609 (Ch); [2023] EWHC 998 (Ch); [2023] EWHC 2420 (Ch): Acted for the First to Fourth Defendants in this c. \$1 billion civil fraud claim in which the claimants were companies in liquidation (and their liquidators) and the claims included claims under sections 212, 213 and 423 of the Insolvency Act 1986. Paul appeared as sole or junior counsel at several substantial hearings, including relating to freezing injunctions, a jurisdiction dispute, a contested consolidation application, and strike out and summary judgment applications.

Kea Investments Ltd v Spartan Capital Ltd & Anor (2015-2017): Acted for the petitioner in this winding up petition in the Companies Court. The proceedings, which concerned an investment joint venture company, ran in parallel with two other sets of proceedings. The winding up petition was brought on two alternative bases: that the company was

insolvent, and that it was just and equitable to wind the company up. The jointly managed proceedings progressed to a three-month trial before Nugee J between May and July 2017. This aspect of the dispute settled during trial.

Kea Investments Ltd v Spartan Capital Ltd & Anor (2014-2015): Acted for the claimant in this just and equitable winding up application in the BVI. The claimant was one of two shareholders in the first defendant BVI company. The other shareholder applied to be joined as a party to the winding up application and sought to contest jurisdiction, relying upon an English jurisdiction clause contained in a shareholders' agreement. In a judgment delivered in October 2014, Bannister J dismissed the second defendant's jurisdiction challenge. The second defendant appealed to the BVI Court of Appeal but the appeal was compromised.

Recommendations

Chambers UK, 2026:

- Commercial Chancery
- Company
- Commercial Dispute Resolution
- Civil Fraud

Legal 500, 2026:

- Civil Fraud
- Company
- Commercial Litigation

Chambers Global:

- Dispute Resolution: Commercial Chancery
- Dispute Resolution: Commercial

Lexology:

- Private Client
 - Company & Partnership
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Quotes

"Paul stands out as being the most gifted individual in his generation. Outstanding intellect; outstanding court performer; caring and devoid of ego." Legal 500, 2026

"He produces documents at incredible speed and is the kind of person you can go to for complex issues across a range of jurisdictions. He has just got an incredible brain." Chambers UK 2026

"He is incredibly bright, cerebral, responsive and easy to work with. He is very good at spotting all the points." Chambers UK 2026

"Paul has excellent tactical instincts and the acumen to tackle the most complex and knotty legal issues." Chambers UK 2026

"Paul Adams' written advocacy is fantastic; he is really creative." Chambers UK 2026

"Paul is a superstar. He is brilliant, gifted and delightful to work with. A great operator, who is good with clients and very clever." Chambers UK 2025

"Paul is absolutely phenomenal and is someone to watch." Chambers UK 2025

"Paul is a fine operator who is great with clients. He is brilliant and delightful to work with." Chambers UK 2025

"Paul is tactically astute, incredibly collaborative and really commercial. He totally gets the client's situation and is quickly able work a way through." Chambers UK 2025

"Paul is very responsive and really on top of very complex factual detail. He is good on his feet and gets to the point." Chambers UK 2025

"Paul is super forensic and has an easy manner with the court. He has a very modern, conversational style and is a natural advocate." Chambers UK 2025

"Paul is extremely bright, clear and compelling on his feet, and leads with confidence." Legal 500, 2025

"Very well prepared in his approach to matters, succinct in his delivery and someone who had a very good manner with the judge. He was responsive (including out of hours) and was very forensic in his approach." Chambers & Partners, 2024

"Superb in every respect, his ability to process vast amounts of complex information and to cut through it to give clear, correct advice is dazzling." Legal 500 2024

"A really penetrating intellect – sound strategic judgement and the sort of calm demeanour that really inspires confidence." Legal 500 2024

"Very bright, brilliant attention to detail, very accessible, and always happy to help – a real team player." Legal 500 2024

"He has an excellent strategic brain, and is always thinking several steps ahead." Chambers UK 2024

"So clever and a good commercial thinker, he's all over the bigger picture and totally gets the client's sensitivities and nuances. He's also really creative in finding solutions." Chambers UK 2024

"He is extraordinarily bright, yet never anything other than easy and straightforward to deal with. His advocacy is lucid and persuasive." Legal 500 2023

"Exceptionally clever and provides advice and written documents with extraordinary speed. He is an excellent strategist and a first rate advocate – completely on top of all the detail; calm, measured and persuasive. A KC in waiting." Legal 500 2023

"A man with a superstar intellect." "He is staggeringly bright." Chambers UK 2023

"His written work is amazing and he has a lovely manner with clients. He is also very reliable." Chambers UK 2023

"Stunningly bright and very knowledgeable. His ability to recall a relevant document or authority is something to behold." Chambers UK 2023

"He is frighteningly bright, yet never anything other than easy and straightforward to deal with. He is a tenacious advocate, and his drafting is also the best I have ever come across (at any level)." "He is a delight to work with." Legal 500 2022

Publications

["Proprietary Claims by Constructive Trustees"](#), Trusts & Trustees, March 2024

["Pugachev Five Years On: Were the Trusts Really Bare Trusts?"](#), Trusts & Trustees, March 2022

"Interest as a Proxy for Investment Returns", Butterworths Journal of International Banking and Financial Law, July/August 2020

["The Two-Party Rule and Transactions Between Trusts With A Common Trustee"](#), Trusts & Trustees, Volume 18 Issue 9

In the Press

Sir Owen Glenn KNZM ONZM and Kea Investments Limited v Eric Watson, Novatrust Limited and others [2018] EWHC 2016 (Ch), The Barrister, 5 October

Glenn v Watson Trust Dispute, STEP Journal, 2nd August 2018

Property Investor Gets OK To Drop £129m Deal in Fraud Case, Law 360, 1st August 2018

Education & Qualifications

BA in Law - St Catherine's College, Oxford (Double First; ranked top in the University in moderations and finals)

BCL - St Catherine's College (Distinction; ranked top in the University)

BVC - BPP London (Outstanding; ranked top in the Law School)

Eldon Scholarship at the University of Oxford (2008)

Vinerian Scholarship at the University of Oxford (2006)

Wronker Law Prize at the University of Oxford (2005)

Memberships

Called to the Bar of the Eastern Caribbean Supreme Court (BVI) (2024)

