

Tony Willis

YEAR OF CALL: 2004

"Hailed as a man of 'great authority, a fantastic, formidable lawyer who commands respect'"

Chambers & Partners 2013

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Practice Overview

Tony is a commercial mediation pioneer, among the first to be trained in 1990, to mediate regularly and then in 1998 launch his own independent practice as a full time commercial mediator as the Woolf Reforms to Civil Justice were about to take effect.

His background as a Litigation Partner in Clifford Chance for more than 25 years (including a 2 year stint as a Managing Partner), managing teams of Lawyers in some of the most complex multinational litigation gave him the experience and standing to undertake a wide range of commercial matters. He was an early member of the International Academy of Mediators, has mediated widely in the UK and elsewhere in Europe, in the US, the Caribbean, the Middle East, Hong Kong and elsewhere and has been recognised by all the prominent legal directories including some years as Commercial Mediator of the year by WWL.

Tony joined chambers in 2004, so joining Bill and Stephen in what even then was an exceptional group of UK based full time professional commercial mediators.

Mediation

Tony has conducted significantly more than a thousand Mediations to date and advised on more in many parts of the UK and in locations such as New York, The UAE, Belgium, Romania, Guernsey, Jersey, the Republic of Ireland, the Bahamas and elsewhere. He has also been appointed Settlement Counsel. Sums in issue have ranged up to 1.2 Billion US Dollars. Issues include Professional Negligence, Board Room, Shareholder and M&A disputes, Partnership, Pensions, Information Technology, Employment, Family Trusts and related disputes, insolvency, tax, charity, oil and gas, civil engineering and construction, insurance and reinsurance. Parties have included multinationals and other companies, individuals, Governments and Departments such as the Home

Office, MOD, Revenue & Customs and DEFRA. He has been appointed Mediator by the FSA and dealt with other Regulatory matters including Competition cases.

Important Cases

All matters dealt with as a Mediator are confidential but information can be provided about cases dealt with in recent times provided it is understood that the names of the parties and related details must remain confidential.

Further Information

Tony was trained as a Mediator by CEDR in London in 1990/91 and was a Non Executive Director and member of their training faculty for some years. He is a member of several distinguished panels of mediators including being a founding member in 1999 of PIM Senior Mediators where he was its second Chairman for 2 years during its re-launch in 2009. He is also a Distinguished Fellow of the International Academy of Mediators (IAM) where he is a Board member, a fellow of the Chartered Institute of Arbitrators and a member of the CPR (New York) International Panel of Distinguished Mediators. He was the Founding Chairman from 1997 to 2001 of the Solicitors *pro bono* Group (now LawWorks) and from 1999 to 2009 was Chairman of the Governing Council of Wycombe Abbey School in Buckinghamshire.

Qualifications

Degree

LLB Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand 1966.

Career

Barrister (New Zealand) 1966 to date

Solicitor (England & Wales) 1971 to 1998

Barrister (England & Wales) 2004 to date

Fellow Chartered Institute of Arbitrators

Distinguished Fellow International Academy of Mediators

Directory Quotes

- "Really understands where the parties are and the pressures they're under." "He commands the trust of everyone in the room." (Chambers & Partners 2021)

- Tony Willis at Brick Court Chambers is lauded as a “big name in mediation”, adept in a number of areas including shareholder disputes and professional negligence. (Who's Who Legal - UK Bar: Mediation 2020)
- “Rated highly” as a mediator according to market sources. Offering a reputable practice and tremendous experience in commercial mediation, he is particularly proficient in professional negligence, construction and energy sectors disputes. (Chambers & Partners 2020)
- Tony Willis at Brick Court Chambers is a former Clifford Chance LLP litigation practice head. An independent mediator in commercial, business and regulatory matters, he has been a full-time mediator, negotiator and designer of dispute resolution processes since 1998. His representative mediation experience includes professional negligence, shareholder and M&A disputes, partnerships, pensions and IT matters. Willis has also mediated disputes involving employment issues, trusts, insolvency, tax, construction, insurance and reinsurance. (Legal 500 2020)
- Tony Willis at Brick Court Chambers is “a pioneer and leading light in the mediation field”. His practice spans international disputes regarding tax, professional negligence, M&A disputes and family trust matters. (Who's Who Legal - UK Bar: Mediation 2019)
- Tony Willis (Brick Court Chambers) stands out among practitioners and clients for his tremendous experience. His broad mediation practice includes proficiency in professional negligence and construction disputes, as well as those in the energy sector. (Chambers & Partners 2019)
- Tony Willis of Brick Court Chambers is a former Clifford Chance LLP litigation practice head who has conducted over 1000 mediations to date. His mediations have included disputes involving professional negligence, shareholder and M&A disputes, partnerships, pensions and IT matters. Other areas include employment, family trusts, insolvency, tax, construction, insurance and reinsurance, among others. (Legal 500 2018-19)
- Tony Willis stands out as “one of the grandfathers of mediation” who enjoys “a phenomenal reputation” among peers and clients alike. One respondent effuses: “He always finds a way to get to grips with the dispute and effectively guide the proceedings.” (Who's Who Legal - UK Bar: Mediation 2018)
- Tony Willis gains recognition from peers as a top practitioner in the market, specialising in commercial and regulatory disputes. He has over 20 years' mediation experience . (Who's Who Legal - UK Bar: Mediation 2018)
- The "intelligent and effective" Tony Willis stands out in the market for his immense experience. He has notable experience in professional negligence claims, construction and engineering disputes, as well as cases in the energy sector. He is "very authoritative," according to sources. (Chambers & Partners 2018)
- The "excellent" Tony Willis is an experienced mediator with a strong background in litigation. Market sources consider him to be "very authoritative." He has notable experience in professional negligence claims, construction and engineering disputes, as well as cases in the energy sector. (Chambers & Partners 2017)
- Tony Willis has a longstanding reputation in commercial mediation and is known as “an outstanding mediator with real gravitas”. (Who's Who Legal - UK Bar: Mediation 2017)

- "With a background of advising on some of the largest international litigation, Tony Willis of Brick Court Chambers is recommended for a wide range of financial, business and complex mediations in both the UK and overseas." (Legal 500 2016)
- "Considered "an elder statesman of the mediation field", is recognised for his "distinctive ability to adapt to any given conflict". (Who's Who Legal - UK Bar: Mediation 2016)
- "Tony Willis emerges as the most highly regarded individual in our international research, and is described by peers as "unparalleled when it comes to complex regulatory and business disputes". With over 25 years' experience in international litigation, he is "incredibly well placed to manage the most high-profile and valuable disputes"; he is also recognised as a "true innovator" in the design of dispute resolution processes." (Who's Who Legal - UK Bar: Mediation 2015)
- "Tony Willis is "part of the aristocracy" and a "premier league mediator". Former managing partner of Clifford Chance, he is a three-time winner of our Mediator of the Year Award and has conducted more than a thousand mediations in relation to areas such as professional negligence, boardroom disputes, construction and insurance for clients such as corporates, individuals, government departments and regulators." (Who's Who: International Who's Who of Commercial Mediation 2014)
- "Tony Willis really stands out," say sources. He is "hugely experienced and innovative in finding ways of bringing parties together," and interviewees emphasise his knack for "maintaining trust while being firm with the parties and their advisers, along with taking the trouble to understand the dispute and what, legally and commercially, divides the parties." (Chambers & Partners 2014)
- "Having been involved in full-time mediation since 1998, Tony Willis at Brick Court Chambers has established himself as an almost default choice among solicitors in the know, such is his reputation in the market. Complex, and often international, disputes are regularly on the agenda, and his background as managing partner and head of litigation at Clifford Chance means he is quick to earn the respect of both sides in high-value cases." (Legal 500 2013)
- "Hailed as a man of "great authority, a fantastic, formidable lawyer who commands respect," Tony Willis is highlighted by market sources for his international practice, frequently handling "the most difficult of cases." A commanding figure in the world of mediation, he is seen as "a statesmanlike figure" and is called upon for big-ticket commercial and regulatory matters." (Chambers & Partners 2012)
- "After a long career in the market, including a period as head of litigation and managing partner at Clifford Chance, Tony Willis at Brick Court Chambers is 'still an éminence grise in this area'. The gravitas that he brings to mediations is much sought after and commented upon by clients and peers alike, and is reflected in the high-value, complex and often international nature of the disputes he is instructed to mediate." (Legal 500 2012)
- "Tony Willis, also of Brick Court, is a hugely experienced mediator and "a popular choice for blockbuster matters where heads might need banging together." He is regularly instructed on multi-jurisdictional cases stemming from commercial, business and regulatory disputes." (Chambers UK 2012)
- "truly excellent" and ranked in 1st place by International Who's Who of Commercial Mediation

2011

- "‘The god of everyone’, according to peers, clients also rate Tony Willis of Brick Court Chambers extremely highly, and take comfort in the fact that he is always ‘his usual accomplished self’. Others note the much-appreciated ‘gravitas’ he is able to bring to heavyweight, multi-party, multibillion-dollar proceedings; his previous experience as head of litigation and managing partner of Clifford Chance certainly helps him command respect." (Legal 500 2011)