

## MANCHES

We have offices in Oxford, Reading and London.

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FAMILY LAW  
“The ‘go-to’ team!”

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Ranked as leaders for family law since 2001

*“National firm Manches LLP has a market-leading family law practice.”*

Legal 500 UK

At Manches we can provide you with a family law team made up of individual specialists. Whether you need advice on the broad areas of divorce or Civil Partnership dissolution or specifically on disputes involving children and the financial issues which result from family break-up, we can offer you the highest quality of service. Our success is based on proven experience and the talent of our lawyers, who are recognised as leading specialists in their field.

We recognise that to achieve high levels of effective settlement you need a team with sound judgement, formidable negotiating skills and meticulous care.

We know that our clients appreciate our committed, well-informed and friendly approach. We also know that they appreciate receiving City-quality advice at regional rates. Importantly, we strive to give every case the individual attention, expertise and care that it deserves.

*“This team is able to match its talent to particular issues. It offers such a range of approaches and styles, you can pick out a specific solicitor to meet your needs.”*

Chambers & Partners UK

#### Our expertise:

- Divorce
- Financial orders following divorce
- Disputes involving children
- Separation agreements
- Pension implications of divorce
- Civil Partnership advice
- Disputes between unmarried partners about children or money
- Pre-nuptial, cohabitation and pre-Civil Partnership agreements
- Mediation
- Collaborative family law
- Trust and estate planning

*“The ‘go-to’ team!”*

Chambers & Partners UK

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## What is the first step?

For new clients, we offer a free initial discussion on the telephone to discuss your options and consider which approach would be best suited to your case.

## Our aim

Our aim is to provide you with expert legal advice and help you find the process that best fits your circumstances. We offer the following approaches:

### Collaborative law

Family law is a constantly evolving practice aimed at achieving “a good divorce”. Manches has lawyers who are trained in collaborative law, helping couples to work together as a team with their advisors, to resolve disputes respectfully, without having to attend Court, thus saving stress and expense.

The aim of the process is to maintain amicable relations and avoid lengthy Court proceedings. We work with relevant professionals such as IFAs and tax accountants, to provide a tailor-made agreement to achieve the maximum benefit for the whole family.

You and your spouse have the support and guidance of your respective lawyers. The lawyers agree that they are there to help you through the collaborative process; they do not take the case to Court, unless it is to obtain an Order by agreement.

The main elements of the collaborative approach are set out in an agreement, which both you and your lawyer sign. Where agreement is reached, it can be turned into a Court Order, which is lodged at Court for approval by a Judge. No attendance at Court is necessary.

*“Clients and peers praise the team.”*

Chambers & Partners UK

## Mediation

Mediation is another proven means of achieving a tailor-made resolution. With the assistance of a specialist lawyer mediator to explore the issues between you and help you to formulate your own agreements, the process can be highly cost-effective. Other benefits can be an improvement in communication between you and a positive message of co-parenting being sent to the children. Once terms of agreement are reached in mediation, a Consent Order can be lodged at Court for approval by a Judge, without need for attendance at Court.

## Litigation

For various reasons, such as the complexity of the case or past history of one or both of the parties, some cases are just not suitable for mediation or the collaborative law process. Where litigation is called for, the Manches team is expert in the latest case law and possesses the highest level of negotiation and litigation skills.



## Additional services

### Cohabitation agreements

Couples are increasingly living together without marrying. If the relationship breaks down, it can often lead to uncertainty and a potentially expensive dispute. Contrary to popular belief, there is no such thing as a 'common law' spouse. If you are not married or in a Civil Partnership, you may wish to protect your position in the event of a relationship breakdown by entering into a Cohabitation Agreement, which will help ensure that any subsequent dispute between you is kept to a minimum.

### Pre-marital and pre-Civil Partnership agreements

Pre-Marital and Pre-Civil Partnership Agreements (or "pre-nups", as they are often called) are becoming more popular following recent case law. They will be upheld by the Court in appropriate cases. They can provide peace of mind and help ensure that, wherever possible, the acrimony of a divorce is kept to a minimum.

### Tax and estate planning

The Manches family law team works closely with the firm's private client team, who can advise you on the best way to protect and maximise your financial assets following divorce, including the creation and administration of family Trusts, preparing new Wills and tax planning.

### Property issues

You can also benefit from the services of a highly experienced residential conveyancing solicitor, who handles the legalities of property acquisition, disposal or re-mortgage following any agreed settlement, and who can draw up Deeds of Trust, where appropriate.

Manches also offers you the full range of business services, including corporate (for example, advising on family companies and partnership advice), employment, dispute resolution and commercial property acquisitions and disposals.

*“Jane Mitchell leads the department and comes highly recommended for her composure and decisiveness. She can fight tenaciously for her clients while keeping everyone involved grounded.”*

Chambers & Partners UK

## Our team

### Jane Mitchell

Jane is a partner and head of the family law team in Manches' Thames Valley offices. Jane specialises in complex financial cases, disputes regarding children between married and unmarried partners, cohabitation disputes and pre-nuptial agreements. She has been ranked for many years as a leading family practitioner in the South East by both Chambers & Partners and the Legal 500 and has been described in these publications as “pragmatic, approachable and efficient” and “not intimidated by anyone”. She is a member of Resolution and is also trained in collaborative law.

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### Kerry Fretwell

Kerry is a partner in the family law team based in Manches' Reading office. She was one of the first family lawyers in the UK to train as a collaborative lawyer and was involved in setting up the London Collaborative Family Law Group and later the Reading Collaborative Family Law Group. She specialises in mid-to-high value ancillary relief, children's cases and collaborative law and is recommended in Chambers & Partners and Legal 500 as “*extremely effective*” with a “*wealth of experience in family law*” and for “*her conciliatory approach*”. She is also a member of Resolution.

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### Alexandra Lewis

Alexandra is a partner and has specialised in family law since 1996. With a background in Psychology, she is an accredited Resolution specialist in advanced financial provision and children cases. She is recommended in both Legal 500 and Chambers & Partners directories, the latter stating “She is a really clever lawyer who is quick off the mark and has a gentle but insistent style”. She is a trained collaborative lawyer and an accredited mediator.

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Jane Mitchell



Kerry Fretwell



Alexandra Lewis



*“Manches LLP provides a top-quality service.”*

Legal 500

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### Ruth James

Ruth is an associate solicitor. She joined Manches in 2002 after training with a leading London practice. She has a diverse client base and is experienced in matters ranging from difficult financial and Trust cases to cohabitation and children issues. She is a trained collaborative lawyer and a member of Resolution. She is a recommended lawyer in the Legal 500 and Chambers & Partners directories in which she has been praised for her intellect, calm demeanour, energy and commitment.

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### Camilla Lovell-Hoare

Camilla graduated in 2004 from Imperial College of Science, Technology and Medicine in London with a degree in Biochemistry. She then undertook her Graduate Diploma in Law and completed the Legal Practice Course at the College of Law before joining Manches LLP as a trainee in September 2008.

Camilla qualified into the family law team in September 2010. She is based in Manches' Reading office

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### Cath Brooke

Cath, who graduated in History from Warwick University, joined Manches in 2004. She qualified as a Fellow of the Institute of Legal Executives in 2009 and continues to develop her experience in all aspects of family law. She is a member of Resolution.

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Ruth James



Camilla Lovell-Hoare



Cath Brooke

