

Charles Irvine

Year of Call: 2010
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Commercial

Charles is a specialist commercial barrister with an established reputation for handling complex, high-value disputes involving company law, insolvency, and commercial litigation. He is regularly instructed in matters requiring urgent intervention, including interim injunctions, freezing relief, strike out applications, and other emergency remedies—particularly in the context of shareholder disputes, boardroom deadlock, insolvency proceedings, and business-critical commercial disputes.

Charles is especially recognised for his expertise in contentious insolvency and company disputes, acting for insolvency practitioners, creditors, directors, shareholders, partnerships, and high-net-worth individuals. His practice spans individual bankruptcy matters through to multi-million-pound corporate insolvencies, unfair prejudice petitions, misfeasance claims, partnership breakdowns, and asset protection disputes.

He is frequently instructed in disputes involving distressed businesses, allegations of fiduciary misconduct, unlawful diversion of corporate opportunities, misuse of company assets, and disputes requiring urgent preservation of trading operations or corporate control.

Recent cases include:

C& anor v O Ltd & ors (2025–ongoing)

High Court unfair prejudice petition acting for minority shareholders in a multi-million-pound unfair prejudice petition arising from the breakdown of a restaurant venture established by former business partners from a two Michelin-starred business. The claim concerns exclusion from management, unauthorised related-party transactions, diversion of several million pounds to associated companies, and the transfer of valuable intellectual property.

Re PLL Ltd (A Company) [2026]

Charles successfully obtained a just and equitable winding up order in the High Court arising from a deadlocked company, where one of the Company's directors had removed the other director unlawfully.

Re D Ltd (A Company) [2026]

Charles successfully opposed a just and equitable winding up petition in the High Court. The main issue was whether the substratum of the Company had been exhausted and whether there was any tangible benefit in the winding up. Charles successfully argued that the although the substratum may have been lost, there would be no tangible benefit in the winding up and the Petitioner had alternative remedies (such as an unfair prejudice petition) such that just and equitable relief should be refused.

Re G Property Holdings v W & ors (2025)

Charles successfully obtained urgent High Court injunctive relief for a founding director of a property holding and management company with assets worth several million pounds, reversing an unlawful attempt by co-directors to remove his client from office, restoring his position as director, and obtaining declaratory relief concerning the invalidity of the purported corporate resolutions.

Re SSS v P (2025)

Charles successfully struck out an urgent winding up petition presented against a national retailer with profits exceeding £3 million and approximately 200 stores nationwide. The petition arose from disputed commercial lease liabilities following vacation of premises. Charles successfully established that the petition was an abuse of process and that the underlying debt was genuinely disputed, raising significant insolvency and property law issues.

Re In the matter of PL Estatea LLP, in administration (2025)

Charles successfully obtained an administration order on behalf of creditors in relation to a family LLP holding assets worth approximately £3 million, principally real estate. Faced with irreconcilable deadlock between partners and attempts to withdraw partnership assets, Charles devised and implemented a strategic administration process that protected secured creditors and facilitated a solvent exit.

W v L (2025)

Charles acted for a shareholder and former director in an unfair prejudice petition concerning a quasi-partnership property holding company. The claim raised novel issues as to whether a refusal to maximise land development opportunities constituted unfairly prejudicial conduct. Charles secured a substantial settlement at mediation.

Restraint of Trade Injunction (2025)

Charles successfully obtained an emergency interim injunction restraining a former employee from competing with his client's business following the theft of confidential client and patient information. The matter involved complex issues concerning the enforceability of restrictive covenants and protection of goodwill.

Cross-Border Freight Services Injunction (2025)

Charles acted in urgent High Court proceedings concerning threatened suspension of critical data synchronisation services used in over 200,000 daily freight shipments, representing approximately 40% of the US LTL freight market. Charles successfully secured undertakings preserving business continuity while alternative operational arrangements were implemented. The dispute involved complex contractual interpretation and jurisdictional issues.

In the matter of M (2023)

Charles successfully defended a debtor facing bankruptcy proceedings in respect of liabilities of approximately £500,000, together with related High Court proceedings concerning a disputed debt of £375,000 arising from the alleged assumption of company liabilities by a director.

S v H (2022)

Charles successfully negotiated a substantial settlement in an unfair prejudice petition arising from a quasi-partnership dispute involving allegations of misappropriation of company assets, breaches of fiduciary duty, and undisclosed dividend and remuneration payments.

G P Ltd v C (2021)

Charles successfully represented a former employee (C) in getting a High Court claim brought by her former employer (G) dismissed and opposing an interim injunction being entered against her for a purported breach of confidentiality. It was alleged that C obtained G's commercially sensitive information and passed it onto her new employer. The context was that the G's former founding director had left G to set up a rival company and C had left G to join him. These proceedings were part of an attempt to obtain information to sustain G's claim against the former director.

In the matter of Sinton European Logistics Ltd (2019) [2019] 2 WLUK 327

Charles successfully represented the liquidator of Sinton European Logistics in a claim brought against the former director of the company that had gone into creditors' voluntary liquidation. The director was liable to pay £20,360 to the liquidator in respect of various payments made, before the company had gone into liquidation, in breach of his fiduciary duty as director. (LTL 22/2/2019 EXTEMPORE: [2019] 2 WLUK 327)

Greatbatch v Sirius Marine Service Ltd (Re Rhapsody) [2018] EWHC 4062 (Admlty)

Charles successfully brought proceedings in the Admiralty Court in respect of defective workmanship carried out by the Defendant. The case raised issues as to the correct measure of damages for pleasure vessels.

Bayerische Motoren Werke AG v Technosport London Ltd & Agyeton [2016] EWHC 797 (IPEC)

High Court trial concerning passing off and trade mark infringement of the BMW word mark and roundel logo.

Doctor Associates Inc v Hussain [2014] EWHC 3384 (IPEC)

High Court application to set aside default judgment on terms in a passing off case.

GHML v Maroo [2012]

Led by David Berkley KC of 3PB for permission to appeal to the Court of Appeal on the fiduciary duties owed by directors. Advising a large group of companies on their standard terms and conditions and updating the same in light of the Consumer Rights Act 2015.

Articles

Goknur Gida Maddeleri Enerji Imalet Ithalat Ihracat Ticaret Ve Sanayi AS v Aytacli [2021] EWCA Civ 1037

Specialist commercial and property law barrister, Charles Irvine has reviewed the recent Court of Appeal case *Goknur Gida Maddeleri Enerji Imalet Ithalat Ihracat Ticaret Ve Sanayi AS v Aytacli* [2021] EWCA Civ 1037 in which one party applied for a non-party costs order.

View Article

Following the introduction of the Corporate Governance and Insolvency Act 2020 ("the CIGA 2020") and the associated Insolvency Practice Direction, 3PB's specialist commercial law barristers Charles Irvine and Rebecca Farrell consider winding up petitions in this context.

View Article

Lydia Pemberton, deputy head of 3PB's Property and Estate team, and Charles Irvine, a member of 3PB's Property and Estates team and Commercial team, have reviewed the new changes to the execution of documents brought about shortly before and since the COVID-19 pandemic and lockdown.

New ways of working have meant a rise in technology and electronic communications which brings new formalities when it comes to dealing with the execution of legal documents. In this article, Lydia and Charles assess the current rules on formalities of deeds and documents and give their detailed response to these frequently asked questions from private client and property solicitors:

· What constitutes signature?
· What amounts to attesting?
· What happens if a deed fails to meet the formality requirements?
· What about formalities for notices and section 44 of the Companies Act 2006?
· What is HM Land Registry's response to the COVID-19 lockdown?
· What are the formalities for wills?

View Article

Privilege under investigation: a commercial update by Charles Irvine. When will solicitor's working papers (as opposed to advice) attract privilege? And what is the scope of legal advice privilege ("LAP") and litigation privilege ("LP")?

Charles Irvine (call 2010) analyses the recent case of Director of the Serious Fraud Office v. Eurasian Natural Resources Corporation Ltd [2017] EWHC 1017 (QB), its impact on its impact for civil litigation.

View Article

Recommendations

Charles Irvine is an accomplished junior with a growing practice which covers an array of property disputes. He demonstrates impressive expertise in residential and commercial landlord and tenant work, and also acts in cases with elements of trusts law.

"Charles Irvine is calm and collected. His advocacy skills have unquestionably been the deciding factor in winning some complex cases with difficult opponents."
"Charles is a formidable technical presence in both written work and in court. He is considered and thorough and has a calm confidence."
"Charles has a surgical-like approach to matters, quickly dissecting the most complex of matters and attacking it with a laser focus, while putting the client at ease and explaining matters clearly."
Chambers UK 2025/Real Estate Litigation/South Eastern Bar

Charles Irvine of 3PB Barristers is a barrister with expertise in commercial litigation, with an emphasis on insolvencies and boardroom disputes. He also has experience in contractual and professional negligence cases.

Strengths: "Charles' main strengths lie in his ability to grasp complex issues promptly and offer practical solutions."
Chambers UK 2025/Commercial Dispute Resolution/South Eastern Bar

Strengths: "Charles is an advocate who inspires confidence in and provides reassurance to instructing solicitors and clients alike."
Chambers UK 2024/Real Estate Litigation/South Eastern Bar

Strengths: "He is a highly skilled tactician, he grasps issues quickly and always ensures the client's interests are protected."
"I find that he matches the enthusiasm of the junior counsel but has the methodical approach of a senior."
"Clients like how he approaches the advice and the way in which he keeps them calm and grounded, making sure they understand his thinking and strategy."
Chambers UK 2024/Commercial Dispute Resolution/South Eastern Bar

Charles Irvine is a barrister with expertise in commercial litigation with an emphasis on insolvencies and boardroom disputes. He also has experience in contractual and professional negligence cases.
Strengths: "Charles has a great client manner and is excellent in his written work; he is thorough and firm in his advice, and his legal knowledge is exceptional."
"Charles is very responsive and personable. His drafting is very good and he is technically strong."
Chambers UK 2023/Real Estate Litigation/South Eastern Bar

Charles Irvine is a barrister with expertise in commercial litigation and an emphasis on insolvencies and boardroom disputes. He also has experience in contractual and professional negligence cases.
Strengths: "Charles is really bright. His written work is spot on."
"Charles is extremely responsive and quick to pick up nuances. He is a brilliant advocate - technically skilled and knowledgeable."
Chambers UK 2023/Commercial Dispute Resolution /South Eastern Bar

An accomplished junior with a growing practice which covers an array of property disputes. Irvine demonstrates impressive expertise in residential and commercial landlord and tenant work and also acts in cases with elements of trusts law.

Strengths: "Charles is exceptionally commercially minded, both in helping clients focus on their true objectives and, upon reaching those goals, providing total client care in pre-empting further developments following on from his instruction." "He is personable, meticulous and tenacious."
Recent work: Charles successfully defended a school in a claim brought by a local bowling club under the Landlord and Tenant Act 1954 for the club to continue operating within the school's premises.
Chambers UK 2022/Real Estate Litigation/South Eastern Bar

Strengths: "Charles is a barrister who thinks outside of the box and can develop arguments and raise key points that haven't been considered before." "He is thorough and provides clever, commercial advice."
Recent work: Successfully obtained summary judgment on a deed of personal guarantee given by a director of a company, despite allegations of undue influence
Chambers UK 2022/Commercial Dispute Resolution /South Eastern Bar

'Charles is incredibly experienced. His calm and collected disposition veils his powerful advocacy and formidable intellect.'
Legal 500 2025/Commercial Litigation/South Eastern - Ranked Tier 1

'Charles is incredibly personable, which puts both solicitor and client at ease. His advice is commercial and considers the wider picture rather than just the minutia of the law. He is a methodical advocate with a calm, clear, and concise approach.'
Legal 500 2025/Company and Insolvency/South Eastern - Ranked Tier 1

'Charles is always on point, ahead of opponents and ready to assist. He is more than just an expert at his practice. He maximises outcomes, inspires confidence and is impressive in court.'

Charles Irvine is described as 'a formidable presence in court' and successfully acted for the defendant in a claim related to the right of way granted by an express deed, proprietary estoppel, and a right to light.
Legal 500 2025/Property and Construction/South Eastern - Ranked Tier 1

'Charles' drafting of pleadings and attention to detail are strong points. He also provides decisive, commercial views and turns work around quickly.'
Legal 500 2024/Company and Insolvency/South Eastern - Ranked Tier 1

'Charles's firm commandment of a court room in pursuit of a faultless strategy is a sight to behold, much to the elation of clients. He is affable with clients, reassuring with solicitors and most importantly, an outstanding representative for the party he fights for.'
Legal 500 2024/ Property and Construction/ South Eastern Bar/ Leading Junior - Tier 1

Charles Irvine is a 'top-notch tactician' and successfully defended a complex claim, including allegations of fraud, brought by one sister against another in a claim concerning the rectification of deeds upon the division of a large estate.

'Charles' knowledge and experience in construction law are second to none. His drafting of pleadings demonstrates that he can grasp the issues succinctly and effectively articulate them.'
Legal 500 2023/Property and Construction/Leading Juniors/South Eastern Circuit - Ranked Tier 1

'Charles' strengths are his attention to detail, ability to develop and execute effective strategies. He is able to put forward his client's position in an effective and most persuasive way.'
Legal 500 2023/Company and Insolvency/South Eastern - Ranked Tier 1

'Charles is thorough and conscientious, and provides excellent advice. He is a calm and considered advocate.'
Legal 500 2022/Property and Construction/Leading Juniors/South Eastern Circuit

Charles is ranked in the **Legal 500 2022**/Property and Construction/Leading Juniors/South Eastern Circuit edition

'His grasp of the issues and his knowledge of the law are second-to-none.'
Legal 500 2021/Property and Construction/South Eastern

'Turns matters round quickly, is very good value for money and is at the end of the phone to discuss technical queries when the need arises.'

"Charles Irvine at 3PB is adept at handling insolvency matters, particularly with respect to individual bankruptcies and corporate liquidations, including ones involving disputes between company directors."
Legal 500 2021/Company and Insolvency/South Eastern

Academic qualifications

· 2009 - 2010: Bar Vocational Course, City Law School, Graded "Outstanding" (ranking well within the top 20 students that year).
· 2008 - 2009: Graduate Diploma in Law (CPE), City University.
· 2005 - 2008: BA (Hons), University of London (Royal Holloway).

Scholarships

- 2009: Gray's Inn Scholarship to study for the Bar Vocational Course.
- 2008: Society Crest Award for outstanding contribution to the University of London.
- 2005: Bedford Entrance Scholarship to read English at University of London (Royal Holloway).
- Awarded a scholarship to read English at the University of London.