

Guide to Business & Property Work at Central London

Introduction

1. The County Court at Central London (“CCCL”) is the venue for the Business and Property work done in London and the South East outside the High Court.¹
2. Much of that work is transferred to CCCL by the Business & Property Courts of England and Wales forming part of the High Court. Waiting times to trial tend to be shorter than in the High Court. The rest of the work is issued at CCCL or sent in from other County Court hearing centres after issue. All cases are allocated to a specialist list, the Business & Property List, and are handled by judges specialising in Business and Property work.
3. The aim of this guide is to give practical help to parties and representatives. It does not have the force of law and is not a substitute for the Civil Procedure Rules (“CPR”) and Practice Directions (“PDs”).

Scope of Business & Property work

4. The Business & Property work undertaken at CCCL includes the following:
 - 4.1 Work of the type within the Property, Trusts and Probate List of the High Court such as:

Real property

Complex landlord & tenant cases (both residential and commercial). The most complex/valuable business tenancy renewal cases will proceed as Business & Property work

Trusts

Contentious probate claims

- 4.2 Work of the type within the Business List of the High Court such as:

Some contractual disputes

¹ Sometimes cases are heard at the Mayor’s and City of London Court by judges from CCCL

Claims for specific performance, rectification and other equitable remedies

Property professional negligence (for example, claims against solicitors and surveyors).

4.3 Insolvency and Companies work. This includes personal insolvency cases, company insolvency work transferred from the High Court or other County Court hearing centres, disqualification of directors, and company cases (for example, unfair prejudice petitions, claims to restore companies to the register, to rectify the register, and to extend time for the registration of charges).

5. That list is not exhaustive. A full definition of Business & Property work in the County Court can be found in para. 4.2 of CPR PD 57AA – Business and Property Courts. Most possession claims, boundary disputes, co-ownership cases, business lease renewal claims, and general landlord and tenant proceedings will not be Business & Property work.

6. A Technology and Construction Court List is operated separately at CCCL. It is overseen by HHJ Parfitt. Work in that list includes construction adjudication enforcement, building disputes, dilapidations claims, and party wall appeals. This guide does not apply to work in that list.

Judiciary

7. There are three Specialist Circuit Judges: HHJ Dight CBE, HHJ Johns KC and HHJ Mark Raeside KC. Business & Property cases are also heard by three further Circuit Judges specialising in this work: HHJ Gerald, HHJ Monty KC, and HHJ Parfitt.

8. There are four Business & Property District Judges, being DJ Hart, DJ Mauger, DJ Revere, and DJ Wilkinson.

9. These judges are assisted by specially authorised Recorders and Deputy District Judges as well as HHJ Evans-Gordon.

Case management

10. Cases are usually transferred to CCCL by the High Court at an early stage. They are listed for a case management conference (Part 7 claims) or for directions or disposal (Part 8 claims). These first hearings are short, usually one hour, and are not a trial. They are used to move the case towards trial where there is any substantial dispute.

11. All cases, whether transferred to CCCL or issued here, will normally be retained by the judge dealing with the case at the first hearing. That judge will, if at all possible, hear the trial and any pre-trial review.

12. Unless otherwise ordered, there should be sent to the Court by email 3 days before the first hearing the following documents (agreed if possible): a brief case summary (of not more than 500 words), a list of issues, and proposed directions (using our template – see the next paragraph).

13. Case management directions in Part 7 claims will normally be given by adapting the draft directions template attached at Annex A to the particular case. Parties should therefore use such template when agreeing and submitting proposed directions. Part 8 claims are typically decided without cross examination or disclosure.

14. The email address to which the documents should be sent is:

14.1 For Circuit Judge hearings centrallondoncjskel@justice.gov.uk

14.2 For District Judge hearings centrallondondjskel@justice.gov.uk

15. The subject heading of the email must start with the claim number. Most Business & Property cases are given a case number taking the form M10CLxxx, where the initial letter indicates the year (L having been used for 2024, and M being used for 2025), 10 designates the case as Business & Property work, CL refers to CCCL, and there is then a unique 3 digit number.

16. The directions will normally provide for the listing of the trial and will do so by (a) setting a 3-month trial window, and (b) directing a telephone listing appointment. That appointment will usually be around 3 weeks after the case management hearing. The standard order for the telephone listing appointment forms part of the template at Annex A.

Interim applications

Normal business

17. An interim application may be issued by (a) sending an Application Notice in form N244 by email to enquiries.centrallondon.countycourt@justice.gov.uk if the legal representative has a fee account or payment is to be made by card, (b) leaving the application in the dropbox located by the reception desk in the main hall of the Royal Courts of Justice or (c) sending the application by post to the court at County Court at Central London, Royal

Courts of Justice, Thomas More Building, Royal Courts of Justice, Strand, London WC2A 2LL, or by DX to DX 44453 RCJ Strand.

18. The Court staff aim to put applications in Business & Property cases before a judge within 5 to 10 working days of receipt. But if the case has been assigned to a particular Circuit Judge at the first hearing, the parties are encouraged to email a copy of the issued application to the judge's clerk in order to bring it to the judge's early attention. The email addresses for the clerks are as follows:

Clerk to HHJ Dight CBE Charley.Emmett@justice.gov.uk

Clerk to HHJ Johns KC Diane.Morris@justice.gov.uk

Clerk to HHJ Gerald Unaiza.Razzaq@justice.gov.uk

Clerk to HHJ Monty KC Beatrice.Donkoh@justice.gov.uk

Clerk to HHJ Parfitt Leslie.Alfonso@justice.gov.uk

Clerk to HHJ Mark Raeside KC Joseph.Mitchell1@justice.gov.uk

19. The Circuit Judges generally hear Business & Property applications each Friday. An application will normally be listed on the first convenient Friday after two weeks. Applications to be heard by District Judges will be listed for a convenient date.

Urgent business

20. There is, however, a process for applications that cannot wait. It is to be used only for applications that are genuinely urgent. An example is an application affecting a trial that is less than four weeks away.

21. The urgent application notice should be submitted by email to centrallondonurgentbandp@justice.gov.uk. The body of the email should contain a succinct statement of reasons as to why the application is urgent and cannot wait to be heard in due turn. The email and attachment will be shown to either HHJ Dight CBE or HHJ Johns KC as soon as possible so that arrangements can be made for the application to be heard. Applications may be sent in draft if urgency requires that they be seen before the issued application notice is available.

22. There is no out of hours service. Any parties requiring such a service should use the Royal Courts of Justice emergency telephone number, 020 7947 6000/6260, and request the Duty Chancery Judge's clerk.

Contacting the Court

23. As CCCL is part of the County Court, telephone calls relating to cases here must be made to the Civil National Business Centre on 0300 123 5577.

24. The address for the Court is County Court at Central London, Royal Courts of Justice, Thomas More Building, Royal Courts of Justice, Strand, London WC2A 2LL, or DX 44453 RCJ Strand. The email address for general correspondence is enquiries.centrallondon.countycourt@justice.gov.uk. Use of the email addresses centrallondoncjskel@justice.gov.uk and centrallondondjskel@justice.gov.uk is reserved for skeleton arguments and certain other specified documents only and is subject to the Court's protocol attached at Annex B.

25. When corresponding with the Court, parties (a) should not duplicate their correspondence by sending it using more than one method as this adds to the burden on the Court, and (b) are reminded of the general rule that they must copy the other parties in to the correspondence – see CPR 39.8.

Trials

26. In order to avoid disruption to other litigants and to ensure that each case does not take more than its proper share of court resources, parties will be required to complete each trial in the time allotted save in exceptional circumstances.

27. It is therefore important that time estimates for trial are realistic. Such estimates should include time for judicial pre-reading. For guidance, parties will often be required to attend only from 11 am in a 3 day case, from 12 noon in a 4 day case and from 2 pm in a case of 5 days or more. The estimates should also include a realistic time for preparation of judgment following evidence and argument.

28. Skeleton arguments should, unless otherwise ordered, be sent to the Court at least 2 days before the trial to centrallondoncjskel@justice.gov.uk (to reach a Circuit Judge) or centrallondondjskel@justice.gov.uk (to reach a District Judge).

29. A bundle of documents for the trial should, unless otherwise ordered, be delivered to Court at least 3, but not more than 7, days before the trial. Hard copy bundles must be indexed and paginated. Electronic bundles must also be bookmarked and searchable, with the pdf page numbers matching the document page numbering. Parties should arrange delivery of the trial bundle directly with the judge's clerk if possible. Otherwise, (a) hard copy bundles can be lodged at the counter in room WG07 in the West Green Building at an appointment previously arranged by telephone on 0207 947 7502, and (b) electronic bundles can be sent to enquiries.centrallondon.countycourt@justice.gov.uk. Any download link for large files must be usable without an account or password.

30. If settlement or some other development means that a trial listing can be vacated or shortened, the parties must inform the Court immediately (by emailing the trial judge's clerk if possible) so that the time saved can be used for the benefit of other litigants.

31. Robes will be worn for trials, appeals, applications for committal, and directors' disqualification hearings. Robes are not otherwise worn.

Orders

32. If a draft order is requested by the Court following a hearing such will normally be required within 2 working days and should be sent by email (to the Circuit Judge's clerk if the case has been heard by a Circuit Judge) and be in Word format. Like other documents in the case, orders should be marked "Business & Property Work".

Insolvency and Company cases

33. There are specific email contact details for use in insolvency and company cases being heard by the Business & Property District Judges. These must be used for all email contact with the Court in such cases. They are as follows:

33.1 By email for company cases: RCJCompGenCLCC@justice.gov.uk

33.2 By email for bankruptcy cases: RCJBankCLCCDJHearings@justice.gov.uk

34. Claims to extend time for the registration of a company charge are dealt with in regular bulk lists. These claims are likely to be adjourned if the papers are not in order. To

assist parties, an up to date template for Appendix A to form part of the claim form is attached at Annex C.

Litigants in person

35. Litigants in person are expected to comply with the CPR and PDs. This Guide is also for them as well as represented parties.

36. There are four specific sources of free help available to litigants in person at CCCL:

36.1 CLIPS. This scheme, being the Chancery Bar Litigant in Person Support Scheme, operates each Friday in the Business & Property applications list usually heard by HHJ Dight CBE or HHJ Johns KC. A volunteer barrister is available to offer assistance to those appearing in such list by giving advice and by representing them in court.

36.2 RCJ Advice. This is a Law Centre offering free legal advice on civil cases in the RCJ, including some Business & Property work at CCCL. Help can be requested at <https://www.rcjadvise.org.uk/our-services/civil/> or by emailing admin@rcjadvise.org.uk.

36.3 Support Through Court. This charity offers volunteers who provide practical and emotional support. Support Through Court can be contacted by email at londoncivil@supportthroughcourt.org.uk or by telephone on 0204 520 5959 or 03000 810 006 (9.30 to 4.30 pm). They also have an office on the ground floor of the Thomas More Building at the RCJ open Tuesday – Thursday 10.30 am – 3.30 pm. Face-to-face appointments can be booked at [https://www.supportthroughcourt.org/locations/london/royal courts of justice/](https://www.supportthroughcourt.org/locations/london/royal_courts_of_justice/).

36.4 Advocate. This charity offers specialist legal advice, drafting, and representation from volunteer barristers for those unable to afford legal assistance and not eligible for legal aid. Applications must be made at least 3 weeks before help is needed. That can be done online at <https://weareadvocate.org.uk/apply-for-help.html> or by post to Advocate, 2nd Floor Lincoln House, 296-302 High Holborn, London, WC1V 7JH.

Mediation

37. CCCL has 2 independent mediation services available to all parties to help them resolve their disputes:

37.1 The Centre for Effective Dispute Resolution (CEDR). Each mediation can take place online, is confidential, without prejudice and is conducted by an accredited mediator. There

is a scale of fixed fees from £550 to £1750 plus VAT per party depending on the value of the claim. Further details of the mediation service and an application form are available at <https://www.cedr.com/solve/clcc/>

37.2 London Chamber of Arbitration and Mediation (LCAM). The mediation will be either remote or in person at LCAM's premises. Parties have the choice of mediating for a half day or a full day, fees are fixed at £350 plus VAT per party for a half day and £500 plus VAT per party for a full day, there are no separate costs for LCAM's administrative support, and the scheme is managed, with oversight provided by the LCAM Advisory Board. Further details of the mediation service and an application form are available at <https://lcam.org.uk/clcc/>

HHJ Dight CBE and HHJ Johns KC

July 2025

List of Contact Details for CCCL

Postal address: County Court at Central London, Royal Courts of Justice, Thomas More Building, Royal Courts of Justice, Strand, London WC2A 2LL, or DX 44453 RCJ Strand

Telephone numbers: 0207 947 7502 (for urgent counter appointments only)
0300 123 5577 for all other calls

Court email addresses: centrallondoncjskel@justice.gov.uk (for skeleton arguments and other specified documents in cases to be heard by Circuit Judges – see the protocol at Annex B of the Guide)

centrallondondjskel@justice.gov.uk (for skeleton arguments and other specified documents in cases to be heard by District Judges – see the protocol at Annex B of the Guide)

RCJCompGenCLCC@justice.gov.uk (for company cases to be heard by District Judges only)

RCJBankCLCCDJHearings@justice.gov.uk (for bankruptcy cases to be heard by District Judges only)

centrallondonurgentbandp@justice.gov.uk (for urgent applications only)

enquiries.centrallondon.countycourt@justice.gov.uk for all other purposes

Circuit Judges' clerks: Clerk to HHJ Dight CBE Charley.Emmett@justice.gov.uk

Clerk to HHJ Johns KC Diane.Morris@justice.gov.uk

Clerk to HHJ Gerald Unaiza.Razzaq@justice.gov.uk

Clerk to HHJ Monty KC Beatrice.Donkoh@justice.gov.uk

Clerk to HHJ Parfitt Leslie.Alfonso@justice.gov.uk

Clerk to HHJ Mark Raeside KC Joseph.Mitchell1@justice.gov.uk

RCJ Advice Bureau: admin@rcjadvice.org.uk

Support Through

Court: londoncivil@supportthroughcourt.org.uk or 0204 520 5959/0300 081 0006

Advocate: <https://weareadvocate.org.uk/apply-for-help.html> or by post to Advocate, 2nd Floor Lincoln House, 296-302 High Holborn, London, WC1V 7JH

Mediation schemes: <https://www.cedr.com/solve/clcc/>
<https://lcam.org.uk/clcc/>

COUNTY COURT AT CENTRAL LONDON

Warning: you must comply with the terms imposed upon you by this order otherwise your case is liable to be struck out or some other sanction imposed. If you cannot comply you are expected to make formal application to the court before any deadline imposed upon you expires.

UPON HEARING

IT IS ORDERED that:

1. *The parties are strongly encouraged to use mediation or other alternative dispute resolution to resolve this dispute. It can achieve an earlier and less costly resolution than a trial.*
The County Court at Central London has two independent mediation services available to all parties to help them resolve disputes.
The Centre for Effective Dispute Resolution (CEDR): Each mediation can take place online, is confidential, without prejudice and is conducted by an accredited mediator. The cost is up to £1750 plus VAT per party. Further details of the mediation service and an enquiry form are available at <https://www.cedr.com/solve/clcc/>.
London Chamber of Arbitration and Mediation (LCAM): The mediation will be either remote or in person at LCAM's premises. Parties have the choice of mediating for a half day or a full day, fees are fixed at £350 plus VAT per party for a half day and £500 plus VAT per party for a full day, there are no separate costs for LCAM's administrative support, and the scheme is managed, with oversight provided by the LCAM Advisory Board. Further details of the mediation service and a booking form are available at <https://lcam.org.uk/clcc/>.
Parties will be expected to provide an explanation if mediation or other ADR is not attempted. Costs consequences may follow.

Assignment

2. The claim will proceed as Business and Property work in the Business and Property List [with a new claim number]
3. The claim is assigned to HHJ/DJ [] for case management and trial.

Statements of case

4. [The claim will continue as if CPR Part 8 had not been used.] [Insert any directions for further or amended statements of case].

Disclosure

5. Disclosure of documents is directed as follows:
 - (1) By 4pm on [] the parties must each give standard disclosure of documents by way of list by category.
 - (2) By 4pm on [] any request for inspection or copies of documents must be made. Any such request, unless objected to, must be complied within 14 days thereafter.

Witness Statements

6. By 4pm on [] the parties must serve on each other signed witness statements from all witnesses (including themselves) on whom they intend to rely and serve any notices relating to evidence. Oral evidence of fact is limited to [:] witnesses per party. Oral evidence will not be permitted at trial from a witness whose statement has not been served in accordance with this order or has been served late, except with permission from the Court.
7. [The witness statements must comply with CPR PD 57AC as though the trial were one in the Business and Property Courts (the exemptions in paragraph 1.3 of PD 57AC apply unless there is a specific direction in these proceedings to the contrary).]
8. If a witness is to give evidence at trial in a language other than English, the witness statement must be in that other language and must be served together with an English translation and a witness statement from the translator verifying the translation.

Expert Evidence

9. No expert evidence is necessary
Or

Expert evidence is directed as follows:

Single joint expert

The parties have permission to rely on the written evidence of a jointly instructed expert [:] on the issue(s) of [:]

- (1) By [:] the expert should be agreed and instructed, and if no expert has been instructed by that date the Claimant must apply to court by 4pm the following day for further directions. The parties shall give joint instructions or, if the instructions cannot be agreed, separate instructions;
- (2) By [:] the expert will report to the instructing parties;
- (3) By [:] the parties may put written questions to the expert;
- (4) By [:] the expert will reply to the questions;
- (5) A copy of this order must be served on the expert by the Claimant with the expert's instructions;
- (6) The expert may apply direct to the court for directions where necessary under CPR 35.14;

(7) A party seeking to call the expert to give oral evidence at trial must apply for permission to do so before pre-trial check lists are filed;

(8) Unless the parties agree in writing or the Court orders otherwise, the fees and expenses of the expert shall be paid by the parties giving instructions for the report equally;

Separate experts

The parties have permission to rely at trial on oral evidence from the following experts on the following issues:

[:]

- (1) The experts will hold a discussion for the purposes of identifying the detailed issues and reaching an agreed opinion on them so far as possible;
- (2) By [:] the parties must serve on each other reports of the experts addressing the issues not so far agreed;
- (3) The experts will hold a further discussion for the purposes of reaching further agreement on the issues in the light of the reports
- (4) By [:] the experts will prepare for the court and sign a statement of the issues on which they agree and on which they disagree with a summary of their reasons;
- (5) The experts may apply direct to the court for directions where necessary under CPR 35.14.

View

10. The parties must cooperate in making arrangements for a site view during the trial

Pre-Trial Directions

11. The Parties shall file Pre-Trial Checklists by [*8 weeks before trial window*].
12. There will be a pre-trial review [4] weeks before the date fixed for trial, with a time estimate of [45] minutes. At least 3 days before the pre-trial review the Claimant must file using centrallondoncjskel@justice.gov.uk (for cases before a Circuit Judge) or centrallondondjskel@justice.gov.uk (for cases before a District Judge) and send to the other party or parties preferably agreed:
 - (1) a case summary (500 words max.);
 - (2) a list of issues;
 - (3) draft directions (if any);
 - (4) a trial timetable (including time for judicial pre-reading and preparation of judgment)
13. Where all parties are represented they may vacate the pre-trial review by filing at least 3 days before the hearing a joint certificate from their solicitors confirming that (1) all directions have been complied with and (2) the case is ready for trial. The certificate must be accompanied by an agreed trial timetable.

Trial listing

14. The case shall be listed for trial before [] in a 3-month trial window commencing on [] with a time estimate of [:] days. [The parties are not to attend until [:] on the first day]. [The last [:] day(s) to be for preparation and delivery of judgment.]
15. There will be a telephone listing appointment on the first available date after 3 weeks in order to list the pre-trial review and the trial:

Costs

20. The costs of today are costs in the case.

ANNEX B

COUNTY COURT AT CENTRAL LONDON CIRCUIT AND DISTRICT JUDGES SKELETON ARGUMENT PROTOCOL

1. The Court has a dedicated e-mail address for filing skeleton arguments in all cases. Where listed before a Circuit Judge: CentralLondonCJSKEL@justice.gov.uk. Where listed before a District Judge: CentralLondonDJSKEL@justice.gov.uk.
2. Unless otherwise expressly directed (on occasion, the Circuit Judge may request that a skeleton argument is sent directly to the Judge's clerk's email address), all skeleton arguments for hearings must be emailed to the correct address in accordance with this protocol.
3. The "Subject" field of the email sending the skeleton must contain (in this order):
 - the Claim Number (typed without spacings)
 - the name of the (First) Claimant and (First) Defendant (abbreviated in any appropriate manner)
 - the party filing the skeleton
 - the date and time of hearing
 - if known, the name of the Judge hearing the case

Example: M10CL123 Smith v Jones Ltd – D – 1 Jan 10.00 – HHJ Dight CBE

The claim number in particular is vital in order for your skeleton argument to reach the Judge.

4. Attach the skeleton argument (in Word or Word compatible format) to the email. The only documents which can be sent by email in this way are:
 - Skeleton arguments (but not authorities to be relied on: these must be lodged separately)
 - Chronologies
 - Reading lists
 - Lists of issues
 - Case summaries
 - Draft directions
 - Trial timetable
 - Lists of authorities (but not the authorities themselves)
 - *Dramatis personae*

5. All documents should be attached to one email. Should it become necessary to send a further email for correction purposes indicate in the title / subject of the email that it is a revised version.
Example: M10CL123 Smith v Jones Ltd – D – 1 Jan 10:00 – HHJ Dight CBE – revised
6. It may be appropriate for certain documents to be sent in PDF format, for example a document which is an essential appendix to a skeleton argument. However, this should be the exception and not the rule – the documents in paragraph 4 above must be in Word and not PDF format, unless the court orders otherwise.
7. Parties and legal representatives are reminded that, in the absence of any other Order made in any particular case, skeleton arguments should be sent to the court by 4 pm no more than 5 and no less than 2 days before the date on which the case is listed.
8. Do not send skeleton arguments by fax or by any other means unless email is not available, in which case an explanation must be provided with the document.
9. Do not duplicate the emailed skeleton argument by copying it to any other Central London email addresses or by sending it in the post. One email to the CJSKEL or DJSKEL Inbox as the case may be is all that is required.
10. When printed out, the email and any attachments, including any document embedded in another, must not exceed 25 pages.
11. The total size of an email, including any attachments, must not exceed 5 megabytes.
12. The CJSKEL and DJSKEL Inboxes are regularly monitored, but an individual acknowledgment of a received email will not be provided, so please do not ask for one.
13. The CJSKEL and DJSKEL Inboxes will be cleared of all emails over 21 days old at any given time.
14. The CJSKEL and DJSKEL Inboxes are not to be used for the following, unless expressly directed by a court order or requested by the Judge:
 - (1) Filing trial or hearing bundles.
 - (2) Filing copies of authorities.
 - (3) Issuing or filing applications; a Part 23 application requires payment of a fee, a draft order and a statement of truth.
 - (4) General correspondence with the Court or the Judge.
 - (5) Sending a draft Minute of Order after a hearing.

ANNEX C

Appendix A

Claim for an Order Extending Time for Registering a Charge

Claim No.

On

Date

Time

Place 4th Floor Reception, Thomas More Building, Royals Courts of Justice, Strand, London WC2A 2LL

The District Judge will consider an application by.....

of

.....[address and
description]

for an Order pursuant to Section **859F** of the Companies Act 2006 that the time for registration in
the manner required by Section **859A** of the said Act of

a [Legal Charge] dated 20... and made between

..... of the one part and

.....of the other part of certain land and property
known as[describe the property] to secure repayment of
[the sum of £ and interest thereon at the rate of per cent [per annum] be
extended to 21 days from the date of the Order

On the grounds that the omission to register such legal charge was due to inadvertence or was
accidental or is not of a nature to prejudice the position of the creditors or shareholders

of the above-named [name of company] or it is just and

equitable to grant relief.

Statement of Truth

* (I believe)(The Claimant believes) that the facts stated in these particulars of claim are true. (I understand) (The Claimant understands) that proceedings for contempt of court may be brought against anyone who makes or causes to be made, a false statement in a document verified by a statement of truth without an honest belief in its truth.

* I am duly authorised by the claimant to sign this statement

Full name

Name of claimant's solicitor's firm

Signed Position or office held

- Delete as appropriate

Claimant's or claimant's solicitor's address to which documents should be sent if different from the claim. If you are prepared to accept service by DX, fax or e-mail, please add details.