

CLAIM NUMBER: BL-2021-002170

**IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUSTICE
BUSINESS AND PROPERTY COURTS OF ENGLAND AND WALES
BUSINESS LIST**

IN THE MATTER OF THE MOBILE TELEPHONE VOICEMAIL INTERCEPTION LITIGATION

BEFORE: THE HONOURABLE MR JUSTICE FANCOURT

B E T W E E N:

KEITH ALLEN

Claimant

and

NEWS GROUP NEWSPAPERS LIMITED

Defendant

STATEMENT IN OPEN COURT

Ellen Gallagher, Hamlins LLP, Solicitor Advocate for the Claimant

1. My Lord, in this action for misuse of private information, I appear on behalf of the Claimant, Mr Keith Allen. My Learned Friend, Mr Silverstone, appears on behalf of the Defendant, News Group Newspapers Limited.
2. Mr Allen is an actor, author, comedian, and musician whose varied career has spanned five decades. Mr Allen continues to enjoy a successful career, with numerous engagements in film, television, and the stage to this day.

3. Throughout his career, Mr Allen has enjoyed close relationships with others in the entertainment industries. In addition, Mr Allen is the father of the singer-songwriter Lily Allen and the actor Alfie Allen. Mr Allen alleged that, as a result of his work and relationships, he was privy to private information relating to him and those close to him and was consequently of significant interest to the press.
4. The Defendant was the publisher of the *News of the World* which, until its closure in July 2011, was the UK's biggest selling Sunday Newspaper with a very considerable readership in this jurisdiction. The Defendant was, and remains, the publisher of *The Sun* which, to this day, enjoys a substantial circulation and readership in this jurisdiction, by way of hard copy sales of the newspaper and via its website.
5. In November 2021, Mr Allen issued proceedings against the Defendant for misuse of his private information. Mr Allen asserted that his voicemail messages were intercepted by the Defendant's journalists and that, as a result, those journalists were privy to private and confidential voicemail messages left on his mobile telephone by others.
6. Mr Allen identified a number of articles published by the Defendant's newspapers, which he asserted contained his private information which he claimed was obtained by unlawful means. Mr Allen alleged that during this time he used his voicemail extensively for both personal and professional purposes and regularly exchanged voicemail messages with his friends, family, and colleagues.
7. Mr Allen further asserted that as a result of the Defendant's publications, he became suspicious as to the source of the private information published in its newspapers. Mr Allen claimed that the publication of the articles caused him considerable distress.

8. Mr Allen is pleased to confirm that he has accepted the Defendant's offer to resolve his claim on terms confidential between the parties and which involve the payment of damages by the Defendant to him, as well as his reasonable legal costs of bringing the claim. The Defendant has also provided appropriate undertakings to the Court and Mr Allen, and it has agreed to join in this statement to apologise publicly to Mr Allen for the distress caused to him by the invasion of his privacy by individuals working for or on behalf of the *News of the World*. The Defendant makes no admission of liability in relation to Mr Allen's allegations of voicemail interception and/or other unlawful information gathering at *The Sun*.

Ben Silverstone, Counsel for the Defendant

9. My Lord, on behalf of the Defendant, I confirm everything that my Friend has said.

10. The Defendant is here today, through me, to offer its sincere apologies to Mr Allen for the distress caused to him by the invasion of his privacy by individuals working for or on behalf of the *News of the World*. The Defendant acknowledges that such activity should never have taken place, and that it had no right to intrude into the private life of Mr Allen in this way.

Ellen Gallagher, Hamlins LLP, Solicitor Advocate for the Claimant

11. My Lord, in light of the order that has been made, and this public statement, Mr Allen considers that the matter is now concluded.

Hamblins LLP

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Hamblins LLP

Solicitors for the Claimant

Clifford Chance LLP

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Clifford Chance LLP

Solicitors for the Defendant