

1GC | Family Law

David Burles MCI Arb

Year of Call: 1984



Practice Overview

Recognised in the legal directories for his expertise in matrimonial finance, David specialises in the whole range of family-related financial disputes as well as private law issues in respect of children, including international issues concerning children.

His work includes applications for financial remedies arising out of divorce or civil partnership dissolution and under Schedule 1 to the Children Act 1989 in respect of unmarried parents; property disputes under the Trust of Land and Appointment of Trustees Act 1996 ('TOLATA'), and cases under the Inheritance (Provision for Family and Dependents) Act 1975. David is also much in demand as an Arbitrator and as a Private FDR Judge and has conducted many successful PFDR's.

As an advocate, David represents clients in court as well as in supported mediations, in 'big money' cases and also in difficult smaller cases, and acts for husbands, wives, mothers and fathers alike. In appropriate cases, he is happy to accept public access instructions.

What the Directories Say

David is consistently ranked as a Leading Junior in both The Legal 500 and Chambers and Partners.

"Very good at listening to the parties, he's very clear in his opinions and is always happy to go the extra mile to get the settlement done." **Band 1 - Chambers and Partners, 2025**

"Due to his judicial experience, he can see both sides of the argument very clearly. As a result, in court he is always calm and courteous to opposing counsel." **Band 2 - Chambers and Partners, 2025**

"David is a consummate professional who adopts an easy-going style with clients. He takes a focused and robust approach to his advocacy." **Band 2 - Chambers and Partners, 2025**

"David has a unique style of advocacy. He draws the courtroom with him rather than presenting, which is very effective. He is good with vulnerable clients, working with them rather than presenting the correct approach." **Tier 2 - Legal 500, 2024**

"David has such a vast range of experience and is very familiar with everyone at the Bar. He's able to speak in the right way for the right case, is an extremely good advocate and he can evolve and adapt to whatever the case needs."

Band 2 - Chambers and Partners, 2023

"David is brilliant with the clients and is amazing on his feet. Behind his relaxed style, he has a razor-sharp mind." **Band 2 - Chambers and Partners, 2023**

"David is an exceptional barrister, who is always extremely well prepared and have a full understanding of the case and issues involved. He is also an excellent communicator, who is able to deal with even the most difficult of clients and put them at ease. He rarely gets flustered and is able to deal with any situation which might arise." **Tier 2 – Legal 500, 2023**

"A silk in all but name." **Tier 2 – Legal 500, 2022**

"Gives thoughtful and considered advice which is invariably not only sensible but accurate. More than a match for any QC." **Tier 2 - Legal 500, 2021**

"Has a calm, charming manner and is ferociously bright." "Excellent at handling nasty cases and difficult clients, he works as part of a team, and is straight-talking and commercial."
"David is well prepared and his position statements are very thorough." **Band 2 - Chambers and Partners, 2021**

"Has an excellent attention to detail when it comes to paperwork and a relaxed but focused presenting style in court." **Tier 2 - Legal 500, 2020**

"A superlative advocate with a knowledge of family law practice and procedure that is second to none." **Band 2 - Chambers and Partners, 2020**

"He's a tenacious advocate and a quick thinker, who commands the respect of the courtroom" **Band 2 - Chambers and Partners, 2020**

"Has winning ways with judges and clients." **Legal 500, 2019**

"David is always reliable, conscientious and most courteous, even when under pressure. He makes the most awkward situations pleasant, reassuring and even enjoyable for the client due to his lively sense of humour. In addition, he gets to the crux of financial issues quickly and pragmatically." **Chambers and Partners, 2019**

"Utterly charming and someone with a real winning way with the judges. They obviously like him, which means they listen to him. He has a fantastic manner with clients too. He can talk to them in a way that is appropriate." **Chambers and Partners, 2018**

"One has complete confidence in him to check every detail." **Legal 500, 2017**

"He is an absolute pleasure to work with; he is personable with clients, persuasive, and precise in drafting. He will regularly alight on the solution that everyone else has missed. He is unfailingly courteous and judges obviously respect him." **Chambers and Partners, 2017**

"He has all the attributes you would want from a barrister." **Legal 500, 2016**

"He is incredibly conscientious and has a superb eye for detail. His ability to distil complex facts is very impressive. Proactive and very easy to deal with, he always goes the extra mile for his clients, who can be assured of his commitment to their case."

Chambers and Partners, 2016

"Exceptionally good with clients." **Legal 500, 2015**

"Innovative, precise in his advice and a barrister who continually provides an excellent level of service. He understands high-value, complex cases, and has extensive knowledge of the interaction between company, trust and tax, and family law." **Chambers and Partners, 2015**

"An excellent and attuned advocate in which the judiciary have confidence." **Legal 500, 2014**

"Comes highly recommended for a wide range of work, including children law, but is particularly highlighted for handling matrimonial finance matters." Expertise: "He is innovative and continually provides an excellent level of service. He understands high-value and complex cases." **Chambers and Partners, 2014**

"The 'very impressive' David Burles who is noted by sources for his expertise in matrimonial finance cases. His specific areas of focus include ancillary relief and Inheritance Act work." **Chambers and Partners, 2013**

"A 'very experienced, helpful and approachable' lawyer who undertakes matrimonial finance matters involving significant assets. Sources praise his dedication to his clients, saying 'He is prepared to fight hard, often against the odds, to achieve the best possible outcome'." **Chambers and Partners, 2012**

"David Burles is much in demand for his expertise in the less mainstream aspects of matrimonial finance such as TOLATA and Inheritance Act matters." **Chambers and Partners, 2011**

"A very hard worker...musters all the facts." **Chambers and Partners, 2010**

"Knows the law from back to front..." **Chambers and Partners, 2009**

"Particularly well regarded...has a way of making the most complicated matters simple and accessible to the court." **Chambers and Partners, 2008**

Notable Cases

David has represented clients in a significant number of reported cases, including 'big-money' ancillary claims and complex cases under the TOLATA jurisdiction, which include Family and Chancery Division decisions as well as cases decided by the Court of Appeal.

His reported cases include:

RN v DA (divorce - rescission of decree nisi) [2023] EWFC 255 (B) - 1GC Summary

FN v AC [2019] EWHC 3806 (Fam)

ABC v PM & Anor [2015] EWFC 32

N v N (Ancillary Relief) [2010] 2 FLR 1093 (Ancillary relief case with assets of £16m, much inherited and held within a private limited company).

4 Eng Ltd v Harper and others (No 2), [2009] EWHC 2633 (Ch); [2009] WLR (D) 307 (Acting for spouse of bankrupt in £8m bankruptcy case)

Dixon v Marchant (CA) [2008] 1 FLR 655 - (Appeal to the Court of Appeal concerning a wife's remarriage within a few months of her maintenance being capitalised)

Young v Lauretani (Ch) [2007] 2 FLR 1211 (Property dispute between cohabitants following relationship breakdown concerning the interpretation of their separation agreement)

Re H (Abduction) (CA) [2007] 1 FLR 242 (Hague Convention child abduction appeal concerning the weight to be attached to the child's wishes and feelings)

Re G (Secure Accommodation) (CA) [2000] 2 FLR 259 (secure accommodation appeal);

Re VB (Minors: Child Abduction) (Rights of Custody) (CA) [1999] 2 FLR 192 (Hague Convention child abduction appeal concerning 'rights of custody')

N v N (Jurisdiction: Pre-Nuptial Agreement) Times 12.7.99 [1999] 2 FLR 745 (ancillary relief - status of / enforceability of an undertaking to provide a Get in Orthodox Jewish divorce proceedings).

Education

LLB Hons, Bristol University

Post Graduate Certificate in Sports Law (Kings College, London) (1998)

Gilbert Cunningham Prize Winner, Middle Temple (1990)

Appointments

MCI Arb (2021)

David is a Deputy District Judge having been appointed in 2007. He sits predominantly in the Central Family Court hearing complex financial cases but also sits in London and on the South East Circuit sitting in the general civil jurisdiction. In 2010 David was one of only a small number of Deputy District Judges 'ticketed' to private law disputes concerning children. His expertise includes applications for ancillary relief/ financial orders arising out of divorce or civil partnership dissolution; applications for financial remedies under Schedule 1 to the Children Act 1989 in respect of unmarried parents.

In 2018 David was a member of the Legal Advisory Group to the Law Commission's Enforcement of Family Financial Order Project, which proved to be the platform for the significant and long-awaited reforms that followed the Law Commission's report in the enforcement jurisdiction.

Memberships & Associations

Common Law Bar Association

Family Law Bar Association

Legal Advisory Group to the Law Commission's Enforcement of Family Financial Orders Project - 2018

FLBA Member on the Resolution Advisory Group to Lord Lester's proposed Cohabitation / Co-Dependants bill.

Legal Advisory Group to the Law Commission Cohabitation Law Project (2005 – 2007)

Publications

David has authored many articles in his area of specialist interest and has also contributed to text books and legal encyclopaedia's alike. His most recent work includes the following:

Co-author of DIY Divorce & Separation: The Expert Guide to Representing Yourself (Jordan Publishing), 2014 <http://diydivorce.familylaw.co.uk/1GC-Blog>

Applications under Schedule 1 to the Children Act 1989, Jordans, 2010 – David is the contributor of the chapter concerning the approach of the courts to the making of orders under Schedule 1.

Halsbury's Laws, Vol 5 (Children and Young Persons) [2007] – contributor on Schedule 1 claims, Child Support.

Butterworths Civil Court Precedents – (Children/Family Breakdown) – contributor, Civil Partnerships.

Schedule 1 Cases – Recent Developments - Family Law Week – April 2006

The Footballer's Divorce – A Game of Two Halves - Sport and the Law Journal - (2005) Volume 13, Issue 3

"Burns v Burns" - 20 Years On - Family Law 2003, 834

s 37 MCA 1973 and shares - Family Law 1999, 578

Conduct and Ancillary Relief - Family Law 1997, 804

Seminars and Lectures

David has delivered many seminars on specialist subjects within his expertise, including topics such as capitalising maintenance orders; 'big money' financial cases; Issues involving interests in privately limited companies in divorce; TOLATA disputes, Schedule 1 claims, International relocation of children. His seminars have been delivered for professional organisations such as Jordans and CLT as well as delivering and chairing many seminars for 1 Garden Court.

He gave a webinar on "[The New Costs Rules in Financial Remedy Cases](#)" as part of the 1GC Family Law Webinar series (May 2020).

Personal

Keen on sport, David plays hockey, golf and cricket and is a keen cyclist. He is married with three children and, when not in London, spends much of his time in Wales, where he indulges his passion

for long-distance vegetable growing. He enjoys the theatre and is a keen supporter of The Bush Theatre, close to his home in Shepherds Bush.