

*The*  
**LEGAL**  
**500**  
JOHN PRITCHARD

**The Legal 500 recommends**

**Hugh James**

**2009 edition**

This PDF is an extract of the full recommendations for the firm in the 2009 edition of The UK Legal 500.

The attached pages contain all the recommendations for the firm. This document relates to your firm only, to see how your firm has performed against your peers and our full editorial analysis please go to [www.legal500.com](http://www.legal500.com) or refer to the printed book.

## London

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Product liability - claimant

## Wales

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Public sector

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Intellectual property and information technology | Sport

### Wales Overview

Regional heavyweights

**Product liability - claimant**

IRWIN MITCHELL LLP  
LEIGH DAY & CO

1

Freeth Cartwright LLP  
**Hugh James**

2

Firms are listed A-Z within tiers

At Freeth Cartwright LLP, Paul Balen reached settlements in cases relating to hip and elbow prostheses, hydrogel breast implants, contraceptive devices, and vaccines. In addition to the medical device field, the practice also has experience in cases relating to exercise equipment, hair dye and shampoo.

**Hugh James'** strengths include recovering compensation for victims of harmful products in the consumer market, as well as in the pharmaceutical and medical fields. Practice head Mark Harvey is leading the Seroxat group litigation order, while Stephen Webber is acting for claimants involved in the South Wales outbreak of E.coli in the Welsh Assembly government's first public inquiry.

**Corporate and commercial - Cardiff and South Wales**

EVERSHEDS LLP Cardiff		1
Geldards LLP Cardiff <b>Hugh James Cardiff</b>		2
M & A Solicitors LLP Cardiff Morgan Cole Cardiff, Swansea		
Berry Smith Cardiff Capital Law LLP Cardiff		3
Darwin Gray Cardiff John Collins & Partners LLP Solicitors Swansea	MLM Cartwright Cardiff Morgan LaRoche Limited Swansea	
Dolmans Solicitors Cardiff Douglas-Jones Mercer Swansea	Harding Evans LLP Newport Lowless & Lowless Haverfordwest	
Firms are listed A-Z within tiers		

Geldards LLP enjoys a strong profile in the market, under practice head Andrew Morris. The team had a buoyant year, advising Celsa on its multimillion-pound acquisition of three steel reinforcement producers, S4C on a high-profile funding issue, and WAG on various equity investments. The commercial team, headed by Ceri Delemore, advised a number of high-profile clients on procurement issues, including Somer Housing Group, S4C, and the National Library of Wales.

**Hugh James'** focus on the commercial aspect of its business is paying dividends. Phillip Rees and Alicia Young have raised the firm's profile considerably, continuing to bring work into the Cardiff office from clients such as Wells Fargo Bank, and also winning Fortis Bank as a new client of the firm. The *'outstanding'* Gerallt Jones heads the corporate side, which advised on some substantial deals last year. Active clients include WAG, WRU, RBS, and California-based Pelican Products Inc, which instructed the firm in relation to its acquisition of Blue i UK.

M & A Solicitors LLP remains the strongest pure commercial firm in the region. Corporate heavyweight Alan Whiteley is popular with clients, and Steve Berry led on the high-profile £90m buy-out of National Britannia Group Limited. The firm also acts for Capita Group plc and its subsidiaries, advising on a number of substantial deals in 2008. Clients rate the firm highly; the *'overall service is excellent - very responsive and proactive'*.

**Crime - Cardiff**

BOWDEN JONES SOLICITORS  
CROWELL & MORING  
DE MAID SOLICITORS  
**HUGH JAMES**  
HUTTON'S  
MARTYN PROWEL

1

Clarke & Hartland  
The Grech Gooden Partnership  
Richard Nelson Solicitors

2

Davies & Jones Solicitors  
Geldards LLP  
Morgans  
RadcliffesLeBrasseur  
Russell Jones & Walker

3

Firms are listed A-Z within tiers

De Maid Solicitors has raised its profile in recent years, with Matthew de Maid being particularly prominent. It is on the VHCC panel, and has attracted a lot of high-end work, particularly fraud, murder and conspiracy cases, obtaining some good results for clients.

**Hugh James** has relinquished publicly funded work in order to concentrate on its Regulatory Defence Service. The firm is on the VHCC panel, is appointed to the Treasury Solicitor's Crime and Regulatory Panel, acts for the Security Industry Authority, and prosecutes for VOSA.

Stuart Hutton at Hutton's has a longstanding reputation, particularly for regulatory defence work, such as cases involving the infringement of FSA regulations, where he works closely with commercial litigator Clare Strowbridge. The firm also handles general crime work, from Magistrates Court to VHCC work.

**Licensing**

**HUGH JAMES Cardiff**

JOHN MORSE SOLICITORS Swansea  
MORGAN COLE Cardiff, Swansea  
MORGAN LAROCHE LIMITED Swansea

1

Allington Hughes Solicitors Wrexham  
Gamlins Rhyl  
Hutchinson Thomas Neath  
Lowless & Lowless Haverfordwest  
MLM Cartwright Cardiff  
Robertsons Cardiff  
William Parry & Co Swansea

2

Firms are listed A-Z within tiers

All licensing work at [Hugh James](#) is now dealt with in Cardiff, within the regulatory and defence services team. Mark Perry acts for Millennium Stadium and other notable Welsh businesses, and last year Martin Jones appeared for the organisers of Ogfest '08.

John Morse of John Morse Solicitors is the big name in licensing in Swansea, undertaking licensing work nationally for a number of well-known chains of betting shops, including Corals and Paddy Power. Morse has unrivalled experience in liquor and betting licensing.

**Commercial litigation**

EVERSHEDS LLP Cardiff	1
GELDARDS LLP Cardiff	
<b>HUGH JAMES Cardiff</b>	
MORGAN COLE Cardiff, Swansea	
Berry Smith Cardiff	2
Capital Law LLP Cardiff	
Darwin Gray Cardiff	3
Douglas-Jones Mercer Swansea	
Harding Evans LLP Newport	
John Collins & Partners LLP Solicitors Swansea	
MLM Cartwright Cardiff	
Morgan LaRoche Limited Swansea	
Dolmans Solicitors Cardiff	Lowless & Lowless Haverfordwest
Hutton's Cardiff	M & A Solicitors LLP Cardiff
Leo Abse & Cohen Cardiff	NewLaw Solicitors LLP Cardiff
Loosemores Cardiff	
Firms are listed A-Z within tiers	

Geldards LLP has a well-balanced team headed by Paul Hopkins. Work in 2008 included acting for the Welsh Ministers to recover grant funding of over £600,000 from Dairygold Food Products (UK) Ltd, and continuing to act for the Cuddys in the high-profile shareholder dispute with Geraint Hawkes, relating to Neath Rugby Ltd. The team was appointed to the Lit-Cat Treasury Solicitor's panel in 2008.

**Hugh James'** Gareth Williams( *'a top performer'* ) and Richard Locke( *'the right man for the job and gets results'* ) are popular with clients. The firm is experienced in multi-party litigation, such as the TAG litigation, and also advises on high-value disputes, such as a US\$10m disputed joint venture agreement for gold mining rights in South Africa. The team is on the WAG panel.

Morgan Cole is currently involved in some of the most substantial pieces of litigation in Wales. Active clients include the Department of Health Commercial Directorate, PHS Group plc, and a number of NHS bodies. Allan Wilson specialises in judicial review and procurement disputes, and is representing Milford Haven Port Authority in High Court proceedings relating to the Pilots' National Pension Fund. Specialisms include marine law, with clients including freight importers FG Hawkes (Western) Limited.

**Debt recovery**

EVERSHEDS LLP Cardiff MORGAN COLE Swansea	1
Berry Smith Cardiff Geldards LLP Cardiff Harding Evans LLP Newport <b>Hugh James Cardiff</b> John Collins & Partners LLP Solicitors Swansea	2

Firms are listed A-Z within tiers

Harding Evans LLP collects debts for a number of local businesses and national debt collection agencies.

**Hugh James** continues to receive volume debt recovery instructions from major organisations, including the Post Office Group Ltd/Royal Mail Group plc, Dwr Cymru Welsh Water, and Thames Water Services Ltd.

John Collins & Partners LLP Solicitors has a specialist commercial lending recovery department, acting for leading lenders such as Lloyds TSB Bank; new clients this year include Principality Building Society.

**Banking and finance**

EVERSHEDS LLP Cardiff	1
Geldards LLP Cardiff <b>Hugh James Cardiff</b> Morgan Cole Cardiff, Swansea M & A Solicitors LLP Cardiff	2
Morgan LaRoche Limited Swansea	3
Firms are listed A-Z within tiers	

Clients find the service levels, commitment, and value for money provided by the banking team at Geldards LLP to be 'excellent'. In 2008 the team was appointed to act for Finance Wales in relation to the £150m JEREMIE fund, and also acted for Barclays Bank plc in the restructuring of over £55m of facilities to the Welsh Rugby Union.

Rob Morgan at **Hugh James** is 'quick to respond and very diligent'; he and Chris Agius are 'excellent'. The firm is instructed by major institutional lenders, but also advises housing associations in relation to substantial borrowings (in one case, £55m). Recent work includes advising the WRU in relation to the re-financing of the stadium debt.

M & A Solicitors LLP is regularly called on to advise on multimillion-pound banking facilities for clients; this year it advised Julian Hodge Bank Ltd on its forward purchase and funding of a new headquarters for Southampton City Council.

**Insolvency and corporate recovery**

EVERSHEDS LLP Cardiff GELDARDS LLP Cardiff MORGAN COLE Cardiff, Swansea	1
Capital Law LLP Cardiff Darwin Gray Cardiff <b>Hugh James Cardiff</b> Hunt & Morgan Cardiff MLM Cartwright Cardiff	2
Berry Smith Cardiff Douglas-Jones Mercer Swansea Gabb and Co Abergavenny Harding Evans LLP Newport John Collins & Partners LLP Solicitors Swansea M & A Solicitors LLP Cardiff	3

Firms are listed A-Z within tiers

Darwin Gray's insolvency arm has been bolstered by two new hires; in 2008 contentious insolvency specialist Kempton Rees arrived from Geldards LLP, and in 2009 Ian Herbert, formerly of Hugh James, joined Rees to form one of the most complete insolvency teams in the region. Client gains last year included Begbies Traynor and Deloitte. The *'level of service is high'*, and the team offers *'excellent value for money'*.

**Hugh James** attracts work from the large accountants and banks, and has good experience in property recovery matters.

Established niche insolvency practice Hunt & Morgan is a three-partner firm popular with insolvency practitioner clients such as Begbies Traynor and PKF.

Employment - Cardiff	
EVERSHEDS LLP Cardiff	1
Capital Law LLP Cardiff Geldards LLP Cardiff Morgan Cole Cardiff, Swansea	2
Berry Smith Cardiff Darwin Gray Cardiff <b>Hugh James Cardiff</b> M & A Solicitors LLP Cardiff MLM Cartwright Cardiff	3
Clarkslegal LLP Cardiff Dolmans Solicitors Cardiff Morgan Denton Jones LLP Cardiff	Russell Jones & Walker Cardiff Thompsons Cardiff
Firms are listed A-Z within tiers	

Darwin Gray punches above its weight in employment. The team is headed by the high-profile Bethan Darwin - a *'tower of strength'* - and has been joined by Damian Phillips from Hugh James.

**Hugh James** has experienced growth in all areas, but particularly in corporate support work. Client wins include Powys County Council and Vale of Glamorgan Council.

At M & A Solicitors LLP, the *'trustworthy, accurate and efficient'* Betsan Thomas heads a team that has experience in relation to substantial acquisitions, and provides HR support to clients such as West Sussex County Council.

**Pensions**

EVERSHEDS LLP Cardiff

1

Geldards LLP Cardiff

**Hugh James Cardiff**

Morgan Cole Cardiff, Swansea

2

Firms are listed A-Z within tiers

Stephen Jenkins at Geldards LLP is '*competent and friendly*'.

Louise Price leads the pensions team at [Hugh James](#), which supports the firm's increasingly active corporate team, but also advises a number of public sector clients.

Morgan Cole's clients include a number of educational institutions and other notable public sector bodies. The firm mostly acts for trustees, advising on terms of pensions deeds.

**Clinical negligence - claimant**

**HUGH JAMES Cardiff**

1

Geldards LLP Cardiff

Harding Evans LLP Cardiff

Hutton's Cardiff

John Collins & Partners LLP Solicitors Swansea

Leo Abse & Cohen Cardiff

Marchant Harries & Co Aberdare

Smith Llewelyn Partnership Swansea

Thompsons Cardiff

Walker Smith Way Wrexham

2

Firms are listed A-Z within tiers

**Hugh James** has the largest clinical negligence team in Wales, with four (Law Society/AVMA) panel members. The team deals with cases of maximum severity, and obtained an award of £3.3m in a child brain injury case in 2008. It is also dealing with the high-profile Weston Knee cases, and continues to act for the Welsh Community Health Council. Consultant Mari Rosser sits on the Committee advising the Welsh Assembly Government Working Party in relation to the Speedy Resolution clinical negligence pilot in Wales.

Jane Rogers now heads the team at Geldards LLP following the retirement of Tom Beech in 2007, and focuses on CFA-funded work.

**Personal injury - claimant**

<b>HUGH JAMES Cardiff</b> LEO ABSE & COHEN Cardiff NEWLAW SOLICITORS LLP Cardiff THOMPSONS Cardiff	1
Harding Evans LLP Newport John Collins & Partners LLP Solicitors Swansea Russell Jones & Walker Cardiff Walker Smith Way Wrexham	2
Cordner Lewis Solicitors Cardiff Dolmans Solicitors Cardiff Douglas-Jones Mercer Swansea Gabb and Co Crickhowell Gamlins Llandudno Geldards LLP Cardiff Hutchinson Thomas Neath Hutton's Cardiff MLM Cartwright Cardiff Secure Law Newport Watkins & Gunn Pontypool, Newbride, Newport	3
<small>Firms are listed A-Z within tiers</small>	

Traditionally known for its union work, [Hugh James](#) is rated for its innovative approach, and ability to handle groundbreaking cases. It is recognised as a leading claimant firm, with expert lawyers across a range of focal areas: harmful products; overseas accidents; volume personal injury; catastrophic cases; group actions; multi-track; and nursing care. Mark Harvey is known for his product liability and group action work, leading the Seroxat Group Litigation Order. Andrew Harding is a member of the Professional Deputies Panel, and is Court Appointed Deputy for 67 individuals with brain injury.

Robin Williams heads the trade union services department at Leo Abse & Cohen which has clients including Amicus, GMB and USDAW; about 50% of the work is union-sourced. Mark Church takes on serious spinal and head injury work, and is a member of Headway and the Spinal Injuries Association.

**Personal injury - defendant**

B2 FROM BEACHCROFT Newport  
BERRYMANS LACE MAWER LLP Cardiff  
DOLMANS SOLICITORS Cardiff  
EVERSHEDS LLP Cardiff  
**HUGH JAMES Cardiff**  
MORGAN COLE Cardiff, Swansea

1

Douglas-Jones Mercer Swansea  
Geldards LLP Cardiff  
Rausa Mumford (inc. SJ Cottrell) Cardiff  
Welsh Health Legal Services Cardiff

2

Firms are listed A-Z within tiers

Karen Meggitt has steered Eversheds LLP through an unsettled year, emerging with a more streamlined team that handles mostly litigated work. The team is instructed by insurers such as Legal & General, and also directly by companies such as Mothercare.

Philip Dicken heads the team at [Hugh James](#) which now offers an indemnity and corporate risk team, supported by streamline and technical services teams. The client list includes a good mix of insurers, loss adjusters and utilities; the firm was retained by Norwich Union and Welsh Water following panel reviews, and has won new clients Aspen and HBOS. Andrew Manners and Pauline Lewis receive good feedback.

Morgan Cole benefited from its merger at the end of 2008 with Bristol firm CIP Solicitors. The merger makes geographical sense for the firm (it now stretches along the M4 corridor), and strengthens the client base, bringing clients such as AXA and NFU as well as self-insured organisations such as Imperial Tobacco.

**Professional negligence**

MORGAN COLE Cardiff, Swansea

1

Berry Smith Cardiff  
**Hugh James Cardiff**

2

Dolmans Solicitors Cardiff  
Harding Evans LLP Newport  
John Collins & Partners LLP Solicitors Swansea  
MLM Cartwright Cardiff

3

Firms are listed A-Z within tiers

Iwan Doull at Berry Smith has a good reputation among clients and peers. He acts for all types of professionals, and the firm was recently appointed to the panel of a multinational legal expenses insurer.

Hugh Price heads the team at [Hugh James](#) which experienced growth in 2008, hiring Alun Tobias and Llyr Davies. The firm handles a considerable amount of professional indemnity work, crossing over with the work of the firm's construction and commercial litigation teams.

Philip Bradley is recommended at Dolmans Solicitors.

**Charities**

GELDARDS LLP Cardiff

1

**Hugh James Cardiff**

Morgan Cole Cardiff, Swansea

2

Gamlins Llandudno

Hutchinson Thomas Neath

3

Firms are listed A-Z within tiers

Giselle Davies at Geldards LLP is *'probably the most knowledgeable and well- respected charity lawyer in Wales'* whose advice *'reflects in-depth knowledge of the sector and importantly the Welsh context'*. Work this year included advising on the Welsh part of the merger of Age Concern Cymru & Help the Aged.

A substantial number of **Hugh James'** clients have charitable status, and a number of the partners act as trustees of notable charities.

Morgan Cole also acts for a considerable number of clients with charitable status, notably in the education sector. Expertise is spread across its offices in Wales and Oxford.

**Family - Cardiff**

**HUGH JAMES**

WENDY HOPKINS FAMILY LAW PRACTICE

1

Berry Smith  
Hopkins Law LLP  
Howells Solicitors  
Hutton's  
Leo Abse & Cohen  
Martyn Prowel  
Morgans

2

Firms are listed A-Z within tiers

Malcolm Stevens at [Hugh James](#) has a very good reputation; specialising in financial arrangements on matrimonial breakdown, he is also known for his private child law work. Alun Thomas specialises in abduction cases, national and international.

Wendy Hopkins Family Law Practice continues to thrive. Melanie Hamer and Thea Hughes are well respected by peers and specialise in high-asset divorce work, but Hamer is also an SRA Children's panel member. Hughes has recently become a Collaborative Lawyer. The firm handles private and public child law, and Rhian Howells is experienced in international family law.

**Personal tax, trusts and probate**

GABB AND CO Abergavenny <b>HUGH JAMES Cardiff</b>	1
Geldards LLP Cardiff Hutchinson Thomas Neath John Collins & Partners LLP Solicitors Swansea Morgan Cole Cardiff	2
Allington Hughes Solicitors Wrexham Berry Smith Cardiff Dolmans Solicitors Cardiff Douglas-Jones Mercer Swansea Francis & Co Chepstow Gamlins Llandudno Harding Evans LLP Newport Hopkins Law LLP Cardiff, Cowbridge Howells Solicitors Cardiff John Morse Solicitors Swansea Leo Abse & Cohen Cardiff, Swansea, Newport Lowless & Lowless Pembroke, Haverford West, Tenby, Milford Haven MLM Cartwright Cardiff Margraves Llandridnod Wells Passmores Solicitors Barry Smith Llewelyn Partnership Swansea Ungoed-Thomas & King Carmarthen Walker Smith Way Wrexham Wendy Hopkins Family Law Practice Cardiff	3
<small>Firms are listed A-Z within tiers</small>	

At Gabb and Co, Steve Meredith's direct and pragmatic approach continues to impress; his can-do attitude is backed up by a team with the necessary strength in depth to advise on complex estates, but which can also deal efficiently with straightforward matters. Clients and referrers are impressed with Meredith's trusts knowledge, and the value for money and quality of service are also noted. The practice includes contentious work.

**Hugh James** remains the heavyweight firm in the region, with a strong and substantial team headed by Alun Jones. The firm deals with complex contentious probate issues, and provides asset management advice, while maintaining a volume will-drafting service for customers of its institutional clients, such as Principality Building Society.

Sian Williams at Geldards LLP is well respected by peers; a fluent Welsh speaker, she specialises in high-end probate and tax planning, and has acted for some substantial estates.

**Projects, energy and natural resources**

EVERSHEDS LLP Cardiff  
MORGAN COLE Cardiff

1

**Hugh James Cardiff**

M & A Solicitors LLP Cardiff

2

Firms are listed A-Z within tiers

Morgan Cole is becoming a firm of choice for energy sector clients seeking expertise coupled with value for their money. Paul Millar is *'patient, knowledgeable, and calm under pressure'*. The firm is advising in relation to the major gas-fired power station at Fleetwood.

**Hugh James** is instructed by Cardiff Council in relation to its integrated transport scheme, and also has experience in wind farms.

M & A Solicitors LLP advises a number of energy clients in South Wales.

**Public sector**

EVERSHEDS LLP Cardiff	1
GELDARDS LLP Cardiff	
MORGAN COLE Cardiff, Swansea	
<b>Hugh James Cardiff</b>	2
Clarkslegal LLP Cardiff	3
MLM Cartwright Cardiff	
<small>Firms are listed A-Z within tiers</small>	

Morgan Cole is the region's principal adviser on health and social care. Expertise spans governance, employment and equality, real estate, and mental health issues, with Eve Piffaretti noted in the latter area. Health clients include substantial NHS trusts and Local Health Boards, the Welsh Health Supplies Partnership, and the Medical Protection Society. In local government, the firm counts the National Assembly of Wales Commission, and various local authorities among its clients. Further education is another area of expertise.

**Hugh James** is known for its housing work. It has seen growth in advice to healthcare providers and bodies such as the Chemists' Defence Association. In education, it counts UWIC among its clients, and also acts as Presenting Officer for the General Teaching Council of Wales. In local government, the firm advises the Treasury Solicitor, and a number of government-sponsored bodies and local authorities in Wales.

Also recommended are: Clarkslegal LLP; Dolmans Solicitors(for work for local authorities and the police forces of Wales); M & A Solicitors LLP(for commercial and projects advice to local authorities); MLM Cartwright(for NHS work); and Russell Jones & Walker.

**Commercial property - Cardiff**

EVERSHEDS LLP		1
Geldards LLP <b>Hugh James</b> Morgan Cole		2
Berry Smith Capital Law LLP Darwin Gray M & A Solicitors LLP		3
MLM Cartwright	Thomas Simon Solicitors	
Clarkslegal LLP Dolmans Solicitors	Howells Solicitors Leo Abse & Cohen	
Firms are listed A-Z within tiers		

Geldards LLP is instructed in relation to a range of development projects across the UK. The team continues to act for WAG on the RAF St Athan site, and for the Forestry Commission in relation to substantial wind power sites. Robert James is noted as a *'very experienced and wise adviser'*, and Liz Ganderton is also praised by clients.

**Hugh James** is instructed in relation to some major developments in Wales, including the redevelopment of Victoria Dock (Caernarfon), and the former Whitland Creamery in Carmarthen (both WAG instructions), and the Parc Derwen village project in Bridgend. Chris Aguis, who was made partner in 2008, and Peter Hurn are recommended for their real estate finance work; Hurn is *'an exceptionally competent lawyer, approachable, and very experienced'*.

Morgan Cole has good strength in depth. Clients include Canary Wharf Group plc, the Principality, the NHS residual estate, and the National Assembly for Wales. Head of department Geoff Reed, and Nigel Griffiths are both well respected for their knowledge in the private sector, and Philip Jardine is noted for his commercial and pragmatic approach in private and public sector work. Highlights included acting for Llanelli Rugby Football Club Ltd on the £23m development of Parc y Scarlets.

**Construction**

EVERSHEDS LLP Cardiff MORGAN COLE Cardiff	1
Geldards LLP Cardiff <b>Hugh James Cardiff</b> Morgan LaRoche Limited Swansea	2
Darwin Gray Cardiff M & A Solicitors LLP Cardiff MLM Cartwright Cardiff	3

Firms are listed A-Z within tiers

The proactive Tony Norris heads the construction practice at Geldards LLP. In 2008 he advised on the new £23m Parc y Scarlets stadium.

Ioan Prydderch at [Hugh James](#) is recommended for construction dispute work. On the non-contentious side, the firm is well respected for its work in relation to substantial projects such as Parc Derwen and Barry Waterfront. 'Excellent' former department head Jeremy Williams has left the firm for M & A Solicitors LLP, where his considerable construction and energy experience should tie in well with the firm's projects work.

Morgan LaRoche Limited punches above its weight and is 'excellent value for money'. Work in 2008 included advising Bristol International Airport on a multimillion-pound planning and construction project.

**Planning and environment**

EVERSHEDS LLP Cardiff GELDARDS LLP Cardiff	1
Darwin Gray Cardiff <b>Hugh James Cardiff</b> John Collins & Partners LLP Solicitors Swansea Morgan LaRoche Limited Swansea	2
Clarkslegal LLP Cardiff Gamlins Llandudno Hutchinson Thomas Neath	3

Firms are listed A-Z within tiers

Donald Gray at Darwin Gray is an expert in mines and minerals, common land, and manorial and fishing rights; he advises on water pollution, erosion and contamination.

Wiljo Salen heads the team at [Hugh James](#). Clients include Ffos Las Ltd (in respect of a new racecourse in Carmarthenshire), and Bridgend County Borough Council.

In Swansea, Rory Hutchings at John Collins & Partners LLP Solicitors has environmental expertise.

**Property litigation**

EVERSHEDS LLP Cardiff GELDARDS LLP Cardiff	1
Berry Smith Cardiff Darwin Gray Cardiff <b>Hugh James Cardiff</b> John Collins & Partners LLP Solicitors Swansea Morgan Cole Cardiff, Swansea Morgan Laroche Limited Swansea	2
Gamlins Bangor Harding Evans LLP Newport Hutchinson Thomas Neath	3

Firms are listed A-Z within tiers

The 'excellent' Rhodri Lewis at Darwin Gray was successful in the Court of Appeal for Barratt Homes against Dwr Cymru Welsh Water (opposite Geldards LLP); leave to appeal to the House of Lords has been granted. Clients appreciate Lewis' 'direct and practical approach'.

In 2008 Neil Morgan at **Hugh James** successfully acted for Cardiff County Council in its high-profile application for a new business tenancy for the sailing centre at Llanishen Reservoir. Instructions also came from WAG and the Forestry Commission.

John Collins & Partners LLP Solicitors acts for NFU members, and has specialist knowledge in areas such as the SPS scheme (including judicial review), environmental prosecutions, farm tenancy matters, CPOs and right of way disputes. Rory Hutchings is a respected adversary.

**Social housing**

**HUGH JAMES Cardiff**

MORGAN COLE Cardiff, Swansea

1

Eversheds LLP Cardiff

Morgan LaRoche Limited Swansea

2

Firms are listed A-Z within tiers

[Hugh James](#) is recognised as the leading social housing law firm in Wales, advising 37 of the RSLs in Wales. The team is headed by Neil Morgan, and also features an anti-social behaviour unit.

Social housing is a traditional and expanding client sector for Morgan Cole, with Philip Stewart and Peter Jones leading the team. It counts over 20 housing associations as clients, and this year won work from RCT Homes and Newport City Homes.

**Intellectual property and information technology**

EVERSHEDS LLP Cardiff GELDARDS LLP Cardiff <b>HUGH JAMES Cardiff</b> MORGAN COLE Cardiff, Swansea	1
Capital Law LLP Cardiff MLM Cartwright Cardiff	2
Berry Smith Cardiff Douglas-Jones Mercer Swansea John Collins & Partners LLP Solicitors Swansea M & A Solicitors LLP Cardiff Morgan LaRoche Limited Swansea	3

Firms are listed A-Z within tiers

Geldards LLP has a highly respected IP/IT team featuring Ceri Delemore and Michael Lindsey. Delemore is best known for her non-contentious licensing and ICT procurement work, and Lindsey for his contentious work. Clients include Cardiff University and Hoover Ltd; the firm successfully advised in an IP issue with Dyson this year.

**Hugh James** has a high profile in the field of IP/IT, and is advising US bank Wells Fargo in relation a number of projects. It advises the WRU on branding and IP issues, and Natural England on significant IT issues. Richard Lane is recommended by IT clients.

Morgan Cole has a strong IP practice headed by Lee Fisher, who has '*excellent business acumen and industry knowledge*'. Emyr Lewis is also well respected for IP advice. Justin Harrington heads the IT practice, which is arguably the strongest in Wales, advising on significant IT and outsourcing transactions, including WAG's Merlin project.

<b>Sport</b>	
<b>HUGH JAMES Cardiff</b> M & A SOLICITORS LLP Cardiff	1
Darwin Gray Cardiff Dolmans Solicitors Cardiff Morgan LaRoche Limited Swansea	2
Harding Evans LLP Newport Hutchinson Thomas Neath MLM Cartwright Cardiff Russell Jones & Walker Cardiff	3
<small>Firms are listed A-Z within tiers</small>	

At [Hugh James](#), Gareth Williams acts for the WRU. In 2008 the team advised on a substantial professional negligence claim; injunctions (relating to release of players by regional clubs); and doping offences. The firm also advises the WRU on commercial issues.

In 2008 Dean Sheehan joined M & A Solicitors LLP in a move which amalgamates Sheehan's sports contacts (he is a licensed football agent with a number of Premiership players on his books) with the firm's existing commercial expertise. The firm represents Regional Rugby Wales Ltd, and also counts Cardiff City FC and Swansea City FC among its clients.

**Regional heavyweights**

EVERSHEDS LLP Cardiff  
GELDARDS LLP Cardiff  
**HUGH JAMES Cardiff**  
MORGAN COLE Cardiff, Swansea

1

Firms are listed A-Z within tiers

Geldards LLP has a popular commercial property practice, and this has inevitably been hit by market conditions. However it also has an impressive media department, and strength in depth in public sector work, a fact that was rewarded by the Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) appointing it to all five of its panels last year.

**Hugh James** has seen a gradual change of focus in recent years, resulting in a far more commercial firm. It has good people at the top in key areas, such as corporate finance and commercial, and this is translating into an increase in quality instructions.

Of all of the regional heavyweights, Morgan Cole is arguably the best insulated against the recession, with a very strong public sector practice; its excellent healthcare team, in particular, rivals any within the UK.