



HERBERT
SMITH
FREEHILLS



GARETH SYKES

UK HEAD OF CORPORATE GOVERNANCE
ADVISORY

[London](#)

Gareth is a corporate governance specialist, helping listed and private companies navigate the increasingly challenging corporate law and governance framework. He leads the firm's Corporate Governance Advisory Team in the UK.

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BACKGROUND

Gareth studied law at St. Catharine's College, Cambridge and Birmingham University. He joined Herbert Smith in 2008 and qualified as a solicitor in England and Wales in 2010.

KEY SERVICES

Corporate Governance
Corporate

KEY SECTORS

Consumer
Leisure and Sport

EXPERIENCE

Gareth leads the firm's Corporate Governance Advisory Team in the UK, helping listed and private companies navigate the increasingly complex and challenging corporate governance landscape. He is listed as a "rising star" for corporate governance in the Legal 500 UK 2021 and 2020 Rankings and was named "next generation lawyer" in the 2019 and 2018 Rankings. Clients say that "*he is knowledgeable, pragmatic and swift in response*" and that he "*is incredibly supportive and provides good commercial advice and recommendations*".

Gareth's expertise includes advising on corporate reporting requirements, the UK Corporate Governance Code, continuing obligations under the Listing Rules and Market Abuse Regulation, company meetings and directors' duties. His experience includes:

- advising a large number of listed companies (FTSE 100, FTSE 250, FTSE Small Cap and AIM) including Abcam, Associated British Foods, Kin + Carta, Renishaw and WH Smith on a range of corporate governance issues including corporate reporting requirements, annual general meetings, continuing obligations under the listing regime and day-to-day corporate governance issues
- advising FTSE 250 constituent Airtel Africa plc on the full spectrum of corporate governance issues arising from its listing on the London Stock Exchange in summer 2019 including in connection with its annual general meetings and annual report and accounts; on event driven disclosures and continuing obligations arising under the listing regime as well as on a number of day-to-day corporate governance issues
- advising, on a pro-bono basis, one of the UK's leading impact investors and social finance providers, Big Issue Invest, which forms part of The Big Issue Group, with a review of its corporate governance arrangements
- advising the Bank of England on its the 2017 review by its Non-Executive Directors of its approach to conflicts of interest

A key part of Gareth's role is horizon-scanning, analysing new law and regulation to ensure that the firm's clients anticipate and remain at the forefront of corporate law and regulatory developments and practice. Gareth writes widely on corporate governance matters and is actively involved in various industry bodies.

Prior to his current role, Gareth advised a variety of corporates and investment banks on a wide range of transactions including mergers and acquisitions, joint ventures and equity capital markets transactions which included advising:

- TUI Travel on its £5.2 billion merger by scheme of arrangement with TUI AG to create one of the first German incorporated, LSE listed, FTSE companies

- Citigroup and Lazard as sponsors on GlaxoSmithKline and Novartis' \$23 billion asset swap and formation of a new consumer healthcare joint venture
- Pearson on a number of transactions including the sale of its 50 per cent stake in the FTSE International index business to the London Stock Exchange
- Connect Group on its £55 million rights issue to part fund its acquisition of Tuffnells Parcels Express and on the acquisition of the Consortium
- Petroceltic International on its share placing, takeover approach by Dragon Oil and campaign by an activist shareholder