

## Sara-Jane Knock

PARTNER | BRITISH VIRGIN ISLANDS



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### Sara-Jane is a partner in our litigation and arbitration team.

Based in the British Virgin Islands and heading up the Withers BVI office, Sara-Jane is recognised by Chambers Global and Legal 500 BVI as a leader in her field, advising on a wide range of matters from commercial, contractual and finance disputes to insolvency, fraud and asset tracing. Sara-Jane also advises on probate and trust matters, both contentious and non-contentious.

Working together with her colleagues in other Withers' offices around the world, Sara-Jane strives to provide her clients with a dedicated global team, ready to tackle cross-border cases with local on-shore and offshore experience. She regularly acts for high-net-worth individuals (HNWIs), trustees, beneficiaries, insolvency practitioners, creditors, companies, directors, shareholders and officer holders, either directly or via intermediaries. She also works with key intermediaries, service providers and foreign lawyers in various jurisdictions to ensure a seamless service for her clients. Additionally, Sara-Jane frequently works with her colleagues in the global fintech team in relation to BVI matters regarding the development of emerging products in that area.

Sara-Jane practices public law and recently acted for the BVI Government in relation to a Commission of Inquiry brought to investigate governance issues and allegations of corruption.

Sara-Jane is a Solicitor-Advocate, regularly appearing in Court on behalf of her clients, including dealing with interim injunctions, appointment of receivers, appointment of liquidators and dealing with shareholder disputes, just to name a few.

Having trained at Withers, Sara-Jane is dual qualified, maintaining practising certificates in both the BVI and England.

## Removal of a Trustee

We act for the beneficiary of a large BVI Trust who is applying to remove the trustee of a family trust. The other beneficiary and trustee are actively opposing the application.

## Successful restructuring of two BVI Trusts worth in excess of US\$400m

We acted for the trustees of two BVI trusts worth in excess of US\$400 million, who undertook an extensive restructuring process involving assets and beneficiaries located in multiple jurisdictions and received the blessing of the BVI Court for their restructuring decisions following an application made under the Public Trustee v Cooper regime. Not only did this matter involve complex issues of cross-border restructuring, but also issues of surrogacy and parental rights of children in the BVI. [Click here](#) to read the Judgment.

## Successful strike out of an Appeal

We acted for the Respondent to an Appeal and successfully struck out the Appeal at the initial stage, before significant work was undertaken. The Appellant was attempting to appeal a judgment relating to the beneficial ownership of a valuable property in London, which we had secured for our client.

## Successful discharge of receivership order in BVI

We acted for an Anguillan company whose asset, a BVI company, was the subject of a receivership order obtained by VTB Bank. VTB is attempting to enforce Russian judgments against a Russian individual via BVI companies, which VTB claims are ultimately owned by the Russian individual. The receivership order was successfully discharged. [Click here](#) to read the Judgment.

## Trustees of two BVI Trusts

We are instructed by the trustees of two BVI trusts worth in excess of US\$400 million, who are currently undergoing a restructuring exercise involving assets in multiple jurisdictions. Recent issues relating to this matter have involved a discussion of parental rights in the BVI.

## Successfully resisted the enforcement of Russian judgement

We acted for a high-net-worth individual in the successful defence of the enforcement in the BVI of Russian judgments obtained by VTB Bank. The matter involved the BVI Commercial Court, Eastern Caribbean Court of Appeal and the Privy Council. [Click here](#) to read one of the many Judgments relating to this matter.

## BVI hedge fund

Successfully acted for a BVI hedge fund in the removal of its investment manager and its liquidation.

## Cyprus based trustee

Successfully acted for a Cyprus based trustee in defending beneficiary claims of \$150m in the BVI Commercial Court.

## BVI Freezing Order

Successfully acted for BVI companies in discharging a BVI Freezing Order in the sum of \$15m obtained in the BVI to mirror an Order obtained in the English High Court. We also frequently act for individuals seeking to obtain mirror Freezing Orders in the BVI to bolster those obtained in the English High Court.

## Kingate Funds

Acted for the liquidators of the Kingate Funds - Madoff feeder funds.

## Recovery of assets

Acted for BVI court-appointed liquidators of multiple hedge funds, seeking recognition and recovery of assets in the US and Channel Islands.

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## Admissions

England and Wales, 2011

British Virgin Islands, 2012

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## Education

BPP Law School, Graduate Diploma in Law

BPP Law School, LPC

University of St Andrews, MA International Relations

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## Languages

English

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## Memberships

Recovery and Insolvency Specialists Association (BVI) Limited

Solicitor Advocate of the Senior Courts of England and Wales

Solicitor Advocate of the Eastern Caribbean Supreme Court

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## Key dates

Year joined: 2007

Year became partner: 2022

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