IPOS Mediation

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Charles Powell

Charles was a partner at Freeths LLP and advised corporate clients, insurance companies and financial institutions on dispute resolution for 40 years.



Background

Charles was a partner at Freeths LLP and advised corporate clients, insurance companies and financial institutions on dispute resolution for 40 years. He retired from private practice in May 2023. He has over 30 years' experience as a mediator and has now conducted over 600 mediations. He specialises in commercial disputes, partnership disputes, professional negligence, property claims and banking/asset finance disputes. He also had considerable experience of advising clients, and taking them through, the mediation process.

Charles trained as a mediator with both ADR Group (accredited 1992) and CEDR (accredited 1996).

Mediation Style and Approach

Charles has a relaxed and informal approach as the Legal Directories reflect. However, as well as putting the parties at ease, he is always focused on the "deal" not the dispute or the law.

Practice Areas

Banking and Asset Finance disputes

Breach of contract

Commercial agency, EU regulations & distribution agreements

Commercial contracts

Construction & property

Corporate recovery

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Employment

Financial services

Franchising

Insolvency

Insurance

Landlord & tenant

Mortgage lending

Partnership disputes

Personal injury

Product liability

Professional negligence

Rights of way, boundaries & adverse possession

Sale of goods and services

Shareholder disputes

Sport

Trespass & nuisance

Trusts, wills, probate and inheritance

Undue influence

Legal Directories

Chambers and Partners, 2025 (Band 1)

Charles Powell is an experienced mediator whose expertise in partnership, professional negligence and property-related disputes is much sought after. He frequently works with corporates, financial institutions and insurance companies.

Chambers and Partners, 2024 (Band 1)

Charles Powell is a prominent mediator whose experience in partnership, professional negligence and property-related disputes is much sought after. He frequently works with corporates, financial institutions and insurance companies.

Chambers and Partners, 2023 (Band 1)

Charles Powell is a prominent mediator whose experience in partnership, professional negligence and property-related disputes is much sought after. He frequently works with corporates, financial institutions and insurance companies. “He’s commercial and a natural dispute resolver. His skills are in diplomacy, emotional intelligence and commercial acumen. He also has a sound grasp of the legal issues.” “He has great charm, communicates well and is a pleasure to work with. He has sound instincts and we felt listened to.”

Chambers and Partners, 2022 (Band 2)

Charles Powell is a prominent mediator whose experience in partnership, professional negligence and property-related disputes is much sought after. He frequently works with corporates, financial institutions and insurance companies." He quickly grasped that discussions of the merits of the case had been exhausted in pre-mediation correspondence and did not waste time going through them yet again, but instead moved the parties on to considering settlement on a commercial basis."

Chambers and Partners, 2021 (Band 2)

Charles Powell is a prominent mediator whose experience in partnership, professional negligence and property-related disputes is much sought after. He frequently works with corporates, financial institutions and insurance companies. "He is a quality mediator who really wins the trust of the parties." "Charles is commercial and skilled at bringing parties towards a resolution."

Chambers and Partners, 2020 (Band 2)

Charles Powell is praised for the "incisive" mediating style that he applies to partnership, professional negligence and property disputes, among a number of other commercial claims. Clients report: "He's very approachable and level-headed, and has a calming manner that puts clients at ease. You feel he goes the extra way to coax things towards a settlement."

Chambers and Partners, 2019 (Band 2)

Charles Powell is an active mediator who concentrates his practice on commercial disputes, property claims, partnership disputes and banking and asset finance issues. He has an excellent reputation among clients, who say: "He's very calm and really wins the confidence of both sides."

Hall of Fame Mediator

Legal 500 2026 (Tier 1)

IPOS Mediation's 'clever, calm and measured' Charles Powell is 'engaging and listens, and at the same time willing to challenge where necessary. Charles' professionalism and determination help parties reach settlements'. A full-time mediator and former Freeths LLP partner, Powell is a longstanding expert in mediating commercial disputes, partnership conflicts, professional negligence claims, property issues, and banking and asset finance disputes. Accredited by CEDR since 1996, Powell has handled over 600 mediations to date; while recent mediations include professional negligence, unfair prejudice and technology sector claims.

Legal 500 2025 (Tier 1)

A former Freeths LLP partner, Charles Powell is 'amiable, professional and mild-mannered, such qualities enabling him to build a rapport with the parties and their legal representatives easily'. Retiring from private practice in May 2023, veteran mediator Powell specialises in high-stakes commercial disputes and partnership issues, as well as professional negligence matters, property claims, and banking and asset finance conflicts. CEDR-accredited since 1996, Powell, who has conducted over 600 mediations to date, is also a founder member of both Hexagon Mediation and The Association of Midlands Mediators.

Legal 500 2024 (Tier 1)

Charles Powell is a former Freeths LLP partner, who 'seems to have the magic touch. He convinces parties that they really do want to settle. Even parties who are going through the motions or are poles apart find themselves shaking hands at the end of a day with Charles'. A founder member of both Hexagon Mediation Limited and The Association of Midlands Mediators, Powell has approximately 30 years' experience as a mediator, and conducted over 600 mediations to date. He specialises in commercial and partnership disputes, professional negligence, and property claims. Other key areas are banking, asset finance and insolvency-related mediations.

Legal 500 2023 (Tier 2)

Charles Powell is 'a very experienced and effective mediator, who is able to handle difficult mediations well and gets the key commercial points quickly'. He has conducted over 500 commercial mediations to date; and specialises in

commercial disputes, partnership issues, professional negligence, property claims, insolvency, and banking and asset finance disputes.

Legal 500 2022 (Tier 2)

Charles Powell is 'a mediator for miracles – he just has a knack for settling cases'. With over 20 years' mediation experience, Powell has conducted over 500 commercial mediations; and specialises in disputes concerning commercial issues, partnerships, professional negligence, property, banking, asset finance, and insolvency.

Legal 500, 2021 (Tier 2)

Charles Powell is 'an excellent mediator; he is hardworking, pragmatic and determined to find the right resolution. He is also creative at unlocking offers'. Others praise Powell's 'really good mediation style, for engaging well with the parties, and approaching the mediation in a pragmatic and sensible way'. Powell has over 20 years' mediation experience and has conducted over 500 commercial mediations. He specialises in disputes involving commercial law, partnerships, professional negligence and property claims, and banking and asset finance disputes.

Legal 500, 2020 (Tier 2)

Charles Powell is 'an exceptional mediator'. He 'finds patches of common ground in battlefields littered with casualties' and 'parties trust him to guide them towards a resolution because he understands the necessary ingredients for settlement and does not allow himself, or the parties, to become hung up on irrelevant aspects'. Powell has over 20 years of mediation experience and has conducted over 500 commercial mediations.

Legal 500, 2019 (Tier 2)

Charles Powell 'handles mediations exceptionally well; he establishes a good relationship with parties and assists in achieving results; he also has a good grasp of the facts and the law and explores the strengths and weaknesses of cases in a sensible manner'.

Who's Who Legal, 2019

Recognised as a leading mediator.

Career History

Trained Dodds Ashcroft; qualified 1984

Simpson Curtis 1984-1996, Partner 1990

Partner Shoosmiths 1996-2001

Partner Freeths 2001 – 2023

Mediator – 2023 onwards

Accredited ADR Group Mediator 1992; CEDR 1996

Professional Qualifications and Affiliations

LLB (Hons), Law

CEDR accredited

ADR Group accredited

Founding member of the Association of Midlands Mediators

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Interests

Charles is married and has three sons. His outside interests are mainly sporting. He is an enthusiastic but erratic golfer and a spectator at football, cricket and rugby. He is a current member of the National Trust and the Guild of Freemen of the City of York and was formerly President of the Old Nottinghamians' Society and Chairman of Caythorpe Cricket Club.

Client Feedback

"Very friendly and helpful in his style and approach to the mediation and also had a calm and experienced presence. His style was very much appreciated by client officers from my side. Would certainly recommend to others and would use him again in any future mediations." January 2022

"First rate. Charles had the confidence of my client from the outset and throughout the mediation. Despite the parties being diametrically opposed, Charles brought them closer to settlement in one day than they have been in years. There were many complicating legal hurdles and a clash over the lengthy factual background between the parties, and their personalities. Charles grasped and cut through all this immediately, and drew the parties into commercial negotiations very early in the day. I would have no hesitation in recommending Charles again, and look forward to working with him again too." December 2021

"As always, Charles was excellent in mediating the dispute to a settlement in which the parties were initially some distance apart at the beginning of the day."

"Charles is an excellent mediator and has an exceptional ability to quickly focus the parties' minds on reaching a commercial resolution and settling what can be quite complicated disputes." December 2021

"We are very grateful for your assistance at both the mediation itself and then in helping to push the settlement along afterwards. I know that our clients were very impressed indeed with your tireless efforts in persuading the other side to drop down to a realistic level; I'm quite sure those cannot have been easy discussions! I very much hope that we get the opportunity to work together on another case in the future." October 2021

"Charles was excellent. He successfully bridged the gap between the parties. Unfortunately, due to the Defendant having reached its authority the mediation concluded without a settlement being reached on the day. However, in the days following the mediation Charles facilitated an extended negotiation by telephone which resulted in the parties reaching a settlement." January 2021

"Thank you very much for all your help at the mediation and afterwards. As well as bringing this 20 year saga to an end, you have also maintained your unblemished record of doing me out of trials for over a decade."

"I have to say, I am always a little sceptical of the idea of follow up calls. I was emphatically proven wrong here: you did an excellent job of thawing the frost we created at the mediation. I rather suspect that, but for that nudging, everyone would have run headlong into a rather contentious PTR." November 2020

"Charles seemed to be making a concerted effort to drive across all the points we were trying to make to the other side, and push both parties. He was careful to handle information which one side wished to keep private, or disseminate, appropriately." June 2020

"The mediator was organised and was patient with the parties in order to reach a settlement.

"Post mediation, it was impressive that the mediator chased up the parties to find out if settlement had been reached. It demonstrated that he took interest in the matter."

"We would use Charles again in the future." February 2020

"Charles had a calm and affable demeanour which I believe contributed to the success of the mediation. He was quick to assess the parties' positions and clearly worked hard in both rooms to achieve a settlement on the day. Very

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effective mediator and will recommend to others." October 2019

"Masterfully guided the parties to finding a solution."

"Never felt rushed."

"Managed the parties well when the lawyers were drafting." June 2019

"Thank you too for resolving yet another dispute. We have managed to set you some pretty challenging ones this year. Between the last three, you have saved 34 days of court time and well over seven figures in legal expenses." December 2018

"I should like to take this opportunity to express both my and my clients' thanks for your sterling efforts in bringing this long and hard fought litigation to a complete and satisfactory conclusion last month. I do not think many of us fancied your chances on the lead up to the mediation and we were all very grateful and impressed that you managed to bring the parties together – despite the additional hurdle which materialised on the day." June 2018

"Excellent, friendly, pragmatic, calm, sensible. Would use him again" September 2017

"Just wanted to convey my thanks for your efforts yesterday. I thought you judged the mood perfectly. Whether or not that is your normal style I don't know but it works and I wish more mediators would do the same." June 2017

"A quick note to say many thanks for your unfailing good humour on what was a difficult day. I was impressed by how calm you kept. I hope to work with you in the future (should the need arise) and would have no hesitation in recommending your approach in mediation situations." January 2017

These comments, taken from direct user feedback, represent a fair and balanced summary of the responses received.

Case examples

Commercial agency claim

Dispute over two aspects surrounding a service contract governing the provision of care services to individuals. At its core the dispute was contractual, and involves claims and counterclaims by both parties.

Dispute between a beneficiary and an executor of an estate, both of whom were left a percentage share of the deceased's business. The executor is seeking to sell the business to the other two parties who receive the remaining 48% of the business under the will but the value is disputed.

Share dispute.

Breach of warranty claim following the sale of a hotel.

Unfair prejudice claim.