Partner Pulse

London market snapshot | September–October 2026

Executive summary

London partner appointments rose 33% compared with July–August, with lateral partner hires up 52%. Corporate drove the rise, with hires climbing from seven to 23, including four from Weil. Tax recorded six hires after none in July–August, while Banking & Finance held steady at 19. A post-summer rebound may have contributed to the overall increase.

Weil's partners voted to wind down the firm in November. The closure leaves partners, associates and business services teams facing uncertainty. Six Weil London partner departures were recorded in September–October. Further moves will be a prominent feature of the next few editions as lawyers take up new roles. The moves to Gibson Dunn, Sidley and Kirkland reported in the press fall outside this edition's figures. Wind-down vote

What the figures cover

Hires: external appointments into the London offices of Am Law 100 or The Lawyer UK Top 100 firms. The previous employer need not be ranked. Departures: partners leaving those London offices, to any destination. The reporting window is 1 September to 31 October 2026, using actual start dates for hires and actual leaving dates for departures, rather than press announcement dates. Fee-share firms are excluded from this data set.

97
PARTNER APPOINTMENTS
↑32.9% vs Jul–Aug 2026

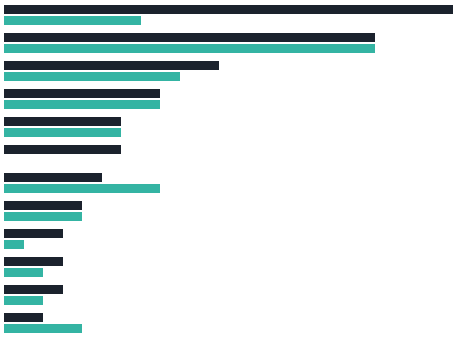
64
HIRING FIRMS
Across both hire types

121
PARTNER DEPARTURES
From 73 firms

HIRE TYPE	HIRES	VS JUL–AUG	HIRING FIRMS
Partner-to-partner	**79**	**↑51.9%**	**54**
Associate/counsel-to-partner	**18**	**↓14.3%**	**16**

Practice area comparison

All hires | primary practice groups with at least three hires in either period



	Sep-Oct	Jul-Aug
Corporate	23	7
Banking & Finance	19	19
Real Estate	11	9
Litigation	8	8
Capital Markets	6	6
Tax	6	0
Insurance	5	8
Employment	4	4
Government Law	3	1
Intellectual Property	3	2
Project Development	3	2
Cybersecurity, Privacy & Data Protection	2	4

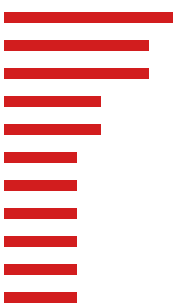
Pirical groups specialist litigators under their primary practice (e.g. Real Estate).

Firms hiring three or more partners



Mayer Brown	4
Haynes & Boone	3
Kirkland & Ellis	3
Latham & Watkins	3
McDermott Will & Schulte	3
Simpson Thacher & Bartlett	3
Sullivan & Cromwell	3

Firms with three or more departures



Baker McKenzie	7
Kirkland & Ellis	6
Weil	6
DWF	4
Reed Smith	4
Ashurst Perkins Coie	3
Broadfield	3
CMS	3
Clyde & Co	3
Freshfields	3
Osborne Clarke	3

Data source: according to publicly available data tracked by Pirical.

Move analysis

A snapshot of just some of the period’s partner moves

MAYER BROWN

A leveraged finance team joins together

Rob Mathews, David Becker and Benjamin Bierwirth joined from Baker McKenzie. Mayer Brown says the team adds high-yield and leveraged finance expertise to its London private capital practice. Hiring an established team gives the firm both capabilities at once.

Firm announcement

HAYNES BOONE

London expands in disputes and derivatives

Louise Woods, a recognised international arbitration specialist, joined from Vinson & Elkins as Chair of International Disputes, strengthening the firm’s energy disputes practice. Chris Acton joined from Macfarlanes as Chair of its UK Derivatives Platform, adding depth in structured finance, derivatives and trading.

Woods · Acton

SIMPSON THACHER

More depth in sponsor transactions

Simon Saitowitz joined from Weil as part of a wider expansion of Simpson Thacher’s asset management practice. His hire adds London expertise in transactions involving asset managers, including secondaries and GP stakes, alongside the firm’s existing funds work.

Firm announcement

GIBSON DUNN

Real estate hiring with a sector focus

James Johnson and Victoria Delacey joined from White & Case. The two hires add London capacity to Gibson Dunn’s data centre practice, where real estate expertise is needed to get sites and projects off the ground.

Firm announcement

DEBEVOISE & PLIMPTON

A specialist hire for fund secondaries

Mary Lavelle joined from Freshfields, adding London capacity for private fund secondaries. She joins both the Private Fund Transactions and Investment Management groups, giving the firm more scope to advise fund clients on transactions as well as fund formation.

Firm announcement

SULLIVAN & CROMWELL

Weil departures deepen European M&A

David Avery-Gee and Sarah Flaherty joined from Weil. Avery-Gee is now co-head of European M&A, making this a leadership hire as well as an addition to the firm’s London deal team. Pirical also lists Weil tax partner Yoon Sun Choi among the firm’s hires.

Avery-Gee profile · Flaherty profile

LATHAM & WATKINS

Technology disputes beyond traditional IP

Jason Raeburn joined from Paul Hastings. His work spans AI, copyright, privacy and technology disputes. The hire expands what Latham can offer technology clients across disputes where intellectual property, data and regulation can overlap.

Firm announcement

TRAVERS SMITH

Funds regulation expertise joins the team

Laura Houët joined from CMS as a partner in the Funds practice. Her experience in UK funds and sustainability regulation adds specialist advice that fund managers can draw on alongside the firm’s transactional work.

Firm announcement

Data source: according to publicly available data tracked by Pirical.

Partner moves table

London | September–October 2026 | Appointments 1–20 of 97

PARTNER NAME	PRACTICE AREA	PREVIOUS ROLE	PREVIOUS EMPLOYER	NEW FIRM
Filippo Durazzo	Corporate	Senior Associate	Sidley Austin	Akin
Henry Stewart	Corporate	Partner	Watson Farley & Williams	Ashurst Perkins Coie
Michelle Sally	Corporate	Partner	TLT	Bird & Bird
Patti Russell	Labor and Employment	Partner	Winckworth Sherwood	Birketts
Laura Steen	Intellectual Property	Counsel	Morrison & Foerster	Bristows
David Brennand	Corporate	Partner	Ansoff Business Advisory	Broadfield
Alexander Studholme	Real Estate	Partner	Mantle Law	Browne Jacobson
David Hill	Government Law	Partner	Blake Morgan	Browne Jacobson
Benn Richards	Banking & Finance	Partner	Michelmores	Burges Salmon
John Buyers	Corporate	Partner	Osborne Clarke	CMS
Prash Mehta	Cybersecurity, Privacy & Data Protection	Partner	Amazon	CMS
Emma Raspin	Real Estate	Associate	Eversheds Sutherland	Clarke Willmott
Suriya Ashok	Real Estate	Partner	Freeths	Clyde & Co
Chiraag Shah	Litigation	Partner	Morrison & Foerster	Crowell & Moring
Vincent Zabielski	Corporate	Partner	Pillsbury Winthrop Shaw Pittman	DLA Piper
Mary Lavelle	Corporate	Partner	Freshfields	Debevoise & Plimpton
Ben Burton	Banking & Finance	Partner	Kirkland & Ellis	Dechert
Kevin Heverin	Banking & Finance	Partner	Baker McKenzie	Dentons
Megan Schellinger	Capital Markets	Partner	Baker McKenzie	Dentons
Liz Gibbons	Real Estate	Partner	Acuity Law	Devonshires Solicitors

Partner moves table

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PARTNER NAME	PRACTICE AREA	PREVIOUS ROLE	PREVIOUS EMPLOYER	NEW FIRM
Paul Harris	Banking & Finance	Partner	Osborne Clarke	Eversheds Sutherland
Julian Balson	Tax	Partner	EY	Fieldfisher
Alex Delin	Litigation	Partner	Irwin Mitchell	Fladgate
Nicholas Harding	Banking & Finance	Partner	Clyde & Co	Fladgate
Jim Jordan	Project Development	Partner	DWF	Freeths
Keith Browne	Real Estate	Partner	Teacher Stern LLP	Freeths
James Johnson	Real Estate	Partner	White & Case	Gibson Dunn
Victoria Delacey	Real Estate	Partner	White & Case	Gibson Dunn
Hannah Roscoe	Banking & Finance	Partner	Osborne Clarke	Greenberg Traurig
Sofiya Bumagin	Corporate	Counsel	Sidley Austin	Greenberg Traurig
Simon Cheverst	Government Law	Associate	Weightmans	HCR Hewitsons
Toby Joy	Real Estate	Senior Associate	Withers	HFW
Christopher Acton	Capital Markets	Partner	Macfarlanes	Haynes & Boone
Linton Bloomberg	Banking & Finance	Partner	Reed Smith	Haynes & Boone
Louise Woods	Banking & Finance	Partner	Vinson & Elkins	Haynes & Boone
Maria Isabel Manley	Regulatory & Compliance	Partner	Sidley Austin	Herbert Smith Freehills Kramer
Richard Bush	Corporate	Partner	Bird & Bird	Hill Dickinson
Mark Meyer	Insurance	Partner	HFW	Horwich Farrelly
Phillip Carney	Insurance	Partner	Clyde & Co	Horwich Farrelly
Nicola Bennett	Corporate	Partner	Gateley	Irwin Mitchell

Data source: according to publicly available data tracked by Pirical.

Partner moves table

London | September–October 2026 | Appointments 41–60 of 97

PARTNER NAME	PRACTICE AREA	PREVIOUS ROLE	PREVIOUS EMPLOYER	NEW FIRM
Ganesh Nanwani	Litigation	Counsel	Grosvenor Law	JMW
Joanna Kay	Family	Partner	Lester Aldridge	JMW
Justin Salkeld	Real Estate	Partner	Baker McKenzie	K&L Gates
Sunay Radia	Banking & Finance	Partner	McDermott Will & Schulte	Katten
Edward Coates	Corporate	Associate	Latham & Watkins	Kirkland & Ellis
Michael Craig	Tax	Associate	Slaughter and May	Kirkland & Ellis
Paul Seppi	Antitrust & Competition	Associate	Willkie Farr & Gallagher	Kirkland & Ellis
Jason Raeburn	Intellectual Property	Partner	Paul Hastings	Latham & Watkins
Patrick Hennessy	Real Estate	Partner	Gibson Dunn	Latham & Watkins
Samantha McGonigle	Corporate	Partner	Hg	Latham & Watkins
Owen Ross	Insurance	Partner	CMS	Linklaters
Benjamin Bierwirth	Capital Markets	Partner	Baker McKenzie	Mayer Brown
David Becker	Capital Markets	Partner	Baker McKenzie	Mayer Brown
Rob Mathews	Capital Markets	Partner	Baker McKenzie	Mayer Brown
Scott D. Ashton	Capital Markets	Partner	Morrison & Foerster	Mayer Brown
David Jamieson	Tax	Partner	Baker McKenzie	McDermott Will & Schulte
Lewis McDonald	Project Development	Partner	Herbert Smith Freehills Kramer	McDermott Will & Schulte
Natalie Blanc	Banking & Finance	Counsel	Ropes & Gray	McDermott Will & Schulte
Miriam Benitez	Government Law	Partner	Veale Wasbrough Vizards	Mishcon de Reya
Chris Grey	Corporate	Partner	Ashurst Perkins Coie	Morrison & Foerster

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Partner moves table

London | September–October 2026 | Appointments 61–80 of 97

PARTNER NAME	PRACTICE AREA	PREVIOUS ROLE	PREVIOUS EMPLOYER	NEW FIRM
Medha Marathe	Corporate	Counsel	Latham & Watkins	Norton Rose Fulbright
Polly O'Brien	Banking & Finance	Partner	McDermott Will & Schulte	Orrick
Sumit Indwar	Regulatory & Compliance	Partner	Kirkland & Ellis	Orrick
Tom Webley	Banking & Finance	Partner	Reed Smith	Osborne Clarke
Maccailein Campbell	Banking & Finance	Partner	Reed Smith	Paul Hastings
Roberto Bruno	Corporate	Counsel	Cravath	Paul Hastings
Mandeep Lotay	Banking & Finance	Partner	Freshfields	Paul, Weiss
Max Oppenheimer	Corporate	Partner	Weil	Paul, Weiss
Jean-François Le Gal	Litigation	Partner	Pinsent Masons	Penningtons Manches Cooper
Fred Nicolle	Intellectual Property	Associate	Simmons & Simmons	Pinsent Masons
Adam Blakemore	Tax	Partner	Hogan Lovells Cadwalader	Proskauer
Julio Castro	Tax	Partner	KPMG	Proskauer
Ed Lewis	Insurance	Partner	Weightmans	RPC
A. Edward D. Downer	Banking & Finance	Partner	Willkie Farr & Gallagher	Ropes & Gray
James Sherlock	Corporate	Counsel	Skadden	Sidley Austin
Quentin Robinson	Project Development	Partner	Ashurst Perkins Coie	Simmons & Simmons
Emma Rachmaninov	Corporate	Partner	Freshfields	Simpson Thacher & Bartlett
Simon Saitowitz	Corporate	Partner	Weil	Simpson Thacher & Bartlett
Tom Richards	Banking & Finance	Partner	Weil	Simpson Thacher & Bartlett
David Marsden	Real Estate	Partner	Freeths	Stephenson Harwood

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Partner moves table

London | September–October 2026 | Appointments 81–97 of 97

PARTNER NAME	PRACTICE AREA	PREVIOUS ROLE	PREVIOUS EMPLOYER	NEW FIRM
Jennifer Lavelle	Insurance	Senior Associate	Clyde & Co	Stephenson Harwood
David Avery-Gee	Corporate	Partner	Weil	Sullivan & Cromwell
Sarah Flaherty	Corporate	Partner	Weil	Sullivan & Cromwell
Yoon Sun Choi	Tax	Partner	Weil	Sullivan & Cromwell
David Hamilton	Litigation	Partner	Howard Kennedy	TLT
Natalie Coates	Banking & Finance	Partner	Blake Morgan	TLT
Andrew Howard	Labor and Employment	Partner	Deloitte	Travers Smith
Laura Houët	Corporate	Partner	CMS	Travers Smith
Tim Hayes	Labor and Employment	Partner	Broadfield	Wedlake Bell
Niall Hearty	Litigation	Partner	Rahman Ravelli	Weightmans
Fiona Cumming	Banking & Finance	Partner	A&O Shearman	Weil
Nick Rainsford	Corporate	Partner	Baker McKenzie	White & Case
Patrick O'Connell	Cybersecurity, Privacy & Data Protection	Senior Associate	Linklaters	Wiggin
Charlie Lightfoot	Litigation	Partner	Cooley	WilmerHale
Jeremy Kosky	Banking & Finance	Partner	Clifford Chance	WilmerHale
Matthew Charles Francis McGoldrick	Litigation	Associate	Kennedys	Withers
Sophie Barrett-Brown	Labor and Employment	Partner	Laura Devine Immigration	Withers

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