

BLUNDELL LECTURES

TOPICAL ISSUES IN PROPERTY LAW

In aid of the benevolent associations of
the Bar, The Law Society and The Royal
Institution of Chartered Surveyors

51st ANNUAL SERIES

When contracts for the sale of land go wrong
Pull the ripcord or push on through?

Tuesday 30 June 2026
Inner Temple Lecture Theatre, London

Supported by Falcon Chambers

SPEAKERS

Lord Justice Newey

Lord Justice Newey practised at the Chancery Bar between 1983 and his appointment as a High Court Judge (Chancery Division) at the beginning of 2010. Before taking silk in 2001, he was one of the Junior Counsel to the Crown (Chancery/A Panel) (from 1990) and Junior Counsel to the Charity Commissioners (from 1991). In 2003 he became an (Acting) Deemster of the Isle of Man, and in 2006 he was appointed as a Deputy High Court Judge. He also served as a DTI inspector, inquiring into the affairs of MG Rover and associated companies. As a judge, he was the Chancery Supervising Judge for Wales and the Midland and Western Circuits between 2014 and 2017. He has been a Lord Justice of Appeal since October 2017.

Nathaniel Duckworth KC, Falcon Chambers

Nat Duckworth is a barrister at Falcon Chambers whose practice encompasses all aspects of real estate and landlord and tenant work. He was real estate barrister of the year in 2023 and was ranked in Band 1 in both Chambers & Partners and Legal 500 before taking silk in 2025. He is a co-author of *Residential and Commercial Service Charges*.

Like all of us who practice in this field, he has good days and bad days: in *Donovan v Prescott Place Freehold Ltd* [2024] EWCA Civ 298, he persuaded the Court of Appeal that a party found to have committed fraud was entitled to keep hold of the fruits of his fraud; in *AHGR Ltd v Kane* [2023] EWCA Civ 428, he somehow failed to persuade the Court of Appeal that a “live/work” use covenant in a lease required the tenant to carry on at least some form of business activity from the unit.

Although happy to turn his hand to anything property related, he has a particular penchant for cases with an NHS angle to them, mind-twisting rent review provisions, and cases in other jurisdictions, especially in the Caribbean and other warm places.

Chair:

Janet Bignell KC, Falcon Chambers

Janet is a barrister at Falcon Chambers and undertakes litigation, arbitration and advisory work in all aspects of real property and landlord and tenant law. She is the co-author of “Megarry & Wade The Law of Real Property” 10th ed. (with Professor Martin Dixon and Professor Nick Hopkins), the author of the last two editions of “Lewison’s Drafting Business Leases”, and co-author of “Registered Land Law and Practice” (with Charles Harpum). Janet was appointed to sit as a Recorder in 2009 and authorised to sit as a Deputy High Court Judge in Chancery, King’s Bench and Circuit Commercial Court work in 2020. She is a Fellow of the Chartered Institute of Arbitrators, a member of the CI Arb President’s Property Dispute Panel, and an invited member of Arbrix. Janet is also an accredited civil and commercial mediator. As a former Chair of the Blundell Lectures Committee, Janet organised the 2019-2023 Blundell Lecture series. She is currently the Vice-Chair of the Chancery Bar Association.

SYNOPSIS

An innocent party faced with a breach of a contract for the sale of land will have to decide whether the breach enables them to escape the contract and claim damages or whether they can instead compel the defaulting party to complete. In this talk, Lord Justice Newey and Nat Duckworth KC will consider a range of issues, including when a party is truly 'ready willing and able' to complete, the impact of judgments such as *Olam Global Agri Pte Ltd v Holbud Ltd* [2025] EWHC 3187 (Comm) on the quantification of damages, and the availability of specific performance as a remedy for both vendors and purchasers.

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Each lecture contains approx. 1.5 hours technical content.

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SPEAKER PAPERS

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