

# Topics, takeaways and themes from the Mourant Trusts and Private Wealth Forums 2025

Update prepared by Gilly Kennedy-Smith (Guernsey) and Stephen Alexander (Jersey).

Widely recognised as the leading trusts and private wealth events in the [Jersey](#) and [Guernsey](#) calendars, the Mourant Trusts and Private Wealth Forums consistently deliver expert insight on the latest issues and trends affecting the industry.

The theme for our 2025 events, which took place on Tuesday 1 July in Jersey, and Thursday 3 July in Guernsey, was 'Shifting Horizons: Embracing Change and Finding New Opportunities.'

Below, we've summarised the topics, takeaways and key themes covered across both events.

## Case update

This year's Forums kicked off with a lively round-up from experienced Mourant litigators, [Justin Harvey-Hills](#) and [Gordon Dawes](#), of the most noteworthy trust litigation cases from the past 12 months with a particular focus on Jersey and Guernsey. These cases covered issues as diverse as the meaning of gross negligence, the role of a protector, the importance of the governing law of a transaction, secret profits, costs, and issues arising on variation of trust applications.

## Safe harbours in times of tumult

The number of ultra-high-net-worth individuals (UHNWIs) around the world is at a record high. Today's UHNWIs are not only wealthier than previous generations but also significantly more mobile, and we are seeing a range of factors – including tax considerations and geopolitical uncertainty – prompting many to consider relocating to different jurisdictions.

In this session, speakers [Fred Milner](#) (Jersey) and [Gilly Kennedy-Smith](#) (Guernsey) were joined by experts from Saudi Arabia, Switzerland and the US (Zohaib Khan, Matthew Sperry, Katten Muchin and, for the Swiss panellist, Dr Guillaume Grisel in Jersey and Grégoire Schafroth in Guernsey), to discuss where the rich are moving, why, and what they are doing with their wealth and structures. The panel also discussed how safe harbours for wealth are more important than ever before, and why Guernsey and Jersey are uniquely placed to provide these.

## Investing for the future: Traditional and emerging asset classes for high-net-worth families

A panel comprising [Stephen Alexander](#), Ronnie Myers, Suzanne Howe and Kelly Watson reviewed the evolving trends in investment strategies for high-net-worth (HNW) individuals and families.

The group compared traditional asset classes such as real estate, stocks, and private equity, with emerging opportunities in digital assets, blockchain and ESG investing and discussed the considerations for trustees when investing in these assets.

## Guarding the brand in litigation: Reputation management strategies for high-net-worth families and family offices

The question of reputation management is crucial for HNW individuals, families, and family offices. Mourant litigators [Abel Lyall](#) (Guernsey) and [Katie Hooper](#) (Jersey) were joined by experts Camilla Baldwin, Juliet Young, Sam Matthews (Guernsey) and Laura Perkins (Jersey) to address the main threats to reputation that

individuals and families can face, and the impact these threats can have, especially in the context of litigation.

Sam addressed how reputation threats are evolving with younger generations in families, while Laura highlighted the importance of UHNW families having formal processes for managing their reputation. Juliet explored the strategies that reputation management specialists use to address these issues and Camilla examined the steps that parties to litigation can take to counter tactics used by their opponents, particularly in the context of divorce involving UHNW individuals. The panel also considered whether using reputation offensively in litigation can be beneficial, as well as the associated risks.

### **Smart tax planning: Preserving wealth and securing future generations**

Will Burnell (Jersey) and Alexander Hawkins (Guernsey) chaired a panel that discussed some of the recent changes to the taxation of non-UK domiciled individuals and the wider IHT reforms relevant to trustees. Will was joined by Stephen Ritzema in Jersey and Alexander was joined by Mark Savage in Guernsey, with George Mitchell joining the panel at both events.

The speakers explored what the reaction has been in the Channel Islands to these recent reforms, and what some of the current planning opportunities are, including utilising the FIG regime and temporary repatriation facility, the potential benefits to US families wanting to diversify custody of their assets, and opportunities for expats and long-term resident settlers who remain in the UK. The session closed with a discussion on some of the changes to the Agricultural Property Relief and Business Property Relief rules, and offered key insights into what further changes may be coming down the road, in the UK, the US, and at OECD level.

### **The intersection of fiduciary duties with AML and information requests**

The fiduciary duties placed on trustees are well known. But, in a world of ever-increasing transparency and regulation, how do they interact with obligations imposed by tax and money laundering authorities? The panel, comprising Christopher Edwards, experienced barrister Giles Richardson KC, and litigator William Christopher, explored how best to navigate this tightrope, also considering other questions such as what a trustee can and can't charge for, what you can and can't say, and how to avoid being sued or prosecuted (or both!).

### **Future-proofing wealth: Building resilient trust structures and navigating complex challenges**

Trusts and other private wealth structures are coming under increasing pressure due to changes in the family, geopolitical challenges and modern, mobile families. In Jersey, Paul Lewis was joined by Claire Randall, Dhana Sabanathan and Katy Cottrell to discuss strategies for future-proofing wealth, with a particular focus on diversification of trust assets and building flexible structures that can adapt to changing circumstances.

In light of changing family dynamics and generational differences, and with the great wealth transfer looming, flexibility in structuring is perhaps more important than ever before. This session placed a particular spotlight on strategies and trustee duties, including the trustee's duty to diversify, often a key focus for trustees who, in turn, seek advice from their advisers as to how they can best satisfy their duty. The session concluded with the panel putting principles into practice in an engaging, entertaining and interactive scenario.

To assist trustees in both preserving and future-proofing their clients' succession planning, Gordon Dawes, Abel Lyall, Christopher Edwards and Gilly Kennedy-Smith in Guernsey used a case study to discuss potential solutions to common and uncommon stressors, drawing from current issues they are facing in their day-to-day practices.

### **Keynote address: Opportunity and threat - AI and the future of everything**

Rounding off both events, keynote speaker Tom Grogan spoke about AI and its transformative impact on the industry. He set out working definitions for key terms, a criteria against which to evaluate so-called agentic AI, and provided six key takeaways for guests to apply to their own organisations.

Tom also emphasised the importance of retaining a key focus on core commercial disciplines, viewing technology as a tool rather than an outcome in itself, the risks of underinvestment, and the more

fundamental rewiring that businesses will need to complete to survive and thrive in the coming years beyond pure 'efficiencies'.

## Contacts

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