

5 MINUTES WITH... ANDREW SAVAGE

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ANDREW SAVAGE WAS A PARTNER* IN THE DISPUTE RESOLUTION GROUP IN LONDON, SPECIALISING IN COMMERCIAL AND FINANCE DISPUTES AND INTERNATIONAL ARBITRATION, INCLUDING INVESTMENT TREATY ARBITRATION.

Andrew has been recommended in Chambers and Partners and The Legal 500, where he is described this year as “a completely class act and whose own attention to detail inspires the same from his team.”

Q: Tell us about your career to date. What were you doing before you joined Watson Farley & Williams?

A: I trained at a firm called Frere Cholmeley Bischoff, which merged with Eversheds at the end of the 90s, becoming the largest firm in the UK at the time. I joined Watson Farley & Williams in 2000, became a partner in 2004 and have headed up the London disputes team since 2007.

Q: Did you always want to be a lawyer? What other careers did you consider?

A: No! I quite liked the idea of architecture, but I was told that you had to be good at maths. I think that was probably bad advice looking back. (But I am very happy being a disputes lawyer).

Q: Tell us a bit about your career path with the firm. What led you to your specialisation?

A: I joined as a litigator and carried on from there. The role was advertised as banking litigation but in the early 2000s there turned out not to be much of that around. That of course changed rather significantly from 2008 onwards but it meant that in the meantime I developed other areas of practice.

Q: Tell us about your highlights as Head of Litigation.

A: One highlight was the first big international arbitration that I worked on, alongside Andrew Hutcheon. The case involved the Tajik state aluminium company and all communications had to be encrypted for fear of international espionage. The fear proved well founded. The firm is still involved in vestiges of the wider ramifications of that dispute to this day. I was also very pleased to win the mandate to act for Lehman Brothers in a number of big derivatives disputes involving their Swiss entity. The most recent highlight was undertaking the advocacy in an investment treaty claim against the Italian state in the solar sector.

WATSON FARLEY & WILLIAMS

Q: What are three things we should know about the team?

A: There're a lot of clever people here who are very interested in solving novel legal problems. I think that's important as the world becomes ever more complex and unpredictable. We really do work well as a team and we're competitive – in all ways.

Q: What challenges do your clients face in their sectors and how does the team respond?

A: Our clients often find that they suddenly need to devote a vast amount of time to something that they never intended to happen (and which they would probably prefer not to think about too much). One of the things we try to do to help is to take away some of that burden, whilst balancing the inevitable costs of doing so.

Q: What advice would you give to someone considering a career in the law?

A: Read the Supreme Court decision in the Gina Miller case. If you find that boring, don't bother.

Q: How would you describe Watson Farley & Williams?

A: Very international in complexion and outlook.

Q: Why do you think it is important to maintain connections with past colleagues?

A: The longer you go in your career, the more you realise that you can learn from people who have gone in different directions, and that they can learn from you. It's always fascinating to see the different paths a group of people take who started off in roughly the same place.

Q: What do you like to do when you are not working?

A: Listening to music. I have a long list of favourites. David Bowie will forever be in the top five though. Daydreaming about playing the guitar. Reading. I also enjoy fine art and fresh air.

*Andrew left the firm in early 2019.