

Family Finance Debate Series 2025



St John's
CHAMBERS



February & March 2025



Registration: 4.30pm – 5.00pm

Starts: 5.00pm

Finishes: 6.00pm for drinks and canapes



St John's Chambers, Bristol

**£25 + VAT
each – 25%
discount if
you book all 4**

**Is the threshold for conduct arguments set too high?
Is it time for domestic abuse to be accepted as 'relevant conduct?'**

**Thursday 6th
February**

Georgina Swinglehurst v Bethany Scarsbrook
Chaired by Christopher Sharp KC

**Is the current discretionary system in England & Wales fit for purpose?
Has the time come for a move to greater certainty?**

**Thursday 27th
February**

Jody Atkinson v Vivien Croly
Chaired by Jenny Wilson

Are financial remedy proceedings misogynistic? Who really comes off worse?

**Thursday 13th
March**

Nick Miller v Zoë Saunders
Chaired by Richard Norman

Taking a Stand(ish): has matrimonialisation gone too far?

**Thursday 20th
March**

Chelsea Bartlett v Sophie Smith-Holland
Chaired by Jack Harris

Debate 1 – 6th February



Georgina Swinglehurst

Year of call: 2019

“Georgina is always thoroughly prepared, and her in-depth knowledge of the law is apparent in her presentation. Her advocacy skills help in securing the best outcome for the client.”

The Legal 500, 2025

Georgina is a specialist family law barrister who acts in all areas of private family law, specifically financial remedy proceedings, private children disputes, issues of jurisdiction including international child relocation, cohabitation disputes and applications under the FLA 1996 (domestic violence). Georgina is ranked in the Legal 500 as a “Rising Star (Tier 1)” in the category of divorce and financial remedy. Georgina has experience of dealing with complexities in financial remedy proceedings, including but not limited to issues of non-disclosure of marital assets, setting aside transactions intended to prevent financial relief, obtaining reporting restriction orders for high profile clients within financial proceedings and enforcement and committal applications.



Bethany Scarsbrook

Year of call: 2014

“Bethany has excellent attention to detail. She has good analytical skills and the ability to process a large amount of complex information.” The Legal 500, 2025

Bethany advises and represents clients in the full range of financial remedy proceedings. Bethany routinely deals with high-net-worth cases involving complex asset structures, trusts, pension issues and assets outside the jurisdiction. She has acted in cases of suspected non-disclosure and urgent applications under Section 37 of the Matrimonial Causes Act 1973. She is ranked as a leading junior in the Legal 500 and Chambers UK and is described by clients for being razor-sharp in her ability to find the key to the case. Bethany has recently been awarded 1st place in the 2nd Edition HNW Divorce essay competition and described as a ‘Future Thought Leader’ in high net-worth divorce.



Christopher Sharp KC

Year of call: 1975

Silk: 1999

“Christopher is excellent in all areas. His preparation and attention to detail are second to none. As a barrister, Christopher is hard to better.” Chambers UK, 2025

With many reported cases, Christopher is frequently instructed on appeals to the Court of Appeal. He has extensive experience in high-value financial remedy, ToLATA and Schedule 1 cases, including those with a foreign element, many of which are dealt with by way of negotiated settlements or private FDR. His experience in personal injury work also translates to cases involving catastrophic injury to one partner where, in subsequent divorce proceedings, financial complexities surround the damages awarded and the particular needs of the injured party.

Debate 2 – 27th February

“Vivien’s goal was to get the best outcome for her client and that she did, whilst showing compassion, understanding and exuding professionalism and competency.”

Lay Client, Divorce and Financial Remedy



Vivien Croly

Year of call: 2019

Vivien specialises in family financial disputes, including matrimonial finance and applications made under Schedule 1 of the Children Act 1989. Vivien was recently nominated ‘Family Law Young Barrister of the Year’ at the [Family Law Awards 2024](#). Vivien represents both applicants and respondents at all stages of the process, including mediations and arbitrations. She has experience of dealing with complexities including trusts, pensions, property, non-disclosure, setting aside transactions intended to prevent financial relief, pre-acquired / inherited assets, jurisdictional issues, third-party interests and enforcement. She combines a high attention to detail with a sensitive awareness of the emotional strain that can accompany financial remedy proceedings.

“Jody is an outstanding barrister and one of the smartest people I know. Jody is extremely sharp and focused and gives easily accessible advice.” Chambers UK 2025



Jody Atkinson

Year of call: 2005

Jody’s divorce and financial remedy practice focuses on the most high-value and intractable cases. He is often instructed by solicitors when divorces involve complicating factors such as; Family businesses, Family trusts, Overseas elements, Disputes concerning third party ownership of property (such as by parents or siblings) Jody is also a popular choice for disputes between unmarried parties, which are generally resolved by a combination of the law of trusts, and Schedule 1 of the Children Act 1989. Jody is a national level expert on the Child Support Act 1991. He acts for both mothers and fathers and can make sense of and effectively challenge the decisions of the CMS. Unlike most family lawyers, he regularly appears in the First Tier Tribunal, and has had several successful appeals in the Upper Tribunal. He accepts public access instructions in suitable child support cases.

“Very articulate on her feet, efficient and well considered in her preparation.” Instructing Solicitor



Jenny Wilson

Year of call: 2021

Jenny has developed a busy practice having represented multiple clients in concurrent financial remedies and Children Act proceedings to ensure they benefit from continuity of counsel. Jenny takes a client-centred approach in all matters and has been described as presenting as counsel “with several years under their belt”. Jenny regularly represents clients at all stages of financial remedies proceedings including where issues such as conduct, non-disclosure of assets, third party intervenors and enforcement have arisen.

Debate 3 – 13th March



Nick Miller

Year of call: 1994

“A reassuring, persuasive advocate, with an eloquent style and client-focused approach.” The Legal 500

Nick specialises exclusively in divorce and financial remedy cases. He has an in-depth knowledge and expertise of the issues and the law, including consideration of pensions and actuarial issues along with tax and commercial considerations.

Prior to joining the Bar in 1994, Nick was a Solicitor and a partner in a Bristol firm. He was a founder member of the SFLA (now Resolution) and secretary of the Bristol SFLA for ten years. He lectures regularly on topical issues, both in house and at conferences. His peers describe him as having a no-nonsense approach and is always very thorough in his preparation of a case.



Zoë Saunders
Head of Family & Divorce

Year of call: 2003

“Zoë is fiercely intelligent and her ability to grasp the issues of a case quickly is second-to-none. Her preparation of case is extremely thorough, as is her breadth of knowledge.” The Legal 500, 2025

Zoë is a financial remedy specialist dealing with complex cases involving significant assets as well as more modest asset cases. Zoë has extensive experience of cohabitation disputes involving ToLATA and Applications under Schedule 1 of the Children Act and is often asked to advise both in writing and in conference as well as acting in disputed cases in the High Court, County Court and before the land registry adjudicator. She has expertise in financial remedy cases involving farms and farming businesses, multiple properties, trusts of land, complex pensions and insolvency. Zoë has experience in cases involving confiscation orders and proceeds of crime act issues and international enforcement of maintenance orders.



Richard Norman

Year of call: 2009

“Richard is a go-to barrister in Bristol. His client care skills are excellent, as is his eye for detail.” The Legal 500, 2025

Richard is a family law specialist with particular expertise in financial remedies (Matrimonial Causes Act 1973 and Schedule 1 of the Children Act 1989). Richard was for several years ranked by Chambers UK as the ‘up and coming’ family law junior on the Western Circuit before moving up the rankings as an expert in his field. Richard has considerable experience of cases involving complex issues such as companies, partnerships, farms, pensions, trusts, tracing assets, enforcement and international jurisdiction to name but a few. Richard acts in cases with asset bases ranging from hundreds of thousands of pounds to multi-million pound disputes.

Debate 4 – 20th March



Sophie Smith-Holland

Year of call: 2015

“Sophie is always thoroughly prepared. She has an eye for detail and robustly represents clients in court. Her advice is always clear and concise.” The Legal 500, 2025

Sophie has extensive experience of representing applicants and respondents at all stages of proceedings, from FDAs, preliminary issue hearings, FDRs and final hearings. Sophie is regularly instructed in cases where there are complex issues concerning third-party interests, non-matrimonial property, non-disclosure and enforcement. Sophie also accepts instructions in relation to applications brought under Schedule 1 of the Children Act 1989, either as free-standing or concurrent applications.



Chelsea Bartlett

Year of call: 2021

Chelsea is a specialist family law practitioner with a broad practice across all areas of family law. In divorce & financial remedies, Chelsea has a growing practice and appears for applicants and respondents at all stages of the financial remedies process. Alongside her practice in this area, Chelsea has given a seminar on Schedule 1 proceedings to local solicitors and has appeared on the St John’s Family Law Podcast channel to discuss domestic abuse as conduct in financial remedy matters. Chelsea is meticulous and approaches cases with a high attention to detail, however, she also brings compassion and sensitivity to her clients.



Jack Harris
Head of Divorce & Financial Remedy

Year of call: 2012

“Jack is the counsel you want on your side; detailed, fantastic preparation, and brilliant with clients.” Chambers UK, 2025

Jack is frequently instructed in cases with complex issues involving companies, farms, trusts, pensions, pre/post nuptial agreements, foreign and inherited wealth, and cases involving disputes about matrimonial / non-matrimonial property and intervenor issues, as well as cases involving more modest means. An empathetic and pragmatic advocate, Jack is known for his ability swiftly narrow down the key issues. He will strive to achieve settlement wherever possible but will take a robust approach if litigation is inevitable.