serle court

Richard Wilson KC

Call: 1996 | Silk: 2016

Richard Wilson is an elite barrister: experienced, incisive and with a fantastic client-side manner.

CHAMBERS & PARTNERS 2026

rwilson@serlecourt.co.uk +44 (0)20 7242 6105

Described by the Legal 500 as 'one of the stars of his generation', Richard Wilson KC has a practice encompassing litigation, drafting and advisory work across a wide range of traditional and commercial chancery, with a strong emphasis on trusts and probate (both contentious and non-contentious), related company and partnership law, claims under the Inheritance (Provision for Family and Dependants) Act 1975, tax, professional negligence and civil fraud.

Richard has been involved in many of the most significant and high-value cases in those areas in recent years, including: *Futter v Futter* [2013] UKSC 26 (the leading case on the Rule in *Re Hastings-Bass*); *Gany v Khan* [2018] UKPC 21 (claim to establish ownership of companies by BVI trust and setting aside appointment by trustees); *Grand View Private Trust Company v Wong* [2022] UKPC 47 (successful challenge to exercise of trustees' powers on the basis that it was for an improper purpose) *Dawson-Damer v. Grampian* [2025] UKPC 32 (high value breach of trust claim in The Bahamas with related litigation in England and Bermuda) and the *Hamersmith Stewart* litigation in the The Bahamas and other jurisdictions (high-value trust and estate dispute). He is also currently acting in a number of disputes concerning the estates of UHNWIs in England and other jurisdictions.

His work frequently involves offshore matters and issues of private international law. He has appeared in the Privy Council, the Supreme Court and Court of Appeal of Gibraltar, the Supreme Court and Court of Appeal of Bermuda, the Supreme Court of The Bahamas, the Grand Court of the Cayman Islands and the Eastern Caribbean Supreme Court and Court of Appeal. He has also given expert evidence of English Law in the Royal Courts of Jersey

and Guernsey. He frequently acts in cases in all of the principal offshore jurisdictions including those mentioned above. A significant proportion of his work involves clients from Asia, particularly Hong Kong.

Before commencing practice at the Bar, Richard worked as a tax consultant with Price Waterhouse (now PwC).

Expertise

Contact

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Trusts & Probate

Richard has extensive experience in trust and probate matters, ranging from contentious matters to applications under the Variation of Trusts Act 1958 and *Public Trustee v Cooper applications*. Richard acts in the full range of trust and estate litigation and has appeared in many of the most important cases in this area over the past twenty years. He has developed particular specialisms in multi jurisdictional trust disputes and also assisting trustees and their advisers to deal with the consequences of mistakes in the creation and administration of trusts. A significant part of Richard's practice is non-contentious, assisting trustees and beneficiaries in non-contentious court applications as well as advising on exercises of fiduciary powers, trust restructuring and carrying out 'stress testing' on existing and new structures.

Recent Cases

- *Grand View Private Trust Company v Wong* [2022] UKPC 47 – Richard (acting with James Weale and Charlotte Beynon) appeared for Tony Wang and successfully argued that exercises of trustee's powers in respect of an extremely valuable trust were void as a result of a breach of the improper purpose rule. Instructed by MJM and Stewarts Law.
- *Dawson-Damer v Grampian* [2025] UKPC 32 – Richard appeared (with Andrew Holden of XXIV Old Buildings and Sparsh Garg) for Ashley Dawson-Damer in long-running breach of trust litigation in The Bahamas, with related litigation in Bermuda and England & Wales. Instructed by Graham Thompon and Co and Charles Russell Speechlys
- *O'Herlihy v. Taylor* [2026] EWHC 505 (Ch) – Richard appeared (with Harry Martin) for the widow of a wealthy businessman defending a high-value 1975 Act claim. The claim was successfully defeated at an early stage, with the Court refusing leave to bring the claim out of time after a hotly contested trial of a preliminary issue. Instructed by Macfarlanes.
- *Lorenz v Caruana* [2025] EWCA Civ 606 – Richard (leading Jamie Randall) acted for the successful appellants in this appeal against the Judge's decision to strike out their claim to establish a secret trust. The matter will proceed to a trial in late 2026. Instructed by Withers.

Commercial Litigation

Richard's practice includes acting in a range of commercial disputes, often involving applications for freezing injunctions and other interim relief.

Professional Negligence

Richard is frequently instructed by Claimants, Defendants and insurers in matters relating to professional negligence, in particular relating to solicitors and accountants. Most of these claims settle on confidential terms. Richard has developed a particular specialism in assisting defendants and their insurers to mitigate loss by rectifying or setting aside transactions.

Recent Cases

- *Etroy v Speechly Bircham* [2023] EWHC 386 (Ch) – Richard appeared (with Jamie Randall) for the claimant who succeeded in establishing that he could bring a professional negligence claim long after the primary limitation period has expired. Instructed by Withers.

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Civil Fraud

Richard has acted in numerous civil fraud cases, particularly in the context of trusts, companies, accessory liability and MTIC fraud. He has also recently acted in a number of cases involving international sanctions.

He has extensive experience of making (and defending) applications for injunctions and disclosure orders, including freezing injunctions and search orders.

Richard has recently assisted Guernsey advocates in relation to claims to recover assets for liquidators of a hedge fund that had been the subject of a major fraud. He has also developed a particular specialism in assisting trustees and other fiduciaries in situations where trust funds are the subject of criminal investigations.

Recent cases have involved him appearing in the BVI for trustees seeking to distribute assets in circumstances where the family who set up the trust are being investigated by the authorities in the UK; advising Jersey trustees having to deal with issues arising out of criminal proceedings brought against beneficiaries in Italy; and assisting Jersey advocates in a claim to secure the release of company funds which the defendant bank refuses to release because of orders made by the US Courts in the context of criminal proceedings in that jurisdiction.

Richard also has considerable experience in relation to proceeds of crime matters, having acted in the past for the Crown in a number of criminal confiscation matters.

Richard also has considerable experience in relation to proceeds of crime matters, having acted in the past for the Crown in a number of criminal confiscation matters.

International

A substantial part of Richard's practice involves matters in offshore courts. Current cases include matters in the Channel Islands, Cayman, The Bahamas, Bermuda, the BVI, Antigua and Nevis.

Recent Cases

- *Grand View Private Trust Company v Wong* [2025] Bermuda Court of Appeal – Richard acts (with James Weale KC, Adrian de Froment and Charlotte Beynon) for Tony Wang, who is challenging a number of extremely high-value trusts governed by the law of Bermuda. Judgment is currently awaited from the Bermuda Court of Appeal . Instructed by MJM.
- *Grand View Private Trust Company v Wong* [2022] UKPC 47 – Richard (acting with James Weale and Charlotte Beynon) appeared for Tony Wang and successfully argued that exercises of trustee's powers in respect of an extremely valuable trust were void as a result of a breach of the improper purpose rule. Instructed by MJM and Stewarts Law.
- *Dawson-Damer v Grampian* [2025] UKPC 32 – Richard appeared (with Andrew Holden of XXIV Old Buildings and Sparsh Garg) for Ashley Dawson-Damer in long-running breach of trust ltigiation in The Bahamas, with related litigation in Bermuda and England & Wales. Instructed by Graham Thompon and Co and Charles Russell Speechlys
- *Hamersmith-Stewart v. Cromwell* [2023] Bahamas Supreme Court – Richard appeared (assisted by James Weale and Zahler Bryan) in this dispute over the application and effect of 'no contest' clauses in The Bahamas. Instructed by Graham Thompson & Co.
- *In the Matter of the Billevese Trust* [2025] GRC 060 – Richard assisted Guernsey advocates in this claim for the removal of a trust protector and changes in the investment management structure. Instructed by Ogier
- *BX v T Limited* [2025] GCA 063 – Richard (acting with James Weale, Harry Martin and Zahler Bryan) assisted Guernsey

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advocated in this important case concerning the information rights of objects of a power of addition to a trust. Instructed by Walkers.

- *AA v. JTC* [2024] Cayman Grand Court – Richard (assisted by James Weale and Zahler Bryan) appeared for the enforcer of a Cayman STAR trust seeking directions from the court concerning the exercise of his powers. This is considered to be an important decision establishing the right of an enforcer to make applications of this kind. Instructed by Carey Olsen and Macfarlanes.
- *Re The A Trusts* [2026] Cayman Grand Court – Richard appeared for the settlor of a number of valuable trusts in this contested application in respect of the costs of proceedings which had been abandoned by a beneficiary who had challenged a change of trustee on the grounds of capacity. Instructed by Campbells.

Company

Richard has acted in numerous cases in this field, particularly those involving allegations of breach of duty by office holders or unfair prejudice.

Private International Law

Richard's cases frequently involve issues of private international law and he has appeared in a number of leading cases in this field.

Property

Richard has extensive experience in real property matters, in particular matters relating to trusts of land and proprietary estoppel.

Tax

Richard has experience in this field across a wide range of matters.

Matrimonial Finance: Trusts & Company Law

Richard has experience in this field across a wide range of matters.

Recent Cases

- *Rotenberg v Rotenberg* [2024] EWFC 185 – Richard appeared for a third party joined to the claims in the divorce of a high-profile couple, involving a dispute over rights in a UK property. Instructed by Peters May.

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Testimonials

"Richard Wilson is an elite barrister: experienced, incisive and with a fantastic client-side manner."

Chambers & Partners 2026

"Richard Wilson is brilliant on his feet, absolutely superb."

Chambers High Net Worth 2026

"He's very much at the top for trust litigation, onshore or offshore. He's very good on the big domestic succession cases. He is in a lot of demand and for good reason, I'd say. He's at the top of his game."

Chambers High Net Worth 2026

"One of the stars of his generation - equally good for strategic advice in conference as he is on his feet in court, Richard is the go-to barrister for any complicated trust matter."

Legal 500

"Richard has been involved in big cases. One of the things that I picked up working with him is his invaluable ability to approach cases from a novel angle and come up with effective solutions."

Chambers & Partners 2026

"Richard Wilson is excellent. He is what you want a leader to be in a case. He works well with his junior and has a real gravitas with clients."

Chambers & Partners 2026

"Richard has huge experience when it comes to marrying up chancery law and family law."

Chambers & Partners 2026

"A real heavyweight advocate who commands respect from opponents and judges."

Chambers & Partners 2026

"Richard Wilson is really brilliant, he's an eminent contentious trust specialist and the quality of his work is remarkable."

Chambers & Partners 2026

"Richard is excellent, easy to deal with and super smart."

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Chambers & Partners 2026

"Richard has incredible trusts knowledge and is outstanding. He will give you the support technically, but is also very friendly and approachable. I trust him absolutely."

Chambers & Partners 2026

"Richard's mastery of trust law, combined with unflappable courtroom presence and razor sharp advocacy, makes him the go-to silk for high-stakes, multi-jurisdictional disputes."

Chambers & Partners 2026

"Richard is excellent to work with. He's very prepared and totally immersed in the case."

Chambers & Partners 2026

"Richard has been involved in big cases. One of the things that I picked up working with him is his invaluable ability to approach cases from a novel angle and come up with effective solutions."

Chambers & Partners High Net Worth 2025

"He is excellent, what you want a leader to be in a case. He works well with his junior and has a real gravitas with clients. He knows what he is doing."

Chambers & Partners High Net Worth 2025

"Richard Wilson is an elite barrister: experienced, incisive and with a fantastic client-side manner."

Chambers & Partners High Net Worth 2025

"Richard is responsive, technically strong and very user-friendly."

Chambers & Partners 2025

"Extremely bright, good on his feet and a pleasure to work with."

Chambers & Partners 2025

"Richard is clever, highly commercial, very approachable and incredibly responsive. His advocacy is fantastic; he's very calm, he doesn't get rattled and he is very specific."

Chambers & Partners 2025

"Richard is very practical and strategic in his thinking, and adept at readjusting, speedily and accurately, when matters take an

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unexpected course. He's accessible, proactive and client-friendly."

Chambers & Partners 2025

"He is much in demand by solicitors and brings a very unique, lateral approach to problem solving. He thinks independently and creatively, and applies his technical capabilities very well."

Chambers & Partners 2025

"Richard has got excellent judgement and knows the law inside out. In court, he has real presence."

Chambers & Partners 2025

"Richard quickly absorbs even complicated factual scenarios and is able to impressively master every element of a trust brief."

Chambers & Partners 2025

"Approachable, diligent, experienced and really pleasant to work with, as well as someone who brings a whole new perspective to a case."

Chambers & Partners 2025

"Richard is awesome. He is so thorough, very collaborative and so user-friendly."

Chambers & Partners 2025

"He is very good - extremely bright, good on his feet and a pleasure to work with."

Chambers & Partners 2025

"Richard is one of the leading KCs for offshore trust work."

Chambers & Partners 2025

"Richard is clever, incisive and creative in his problem-solving."

Legal 500 2025

Recommendations

- Shortlisted for Chancery Silk of the Year (Chambers UK, 2026)

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- Private Client (Global Elite Directory)
- Top Recommended Contentious Trust Lawyers – Offshore & Trusts (Spears500)
- Traditional Chancery (Chambers & Partners HNW)
- Offshore, Private Wealth: Trusts UK (Chambers Global)
- Private Client Global Elite (Legal Week)
- Traditional Chancery (Chambers & Partners)
- Offshore (Chambers & Partners)
- Trusts (Chambers & Partners)
- Private Client: Trusts & Probate (Legal 500)
- English Bar Offshore: Private (Legal 500)
- Chancery; Trusts & Personal Tax Law (Best Lawyers)
- Listed in the Citywealth Leaders' List as a prominent barrister in the field of trusts

Publications

Richard writes extensively on subjects within his fields of expertise. He has had numerous articles published in journals such as Trusts and Trustees, Private Client Business, The Trusts and Estates Law and Tax Journal and Elderly Client Adviser. He is the co-author of 'The Trustee Act 2000: a Practical Guide' (Jordans, 2001). Richard is a former editor of the Trusts Quarterly Review and is the Consultant Editor of the 'Trusts and Settlements' volume of Halsbury's Laws of England.

Memberships

- Chancery Bar Association
- ACTAPS
- STEP
- Professional Negligence Bar Association

Education & Qualifications

- LLM, University of London

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- LLB, University of Sheffield

Seminars & Lectures

Richard lectures on a wide range of subjects. He has spoken at many of the leading professional conference. He has lectured to a number of STEP branches in the UK and around the World, including the Cayman Islands, Guernsey, New York, Gibraltar and Bermuda.

BSB Registration

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VAT Number

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