Matthew Thorne, FCIArb

Call: 2011

mthorne@4pumpcourt.com ☎ +44 (0)20 7842 5521

Matthew Thorne is instructed as counsel in matters in the High Court, Court of Appeal and Supreme Court, and in arbitrations and adjudications.

He frequently acts as sole counsel, and also as junior counsel in large and complex litigation. He has a broad commercial practice, with particular experience in the following fields:

- Commercial Litigation
- Construction
- Insurance & Reinsurance
- Professional Negligence
- Technology & Telecoms

Expertise

Construction

Matthew is a former Chairman of Junior TECBAR. He is ranked in Chambers and Partners, Legal 500 and Who's Who Legal as a leading junior in Construction and has been described as "*absolutely brilliant*" and "*a future star of the construction Bar*".

He regularly appears in the TCC, both as sole and junior counsel, as well as on significant points of law in the Court of

Appeal. Matthew is also often instructed on complex arbitrations with an international element.

He is instructed in respect of single and multi-party disputes, including between employers, main contractors, sub-contractors and contract administrators, and in respect both of standard forms and ad hoc arrangements.

Cases

Persimmon Homes Ltd v Amec Foster Wheeler Group Ltd [2026] EWHC 1980 (TCC), considering the level of detail needed in the pleading of a defects claim

---

Crestline Direct Finance LP v Insurance Company Euroins AD [2026] EWHC 423 (TCC), considering the principles governing repudiation, termination under the JCT standard form and defences under a performance bond.

Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea v Beko Poland and others [2025] EWHC 3276, a £350m claim against professionals involved in the design and refurbishment of Grenfell Tower.

London & Quadrant Housing Trust v WPHV Ltd & Ors [2024] EWHC 1121 (TCC), a claim seeking a building liability order against companies associated with a contractor, and claims against the contractor's professional indemnity insurers, in respect of various fire safety and other defects at a large residential development in Elephant & Castle, London.

Lendlease Construction (Europe) Limited v Aecom Ltd [2023] EWHC 2620 (TCC), a wide-ranging judgment considering (amongst others) limitation in construction and professional negligence cases, the date of accrual of causes of action in respect of design and continuing duties to review or warn.

Home Group Ltd v MPS Housing Ltd [2023] EWHC 1946 (TCC), an adjudication enforcement considering questions of natural justice, ambush, size and complexity of a dispute.

Acting on behalf of fire engineers in a TCC claim concerning the cladding on a hotel at a major UK airport.

Lendlease Construction (Europe) Ltd v Aecom Ltd [2022] EWHC 2855 (TCC), concerning the extinguishing of a right to pursue a contribution claim.

C Spencer Ltd v MW High Tech Projects UK Ltd [2021] EWHC 1284 (TCC), concerning payment and adjudication entitlements under hybrid contracts.

4 PUMP COURT

Temple, London, EC4Y 7AN
www.4pumpcourt.com

CALL: +44 (0)20 7842 5555
EMAIL: clerks@4pumpcourt.com
Barristers regulated by the Bar Standards Board

Acting on behalf of structural engineers in respect of claim concerning the Grade II listed Liverpool Institute for Performing Arts.

Sainsbury's Supermarkets Ltd v Ryan Jayberg Ltd [2020] EWHC 3404 (TCC), considering the principles applicable to post-limitation amendment to statements of case in respect of a claim for allegedly defective refrigeration systems.

S&T(UK) Limited v Grove Developments Limited [2018] EWCA Civ 2448, the leading case concerning 'valuation' adjudications for interim payments and the requirements for Payment/Pay Less and Liquidated Damages notices.

North Midland Building Ltd v Cyden Homes Ltd [2018] EWCA Civ 1744, considering concurrent delay and the prevention principle.

Butcher v Hill Partnerships Ltd [2015] EWHC 1703 (TCC): a defects dispute, considering the scope and interpretation of a residential sale contract.

A USD $93 million ICC arbitration over defective works in a flagship middle east airport.

A £22m claim in respect of allegedly defective chillers in a computer data centre.

A PFI dispute concerning PFP and structural defects in a large hospital.

An ICC arbitration valued at over $100m concerning defects in a steel plant.

A £34m claim for widespread defects (including cladding, fire-stopping, insulation and render) in student and social accommodation.

High Court proceedings concerning a solar installation dispute.

Arbitration concerning a basement tanking/waterproofing dispute.

4 PUMP COURT

Temple, London, EC4Y 7AN
www.4pumpcourt.com

CALL: +44 (0)20 7842 5555
EMAIL: clerks@4pumpcourt.com
Barristers regulated by the Bar Standards Board

Various “payment dispute” adjudications.

In the aftermath of the Grenfell tragedy, Matthew has also been instructed in a large number of multi-million pound cladding and fire-safety claims, including claims under the Defective Premises Act 1972 and under the Building Safety Act 2022 for Building Liability Orders. These have included TCC litigation by a major hotel chain concerning the requirements of, and compliance with, Building Regulations in relation to ACM cladding, and various claims by universities, local authorities and housing associations. Matthew is also instructed by the Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea in the Grenfell Tower litigation.

He has also been involved as part of a legal team in complex, high-value construction disputes including a £37million dispute involving the construction of a petrochemical plant; and as part of teams in various PFI disputes (eg *Portsmouth City Council v Ensign* [2015] B.L.R. 675).

Matthew is an Adjudicator accredited by CIArb, TECBAR, CIC and UK Adjudicators and is regularly appointed to determine a variety of disputes. He is co-editor of the Architects’ Legal Handbook and author of the chapter on Adjudication, and has also been a contributing author on the online Lexis legal database in respect of construction and adjudication.

Commercial

Matthew is ranked by Legal 500 as a leading junior in Commercial Litigation. He is instructed as sole and junior counsel in a wide range of commercial matters.

He is regularly instructed as junior counsel in various disputes concerning the sale, supply and design of allegedly defective products, including animal feed supplements, supermarket refrigeration systems, passenger vehicles and trucks, lifting equipment, commercial/industrial chilling systems, and vehicle tracking devices. He has also been instructed in contractual disputes over shareholding ownership in major international companies, as well as issues of rectification of supply and services contracts.

He also has experience in complex and high-value matters ranging from liability under Refund Guarantees, Custodial Services Agreements, and the interpretation and termination of Oil Supply Contracts through to the enforceability of pre-litigation ADR clauses and the rights of estate agents in Agency Agreements.

Matthew has been instructed as part of various larger legal teams in large and complex project disputes, including various PFI disputes (e.g.[2015] B.L.R. 675), and in a Commercial Court dispute relating to the sale of a mobile telephone manufacturing business.

Cases

Tulip Trading v Bitcoin Association [2022] EWHC 667; [2022] EWHC 141 & [2022] EWHC 2: a $4.5bn claim against bitcoin

4 PUMP COURT

Temple, London, EC4Y 7AN
www.4pumpcourt.com

CALL: +44 (0)20 7842 5555
EMAIL: clerks@4pumpcourt.com
Barristers regulated by the Bar Standards Board

software developers in respect of the rights and duties of cryptocurrency system participants.

LA Micro Group (UK) Ltd v LA Micro Group Inc [2022] EWHC 1304 (Ch) & [2021] EWHC 140 (Ch): resisting a claim for a share of ownership in a major global IT Company.

Provimi France SAS v Stour Bay Co Ltd [2021] EWHC 218 (Comm): a £multi-million claim in respect of allegedly defective animal feed supplements.

Sainsbury's Supermarkets Ltd v Ryan Jayberg Ltd [2020] EWHC 3404 (TCC): a claim over allegedly defective supermarket refrigeration systems.

Frenkel v Lyampert [2017] EWHC 2223: a dispute over the ownership of a large shareholding in a substantial UK company.

Discharging a freezing injunction over a multimillion pound shareholding obtained through material non-disclosure ([2017] EWHC 3121 (Ch)).

Resisting proceedings against a casino for losses sustained whilst under the influence of alcohol.

A £22m claim in respect of allegedly defective chillers in a computer data centre.

Proceedings against Renault for the sale of defective trucks in breach of the Sale of Goods Act 1979.

A Commercial Court dispute concerning the maintenance of a large fleet of vehicles

---

Proceedings against an NHS trust for sums due under an educational and ancillary services contract.

Advising a private college on the validity of a contractual notice to terminate a supply contract, and related proceedings.

High Court proceedings relating to a dispute under an international television series distribution arrangement.

---

4 PUMP COURT

Temple, London, EC4Y 7AN
www.4pumpcourt.com

CALL: +44 (0)20 7842 5555
EMAIL: clerks@4pumpcourt.com
Barristers regulated by the Bar Standards Board

Acting on behalf of a PR Consultancy in proceedings against a well-known children's author relating to the national publication of various newspaper articles and alleged breach of the consultancy agreement.

Acting on behalf of a casino in proceedings relating to compliance with gambling and licensing legal requirements.

Insurance & Reinsurance

Matthew has spent time working at a major global insurer/reinsurer and is regularly instructed as sole and junior counsel in substantial insurance disputes. He acts for insurers and reinsurers, including many of the leading UK insurers, as well as brokers and insured parties. Examples of his insurance/reinsurance work include:

- Advice as to the scope of policy cover
- Interpretation and construction of contractual provisions
- Limitation and exclusion clauses
- Misrepresentation, fraud and avoidance
- Disputes as between Brokers, Insurers and their Insured
- Subrogation rights and duties
- Jurisdiction of, and disputes decided by, the Financial Ombudsman Service

Matthew has experience in policies ranging from professional indemnity and excess liability through to property damage, business interruption, contractors' all risks, public liability, kidnap & ransom and cyber media & tech cover. He has been involved in large and complex disputes, including as part of a team in a reinsurance arbitration concerning a Managed Aggregate Excess Liability policy (based on Bermuda Form language), and as part of a team in a fire damage claim concerning coverage and conditions precedent (Milton Furniture Ltd v Brit Insurance Ltd [2014] Lloyd's Rep. I.R. 540).

Following the Grenfell tragedy, Matthew has also been engaged in a number of claims concerning property and 'building guarantee' insurance in respect of non-compliant cladding and building defects constructed in breach of Building Regulations.

Cases

Crestline Direct Finance LP v Insurance Company Euroins AD [2026] EWHC 423 (TCC): acting on behalf of an insurer to defend a claim made under a construction project performance bond.

London & Quadrant Housing Trust v WPHV Ltd & Ors [2024] EWHC 1121 (TCC): a claim against professional indemnity insurers of three policy years under the Third Parties (Rights against Insurers) Act 2010 in respect of various fire safety and other defects at a large residential development in Elephant & Castle, London.

4 PUMP COURT

Temple, London, EC4Y 7AN
www.4pumpcourt.com

CALL: +44 (0)20 7842 5555
EMAIL: clerks@4pumpcourt.com
Barristers regulated by the Bar Standards Board

Advising on cover under a Swiss master policy in respect of a US class action.

Advising insurers on the scope of a Tour Operators and Travel Agents Combined Liability Policy in respect of a major fatality incident in a foreign jurisdiction.

Acting on behalf of insurers in High Court (QB) proceedings related to a dispute under an income protection policy, involving questions of policy coverage and detailed forensic accounting evidence.

Advising insurers on the scope of an Employers' Liability section and its compliance with the Employers' Liability (Compulsory Insurance) Regulations 1998.

Advice on the extent of liability following a blanket / bulk notification of circumstances in a solicitors' PI claim.

Acting for an insurer in proceedings concerning business interruption losses flowing from a power outage, and a related coverage dispute.

Advising on the scope of a Coverholder agreement.

Advice on the interpretation of a Long Term Care Plan policy, and a claim for misrepresentation as to the effect and appropriateness of such policy.

Defending against a water damage claim on a property policy on the basis of fraudulent devices.

Advising on a potentially fraudulent claim made under a Commercial Vehicle Insurance policy.

Advising insurers on coverage provided by a travel policy and potential liabilities arising from a US claim against the insured.

Acting in a number of mediations in respect of coverage disputes.

4 PUMP COURT

Temple, London, EC4Y 7AN
www.4pumpcourt.com

CALL: +44 (0)20 7842 5555
EMAIL: clerks@4pumpcourt.com
Barristers regulated by the Bar Standards Board

Advising insurers on the scope and effect of joint names insurance, and the permissibility of a £650,000 claim falling outside its scope.

Obtaining, for insurers' employees, an injunction to prevent harassment (*XL Group plc v Henry-Darius* [2013] EWHC 2276 (QB)).

Professional Negligence

Matthew is ranked as a leading junior by Legal 500 in Professional Negligence and by Chambers & Partners in Professional Negligence: Construction. He is regularly instructed in a wide range of professional negligence disputes, with particular emphasis on the legal, construction and insurance sectors. Previous cases have involved:

- Solicitors
- Insurance brokers
- Accountants
- Engineers
- Financial and tax advisors
- Architects
- Valuers
- Plumbers
- Surveyors

He acts for both claimants and defendants, and is also regularly instructed by the relevant professional's indemnity insurer.

He is presently involved in a number of TCC cases concerning the respective duties of various construction professionals involved in the design and specification of cladding which, following the Grenfell tragedy, has been investigated for compliance with Building Regulations.

Matthew was instructed as junior counsel in successful Court of Appeal proceedings against the Law Society (Schubert Murphy v Law Society [2017] EWCA Civ 1295).

He has also been instructed as junior counsel in, amongst others, proceedings against solicitors alleging dishonest participation in a large-scale fraudulent scheme in conveyancing transactions; a claim against a tax consultancy firm in respect of claims arising from the provision of a tax mitigation scheme subsequently rendered ineffective by the enactment of retrospective legislation; and a multimillion pound claim against professional architects, timber frame designers, M&E engineers and consulting engineers in respect of defects in blocks of social housing.

4 PUMP COURT

Temple, London, EC4Y 7AN
www.4pumpcourt.com

CALL: +44 (0)20 7842 5555
EMAIL: clerks@4pumpcourt.com
Barristers regulated by the Bar Standards Board

Cases

Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea v Beko Poland and others [2025] EWHC 3276, a £350m claim against professionals involved in the design and refurbishment of Grenfell Tower.

Lendlease Construction (Europe) Limited v AECOM Limited [2023] EWHC 2620 (TCC), a wide-ranging judgment considering (amongst others) limitation in construction and professional negligence cases, the date of accrual of causes of action in respect of design and continuing duties to review or warn.

A TCC claim against fire engineers in respect of the cladding on a hotel at a major UK airport.

Lendlease Construction (Europe) Ltd v Aecom Ltd [2022] EWHC 2855 (TCC), concerning the extinguishing of a right to pursue a contribution claim.

Acting on behalf of professional indemnity insurers in High Court (Chancery) proceedings in a claim brought by a bank against their insured solicitors for failure to register a charge and breach of a solicitors' undertaking.

Acting on behalf of solicitors in a claim for negligent advice on the interpretation and consequences of a Sale and Purchase Agreement.

High Court (Chancery) proceedings against solicitors for negligent drafting and advice relating to a consultancy agreement.

Acting on behalf of conveyancing solicitors in a claim for failure to advise on the effect of the transaction documents.

Advising on a claim against solicitors for negligent advice in the commencement and pursuit of an adjudication.

Defending a firm of insurance brokers against allegations of mis-selling, inadequate policy cover and negligent advice.

Proceedings against accountants for negligent advice and preparation of accounts.

Acting for the claimant in a property damage claim against engineering consultants for negligent specification and advice

4 PUMP COURT

Temple, London, EC4Y 7AN
www.4pumpcourt.com

CALL: +44 (0)20 7842 5555
EMAIL: clerks@4pumpcourt.com
Barristers regulated by the Bar Standards Board

concerning a basement water storage tank.

Defending structural engineering consultants in a TCC dispute.

Representing a property management company in its claim against a negligent plumber.

Acting for a surveyor in a claim alleging negligent advice given as an expert witness in the course of a claim against the local authority.

Regularly instructed by surveyors for negligence claims brought in respect of valuation and property survey reports.

Technology & Telecoms

Matthew is regularly instructed in respect of a variety of IT and telecoms disputes, including complex and high value project disputes, claims for defective work and delay, and claims arising from the sale and separation of systems.

He recently defended a $4.5bn claim against bitcoin software developers in respect of the rights and duties of cryptocurrency system participants (*Tulip v Bitcoin* [2022] EWHC 667). An early hearing to that case considered the principles on security for costs insofar as they relate to Bitcoin ([2022] EWHC 141; [2022] EWHC 2).

He has acted for web companies, IT professionals and their insurers and has particular experience in claims for the inadequate, incomplete and late design and development of websites and IT packages. Matthew has also been instructed as part of a team in larger disputes, including in a Commercial Court dispute valued at over £100,000,000 concerning the sale of a luxury mobile telephone business, giving rise to complex IT issues including logical separation of systems, transfer of hardware, software and data to particular standards, and network and business functionality.

Cases

Tulip v Bitcoin [2022] EWHC 667; [2022] EWHC 141; [2022] EWHC 2: a $4.5bn claim against bitcoin software developers in respect of the rights and duties of cryptocurrency system participants.

Acting on behalf of web developers in various proceedings for delay and defects in the design and provision of commercial websites.

LA Micro Group (UK) Ltd v LA Micro Group Inc [2021] EWHC 140 (Ch): resisting a claim for a share of ownership in a major global IT Company.

4 PUMP COURT

Temple, London, EC4Y 7AN
www.4pumpcourt.com

CALL: +44 (0)20 7842 5555
EMAIL: clerks@4pumpcourt.com
Barristers regulated by the Bar Standards Board

Proceedings concerning interpretation of a contract for the provision of a specialist software package which provided regulation-compliant data sheets, and the validity of termination thereunder.

Acting in proceedings concerning alleged breach of a hosting agreement.

Other Commercial & Common Law Matters

Matthew is also regularly instructed in a variety of other commercial and common law matters. By way of example:

Negligence, nuisance and claims for pure economic loss:

- Acting as junior counsel on behalf of a firm of solicitors in a claim for economic loss arising out of negligent misstatement by the Law Society ([2015] P.N.L.R. 15) and in the Court of Appeal ([2017] EWCA Civ 1295).
- Advising on various claims against distribution network operators and electricity suppliers for fire damage resulting from electricity meters, cut-out assemblies and other third party equipment.
- Smoke, fire damage, escape of water and flooding claims against adjoining property owners.
- Product liability, negligence and breach of contract claims relating to defective boilers, washing machines, dishwashers and other appliances.
- Advising on the merits of a claim for property damage caused by iron particles from a foundry chimney.

Claims for subsidence-related damage (including by tree roots):

Matthew is regularly instructed in respect of subsidence and related claims, on behalf of claimants and defendants. Recent work includes:

- TCC proceedings against Westminster City Council in respect of a £7m claim for damage to a residential Bayswater property (*Tideland Ltd v Westminster City Council* [2015] EWHC 2710 (TCC)).
- TCC proceedings by a freehold landlord against a neighbouring public authority in a £200,000 claim for damage.
- Defending claims for residential property damage brought against the London Boroughs of Haringey and Croydon.
- Advice on the merits of a claim against various local authorities.

Banking & Finance:

- Matthew is regularly instructed by financial institutions, including many of the leading UK banks and lenders.
- He has experience in matters ranging from questions over the validity and scope of refund guarantees through to allegations of mis-selling, three-party hire purchase disputes, claims for breach of lenders' terms and conditions and tortious claims for economic loss.

4 PUMP COURT
Temple, London, EC4Y 7AN
www.4pumpcourt.com
CALL: +44 (0)20 7842 5555
EMAIL: clerks@4pumpcourt.com
Barristers regulated by the Bar Standards Board

Recommendations

Matthew is recommended as 'leading junior' in the Legal 500, Chambers & Partners and Who's Who Legal. Comments in recent years have included:

- *"Matthew is a silk in waiting, comfortably holding his own against KCs with both his written advice and advocacy."*
- *"Matthew Thorne is absolutely brilliant."*
- *"He offers great attention to detail and a lovely manner."*
- *"He is a class act with a real eye for detail."*
  "Matthew Thorne's eye for detail and knowledge of the law is second to none. His written advice is clear and easy to digest."
- *"You will never want to instruct another barrister. He treats the smallest point with the same exacting attention as the biggest cases. He never misses a point worth making."*
- *"Matthew is extremely intelligent and his legal research and analysis are absolutely superb. He is also a first-rate advocate, and can patiently explain the most complex points in a way which is both attractive and easy to follow. He easily operates at the level of a strong KC."*
- *"Matthew is a first-class junior, easily holding his ground against silks, whose ranks he will soon join. He's very easy and collegiate to work with, and builds a great rapport with clients."*
- *"He is very bright and good at getting up to speed on technical aspects of a case quickly and giving strategic advice."*
- *"Matthew continues to excel and be a go-to senior junior. He is exceptional."*
- *Matthew is very intelligent and drills down into the details of the case, and his presentation and advocacy are exceptionally strong. He is always well-prepared, his analysis is accurate and compelling, and he is a highly persuasive advocate.'*
- *Matthew is exceptionally bright, with the gift of being able to explain and convey complex legal issues in a persuasive and compelling manner to both clients and the court. He comfortably holds his own against silks.'*
- *"Matthew Thorne combines a deep knowledge of wider construction and commercial issues with an astute understanding of insurance law and practice."*
- *"Matthew is very good at technically difficult matters."*
- *"Matthew Thorne is smart, approachable and diligent. He always gets straight to the nub of the issues and is invariably one step ahead on strategy."*
- *"Matthew is incredibly bright and all over the detail. The advice he produces is clear, succinct, and deals with each point with clarity and brevity."*
- *"Matthew gets to grips with the issues quickly and is incisive. Clients like his friendly manner and pragmatic approach. His willingness to go the extra mile and his attention to detail make him a delight to work with. Always a go-to junior."*
- *"Matthew is very bright. His written work is first-class, and his advocacy style is highly effective. He is also very user-friendly and easy to work with, and a good team-player."*
- *"He is an excellent advocate, his written work is thorough and considered, and he is always thinking strategically."*

4 PUMP COURT
Temple, London, EC4Y 7AN
www.4pumpcourt.com
CALL: +44 (0)20 7842 5555
EMAIL: clerks@4pumpcourt.com
Barristers regulated by the Bar Standards Board

- *“He is very bright and a future star of the construction Bar.”*
- *“A pleasure to work with: charming, bright and always prepared to go the extra mile to produce high-quality work.”*
- *“A very impressive grasp of technically complex cases.”*

Appointments

- Fellow, Chartered Institute of Arbitrators
- Adjudicator accredited with CIArb, TECBAR, CIC and UK Adjudicators

Publications

- Contributing author of LexisNexis online Adjudication KnowHow
- Architect’s Legal Handbook, 10th Ed (co-editor)

Memberships

- The Adjudication Society
- Commercial Bar Association (ComBar)
- Technology and Construction Bar Association (TECBAR)
- Professional Negligence Bar Association (PNBA)
- Society of Construction Law (SCL)
- Society for Computers & Law
- Inner Temple

Education

- MA Law, First Class (Jesus College, Cambridge)
- Diploma in French Legal Studies, First Class (Université de Poitiers, France)

4 PUMP COURT

Temple, London, EC4Y 7AN
www.4pumpcourt.com

CALL: +44 (0)20 7842 5555
EMAIL: clerks@4pumpcourt.com
Barristers regulated by the Bar Standards Board

Languages

- French (conversational)

4 PUMP COURT

Temple, London, EC4Y 7AN
www.4pumpcourt.com

CALL: +44 (0)20 7842 5555
EMAIL: clerks@4pumpcourt.com
Barristers regulated by the Bar Standards Board