

Private client team of the year

WINNER

Maurice Turnor Gardner

Clare Maurice

City start-up lands coveted panel places

Maurice Turnor Gardner was set up just two years ago but in that time has managed to build up an enviable client roster, bring in some impressive lateral hires and cement its position as a major player in the private client sphere. Despite having only eight partners, the firm has managed to land places on Barclays', The Royal Bank of Scotland's and Nationwide's panels and picked up over 100 new clients over the past two years.

The boutique practice was formed after Allen & Overy spun off its private client practice, with partners Clare Maurice, Richard Turnor and Ceris Gardner all deciding to go it alone, bringing in healthy first-year profits of £2m. As one of their clients, Mike Housden, director of European tax at Goldman Sachs, put it last year: 'They have had a terrific first year'.

In 2010 the firm added two litigation partners from pensions and consulting firm Mercer, bringing the partnership up to eight. While many in the City have scaled back their private client practices, Maurice Turnor Gardner has bucked the trend to build a strong and focused private client firm.

HIGHLY COMMENDED

BERWIN LEGHTON PAISNER

Ian De Freitas

BLP had a great 2010, successfully representing the millionaire Vivian Imerman, the former chief executive of Whyte & Mackay, in a landmark divorce battle. The court ruled in Mr Imerman's favour, finding that his wife could not use private documents downloaded from his computer in divorce proceedings. The work of the BLP team helped over-turn nearly 20 years of precedent in the family law division.

FARRER & CO

Simon Bruce

Farrer advised on one of the most talked about cases of the year, concerning the validity of pre-nuptial agreements in English courts. Bruce's team successfully acted for Katrin Radmacher in a landmark case that ruled that consideration should be given to pre-nuptial agreements signed by spouses before getting married.

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(L-R) Vistra's David Rudge with Corinne Staves, Eesha Arora and Richard Turnor of Maurice Turnor Gardner

MACFARLANES

Jonathan Conder

Macfarlanes has long been a fixture on the private client scene and acts on some of the most complex high-value work in the City. In the course of 2010 the team advised on the structure of five trusts in Moscow for several Russian nationals that together control a business valued in excess of \$10bn.

MICHELMORES

Will Michelmores

South West firm Michelmores had a strong year that saw the team win major new trust work from the Criminal Injuries Compensation Authority. The team also bagged some new clients from rival City firms and has increased turnover in its contentious trust team by 77% in the past year.

TAYLOR WESSING

Mark Buzzoni

Taylor Wessing has built up a top-notch private client practice with a particular focus on high-rolling individuals and families. The eight-partner team now acts for over 150 families with assets worth more than £100m and in the past year advised on two major multibillion-pound multi-party trust disputes in Bermuda. The hard work of the team has paid dividends with the turnover of the team growing by over 50% over the past three years.



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