

# THE BRIEF

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- **500 Britons sue over holiday-home timeshare scheme**

[The Times](#)

Nearly 500 Britons who own holiday homes are going to court today to try to recover millions of pounds in alleged damages in a dispute over the operation of a European timeshare scheme.

A High Court judge in London will hear members of a worldwide timeshare exchange club allege that the bosses of the operator RCI Europe "skimmed off" the best properties by selling them, despite having said that they would make them available for exchange.

According to the claim - which could ultimately affect up to 9,000 British clients of RCI - the timeshare participants were rarely, if ever, able to exchange their right to use one property for an alternative holiday home of the same value in a different location. The membership scheme involved properties around the world.

The timeshare claimants maintain that RCI's duty to its members was in clear conflict with its own interests in profiting from the sale of the most desirable properties and providing staff incentives. They say also that the sales were undertaken without members' consent. RCI is also said to have been in breach of its implied fiduciary duties of care to club members.

David Greene, partner at the London law firm Edwin Coe who is representing the claimants, said: "Too many members too often have been told that not only can they not exchange their own property for one of their choice, at a time of their choosing, but that no properties of equal value exist anywhere within RCI's 'extensive' pool for members reasonably to exercise their right to exchange.

"We intend to expose these unfair practices at trial, and expect to succeed in securing rightful compensation for thousands of frustrated holidaymakers. This case may

provoke a long overdue shake-up in the opaque world of timeshare exchange companies."

A spokesman for RCI Europe, which is being represented by City of London law firm Herbert Smith Freehills, said the company "believes the claims to be unfounded and that the evidence will demonstrate as much. Beyond that we have no other comment at this time as it is our policy to not discuss ongoing litigation."