

Luke Barnes

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Practice Overview

Luke practises in the demanding area where Chancery meets Family. His expertise encompasses competing property interests, the subtle and complex issues surrounding trusts of land, and a wide range of family property disputes – frequently in the shadow of separation, divorce, bankruptcy or death.

Luke's entry in the Legal 500 2025 edition was: *'Luke is an exceptional barrister both in terms of his judgement and his people skills. He is bright, respected and highly regarded. He goes out of his way to be helpful and leaves no stone unturned.'* **His 2024 entry was:** *'Luke has a meticulous eye for detail, and his knowledge is unmatched. His advocacy [shows] precision, insight and a sharp intellect.'* **His 2023 entry included:** *'His pleadings are second to none. He is extremely knowledgeable in trusts law. He is realistic in his advice and presents it in a clear and succinct manner.'* **In 2022 he was described as:** *'always enthusiastic and approachable, [able] to turn a difficult case around and will dedicate himself to putting the best possible arguments forward for the client.'*

Best known for his work concerning the establishment and quantification of beneficial interests in real property in TLATA and Intervenor claims, Luke often applies his incisive approach to related issues which may arise in such cases or independently, such as proprietary estoppel, capacity, undue influence, illegality, mistake, entitlement to funds in joint bank accounts, occupation rent, equitable accounting and the equity of exoneration.

A genuine specialist, very experienced in civil and family litigation and equally at home providing persuasive advocacy or carefully reasoned advice, he frequently gives seminars and contributes articles to legal publications.

[Click here](#) to see the synopses of his two current seminars. Feel free to contact Luke or the clerks if you would be interested in Luke presenting either of his seminars at your office or in attending a seminar in Chambers. The seminars are kept right up to date and are guaranteed to enhance your knowledge in the Chancery area of Family law.

Luke is qualified to accept instructions under the Bar Council Public Access scheme.

Luke offers Private Neutral Evaluation and Financial Dispute Resolution Appointments in all areas of his practice, both before and after the issue of proceedings. [Click here](#) to see his specimen "PNE&FDR" letter.

Cases of note

***Dervis v Deniz* [2025] EWHC 902 (Ch)** Edwin Johnson J. April 2025.

The judgment at first instance was that the parties held the property as joint tenants. Appeal, relying on *Hudson v Hathway* [2023] KB 345, on the basis that the claimant disposed of his beneficial interest by virtue of one or more emails sent to the defendant.

Article: *Reflections on Hudson v Hathway* Law Society Gazette 2025 (17) 23

***Lanyiova v Jones* L00OX128** HHJ Melissa Clarke, County Court at Oxford. April 2025

A joint ownership form signed by the parties to indicate they would purchase the family home as joint tenants in equity was a trust of future property, since it was created for consideration. The trust took effect on the completion of the purchase even though the TR1 form did not indicate the beneficial interests.

***Shayler v Yeo* REF/2023/553** Judge Michael Michell, Principal Judge, Land Registration Division, Property Chamber, First Tier Tribunal. June 2025.

Public policy would require the Tribunal to deny S the right to assert a beneficial interest in the property on its purchase in another's name. The monies used to purchase the property and pay off the mortgage were the proceeds of crime. Drug trafficking is a social evil and to deny S a remedy would serve to deter others and would not be disproportionate. *Patel v Mirza* [2016] UKSC 42 and *Al-Dowaisan v Al-Salam* [2019] EWHC 301 (Ch) applied.

***Springall v Paice* E10CL911** HHJ Richard Roberts, County Court at Central London. July 2019.
Widely reported in the regional and national press in 2019

Complex cohabitants' property dispute involving the family home and three development properties. Total value over £3m.

***Griffiths v Cork* [2009] WTLR 955 (Ch)** Evans-Lombe J.

Capacity to execute disposition of beneficial interest – burden of proof where disponent suffering from mental illness

***Babar v Anis* [2005] 3 FCR 216 (Ch)**

Promissory estoppel as a defence to possession proceedings brought by former 'husband' against former 'wife' following decree of nullity (case cited in Snell's Equity 32nd Ed at 12-015)

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Languages

Fluent French

Some Arabic

Degree/University

M.A. Classics (New College, Oxford) M.A. Law (City University)

Scholarships/Awards/Prizes

Memberships

Property Bar Association,

Family Law Bar Association,

Franco-British Lawyers' Society,

Lawyers for Liberty

Areas of Practice

Family Finance

Chancery, including TLATA 1996

Private Chancery Financial Dispute Resolution

Public Access

Outside Interests

Family life, skiing, riverside walks / cycle rides, travel in France