



Chambers UK

Leading Set 2012 – Commercial Chancery

Perhaps the single most attractive quality of 11 Stone Buildings is the sheer number of disciplines in which its members are experienced. The set is well known for its expertise in fraud, IP, insolvency and real property law, as well as company and trusts litigation. The recent arrival of two new silks has been a real fillip for a set which is now seen as being on the up as a result of advances made since the arrival a couple of years ago of chambers director Michael Couling.

The "very impressive" **Jeremy Cousins QC** joins from Selborne Chambers, a move which has given added vigour to the set. His is a broad-based, classic commercial chancery practice, which has lately seen him take on a number of high-stakes banking and finance cases. Cousins joins the likes of the highly respected **Alan Gourgey QC**, who is "a fantastic advocate" with an enviable reputation for his efforts in disputes involving joint ventures, franchising, commodities contracts, share sale agreements and banking issues. His work is taking on an increasingly international dimension. Another new and highly prized acquisition is "top-quality lawyer" **Lexa Hilliard QC**, who joins from 3-4 South Square. Among her recent cases, she has acted in a shareholder dispute pertaining to a pharmaceutical company, and is appearing in a similar dispute regarding a group of companies operating in Australia and the United Arab Emirates. This "canny tactician" has also handled a number of professional negligence actions against law and accountancy firms.

Sources recommend senior junior **Tim Penny** as a "superb and charming advocate." A lot of his work before the Chancery Division is fraud-related, or else involves claims of breach of fiduciary duty. He has been busy of late acting in the matter of *Jenington & Others v Assaubayev & Others*, a major piece of litigation concerning fraud claims against the former controllers of a Kazakh mining operation. Distinguished colleague **Edward Cohen** has a well-deserved reputation at the Chancery Bar and beyond for his work on all manner of commercial chancery cases, ranging from contract and shareholder disputes to property litigation and tax avoidance claims. A "very bright man who is doing very well," **Jonathan Lopian** has a chancery practice that is roughly equally divided between insolvency and company law disputes arising from breaches of contract, breaches of fiduciary duty and the disqualification of directors. **Birgitta Meyer** also impresses market sources with her forceful and effective advocacy. A number of legal areas make up her practice, among them

insolvency, an area in which she is considered an expert. **Iain Pester** comes highly recommended for his strong work across the spectrum of commercial chancery. His work takes in contract, shareholder, partnership and joint venture disputes, as well as insolvency and fraud actions. His good working knowledge of German and Russian are appreciated by clients from CEE. Finally, **Jamie Riley** enjoys a growing profile due to the strength of his varied company, fraud and insolvency law practice. He has an interesting line in sports and media law as well. **Max Mallin** enjoys the support of instructing solicitors for the depth and breadth of his knowledge base. His extensive understanding of financial disputes is underlined by his background in investment banking. **David Peters** provides guidance on a diverse selection of concerns spanning company, partnership, contractual and insolvency disputes. Highlights include acting for the All England Lawn Tennis Club over urgent relief on the illegal resale of Wimbledon tickets.

Leading Silk and Junior 2012 – Commercial Dispute Resolution

Alan Gourgey QC of 11 Stone Buildings is a particular favourite amongst solicitors thanks to his "hands-on approach" and "easy manner with clients." They further note: "He quickly grasps, and then clearly explains, the most complex of issues." He recently advised Hawksford Trustees on various claims valued at between £10 million and £20 million relating to a share sale agreement for a travel group of companies. At the same set, **Max Mallin** also impresses market observers as an "astute and user-friendly" junior. Having worked in international investment banking before being called to the Bar, Mallin's practice is centred on commercial disputes arising within financial markets.

Leading Set 2011 – Commercial Chancery

It is the quality of clerking on offer at 11 Stone Buildings that keeps solicitors coming back on a whole host of chancery matters, with interviewees casting light on the "brilliant communication skills" and "attention to detail" provided by Michael Couling's clerking team. This support network nicely complements the barristers themselves, who offer "reasoned and thoughtful opinions." Insolvency is the set's principal strength but it is well capable of handling chancery matters of every kind.

Chief among the stable of juniors at the set is **Tim Penny**, who is awarded plaudits for his "no-nonsense approach" and "compelling advocacy." He can tackle a wide array of chancery-related issues, but has really won his spurs by developing a niche in freezing orders. Many of his cases are international in nature, as illustrated by his representation of one of the defendants in the Cadogan Oil fraud proceedings. Penny is at a set headed by **Edward Cohen**, a company law, commercial litigation and professional negligence expert who is "probing in his analysis." Others at Cohen's set include the "utterly professional" **Iain Pester**, who "adds a dash of inspiration to proceedings" and produces "thorough, well-prepared statements." Well capable of dealing with a broad range of issues, he is as happy handling civil fraud and insolvency work as he is partnership law and professional negligence. **Jonathan Lopian** has recently come off the Treasury Counsel B Panel and ramped up his commercial chancery caseload on both the litigation and advisory fronts. Trust, breaches of fiduciary duty and partnership disputes all fall within his remit, and his corporate finance background holds in him good stead for anything with a banking or financial services tinge to it. He is recommended along with the "robust" **Birgitta Meyer**. "She has a great tactical appreciation for how the other side works," says one source, with another adding that "we feel confident she will get her teeth into the details and relate well to the client." Finally at the set, **Jamie Riley** is a strong presence in the Companies Court.

Leading Silk and Junior 2011 – Commercial Dispute Resolution

Alan Gourgey QC of 11 Stone Buildings is an "incisive and dynamic thinker" who exhibits a "down-to-earth approach and magnetic courtroom charisma." His practice comprises contractual, commercial fraud and IT matters, and he recently defended NatWest against breach of contract and duty of care claims valued at several million pounds. Gourgey can turn to juniors of the calibre of **Max Mallin** at his set. Mallin is a "smooth advocate" who one instructing solicitor considers to be "the most approachable barrister I've instructed." He recently represented the claimant in a multimillion-dollar breach of fiduciary duty claim.

Leading Set 2010 – Commercial Chancery

11 Stone Buildings impresses its clients with its capacity for change, with one source reporting that the set "seems to be trying hard to modernise – to make its barristers more receptive and more commercially minded." The set has positively reorganised its clerking, and maintains an excellent array of juniors. The future, it would seem, is rosy for this set. A member of the Attorney General's B Panel, **Jonathan Lopian** is principally recognised for his work on behalf of central government. He has been acting for HMRC in an ongoing case concerning the administration and liquidation of Farepak. **Tim Penny** impresses sources with his "highly analytical and creative approach." He is further appreciated for the fact that he is "always approachable and very client-friendly – Tim is always prepared to listen to ideas." He maintains a broad practice in commercial and chancery disputes, and is recognised by sources for his specialism in IP, sport and media and entertainment. **Iain Pester** combines general commercial and chancery litigation with advisory work, and impresses sources with his specific expertise in fraud, insolvency and partnership-based cases. Head of chambers **Edward Cohen** is also recommended. Thirty-five years and more at the Bar have made him into "a wise old head who is never likely to be put off his stride."

Leading Silk and Junior 2010 – Commercial Dispute Resolution

11 Stone Buildings houses two illustrious names of the Commercial Bar. **Alan Gourgey QC** is "hard-working, quick, sharp and good in court." His practice is wide-ranging, covering partnership and shareholder, insolvency, fraud, sports, media and IT disputes. He is hailed as "a brilliant all-rounder and a joy to work with." His stablemate **Max Mallin** is a highly respected authority in finance litigation and commercial fraud. Sources agree that his unique insight into the world of high finance is, in part, a result of his pre-Bar incarnation as an international bond trader on Wall Street and in the City.

Leading Set 2009 – Commercial Chancery

Although some concerns were raised by interviewees regarding the lack of uniformity of quality at this set, most were in agreement that it offers a number of solid practitioners who are well up to the task. Insolvency is its key strength, but it is more than capable of handling all types of commercial chancery work, approaching everything it handles in a "modern and responsive way." Head of chambers **Edward Cohen** is seen as a "delight to work with." He has a broad-based chancery practice and recently acted as sole counsel for the appellate in *Tasarruf Mevduati Sigorta Fonu v Demirel* in the Court of Appeal. According to clients, he "has an amazing brain and is great for detailed paperwork." Colleague **Tim Penny** enters this year's tables after being highly recommended by peers and clients as "hard-working, effective and user-friendly." His chancery practice overlaps with his media and privacy practice. Also praised here is **Iain Pester**, who has built up a decent fraud, insolvency and

partnership-based chancery practice: “a thorough performer, he is able to explain potentially complicated matters to clients with clarity.” A well-regarded Treasury Counsel practitioner, **Jonathan Lopian** acted for the Secretary of State in the British Coal respiratory disease litigation and represented HMRC in the Farepak Limited administration. Peers describe him as “a good, forceful litigator.”

Leading Silk and Junior 2009 – Commercial Dispute Resolution

The extremely brainy and accessible **Alan Gourgey QC** at 11 Stone Buildings is highly sought-after. He has been immersed in the BSkyB/EDS litigation concerning allegations of deceit and breach of contract. Few understand finance-related litigation and commercial fraud better than **Max Mallin**. A man with Wall Street and City banking experience, he is “utterly au fait with the world of high finance.”

Leading Junior 2008 – Commercial Chancery

Head of chambers at 11 Stone Buildings, **Edward Cohen** is known both for his wealth of experience in chancery-related matters and for his industrious and focused approach.

Leading Silk and Junior 2008 – Commercial Dispute Resolution

“Consistently good,” **Alan Gourgey QC** at 11 Stone Buildings “never ceases to amaze” sources with his cast-iron practicality and user-friendliness. He is heavily involved in a multimillion-pound dispute between Sky and EDS premised on allegations of deceit and breach of contract.

Specialising in large-scale litigation and arbitration, 11 Stone Buildings’ **Max Mallin** is noted for his expertise in contractual issues and his affinity with financial markets. “Clients like him a lot” and peers describe him as a “reliable presence” in court.

Leading Set 2007 – Commercial Chancery

This innovative commercial set is faring well following the advent of a “wave of outstanding juniors who are already making their mark.” Clients favour the “fresh and accommodating atmosphere” at the set as well as its “ongoing commitment to innovation both in court and beyond.” Head of chambers **Edward Cohen** was unanimously hailed as “a tactical and polished advocate,” meriting additional mention as “one of the quiet, legal geniuses of the Bar.” His practice continues to focus on company and insolvency matters, as well as commercial fraud, and he has enjoyed a successful appearance before the Privy Council. **Jonathan Lopian** is junior counsel to the Crown and has a particular insolvency bent. Clients deem him “an easy choice - he’s committed, diligent and a consummate professional.”

Leading Silk 2007 – Commercial Litigation

Leading Silk: Alan Gourgey QC

11 Stone Buildings’ **Alan Gourgey QC** boasts a wealth of expertise that guarantees him an esteemed position in the market: “Good with the paperwork in terms of pleadings and witness statements, he is no less impressive in court”.

Leading Set 2006 – Commercial Chancery

The set has suffered a blow following Murray Rosen QC's departure to Herbert Smith; however it retains its clients respect for its "user-friendly; non-stuffy" service and "helpful clerks." Clients rate its insolvency work particularly; one commented: "There is always someone competent there to take the reins." "His paperwork is a pleasure," said clients of new head of chambers, **Edward Cohen** who is valued notably for his "measured and conscientious approach". One client commented: "He has one of the most incisive legal brains at the bar." His focus over the past year has been on big company cases as well as appearing before the Privy Council.

Leading Silk and Junior 2006 – Commercial Litigation

Leading Silk: Alan Gourgey QC

Leading Junior: Max Mallin

From 11 Stone Buildings, junior silk **Alan Gourgey QC** is well known for his IT expertise, and was praised for being "extremely accessible, bright, good on his feet and a delight to work with." Interviewees also alluded to his popularity whilst endorsing **Max Mallin**. Mallin's background in trading is felt to give him an advantage when he tackles cases concerning the financial markets.

Legal 500

Leading Set 2011 – Commercial Litigation

Leading Silk: Alan Gourgey QC, Jeremy Cousins QC, Lexa Hilliard QC

Leading Juniors: Tim Penny, Tina Kyriakides, Max Mallin, Marcia Shekerdemian, Jamie Riley

11 Stone Buildings' commercial litigation offering was significantly enhanced by the arrival of **Jeremy Cousins QC** from Selborne Chambers. The set has "a real star" in **Alan Gourgey QC**, who is "a first-rate trial advocate and tactician" whose "understanding of complex expert accounting and forensic issues is second to none". **Tina Kyriakides** is noted for her "quiet approach, which cuts through the issues to produce excellent outcomes".

Leading Silk and Junior 2010 – Commercial Litigation

Leading Silk: Alan Gourgey QC

Leading Juniors: Marcia Shekerdemian, Tim Penny

11 Stone Buildings is "developing a strong reputation as a commercial set". **Alan Gourgey QC** is singled out as "really great advocate, who is absolutely outstanding in court". **Tim Penny** is "a good all-round junior with a sensible commercial approach" and **Marcia Shekerdemian** is praised for "good knowledge and advocacy, with a strong ability to empathise with clients".

Leading Silk and Junior 2009 – Commercial Litigation

Leading Silk: Alan Gourgey QC
Leading Juniors: Marcia Shekerdemian, Tim Penny

11 Stone Buildings is “imaginative in the way that they deal with work”. **Alan Gourgey QC** is “a good communicator who gets to the issues quickly”; **Tim Penny** is “very commercial, tactically aware and responsive”.

Leading Set 2008 – Commercial Litigation

Leading Silk: Alan Gourgey QC
Leading Juniors: Marcia Shekerdemian, Tim Penny

Entering the rankings, firms say 11 Stone Buildings’ applies a commercial approach to work, ably assisted by some of the best clerks in the business’. **Alan Gourgey QC** is “extremely bright, very good in court and user-friendly”, **Marcia Shekerdemian** is “thorough and practical”, and **Tim Penny** has “first-rate advocacy skills’ and ‘commercial acumen”.

Leading Silk 2007, 2006, 2005, 2004, 2003 – Commercial Litigation

Leading Silk: Alan Gourgey QC

Another excellent Chancery set, 11 Stone Buildings boasts the talents of **Alan Gourgey QC**, ... (2005)

11 Stone Buildings is a Chancery Set with a great deal of mainstream commercial work, and a niche in sports. ... and **Alan Gourgey QC** are both excellent advocates. (2004)