

IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUSTICE

BUSINESS AND PROPERTY COURTS OF ENGLAND AND WALES

BUSINESS LIST

B E T W E E N:

JULIA SAWALHA

Claimant

- and -

NEWS GROUP NEWSPAPERS LIMITED

Defendant

STATEMENT IN OPEN COURT

Solicitor Advocate for the Claimant

1. In this action for misuse of private information, I appear for the Claimant, Julia Sawalha. My learned friend, Mr Silverstone appears for the Defendant, News Group Newspapers Limited.
2. The Claimant is an actress and voice artist best known for her prominent and long-standing role in *Absolutely Fabulous*. The Claimant has appeared in a number of popular television programmes and films including, but not limited to, *Lark Rise to Candleford*, *Jonathan Creek*, *Press Gang*, *Pride and Prejudice* and *Chicken Run*. The Claimant is also an activist and member of a well-known acting family.
3. The Defendant was the publisher of the *News of the World* newspaper which had a considerable readership in this jurisdiction, until its closure in July 2011. The Defendant is currently the publisher of *The Sun* newspaper and website, which also enjoyed substantial circulation and readership.

4. The Claimant issued proceedings on 27 September 2019 for misuse of her private information. The Claimant identified 19 articles in her Particulars of Claim, which were published by the Defendant's newspapers and which she said contained information about her private life.
5. The Claimant also stated in her Particulars of Claim that the private information which was appearing in the newspapers at the time caused her to become paranoid and suspicious as to who was the source of the disclosures. The Claimant said that this caused problems with her family and friends, and caused the irretrievable breakdown of one close friendship in particular, and prompted her to move away from London.
6. In July 2021, the Claimant accepted the Defendant's offer to resolve her claim on terms confidential between the parties, but which involved the Defendant agreeing to pay her damages as well as her reasonable legal costs.
7. The Defendant has also provided appropriate undertakings to the Court and the Claimant and agreed to join in this statement to apologise to the Claimant for the distress caused to her by the invasion of her privacy by individuals working for or on behalf of the News of the World. The Defendant makes no admission of liability in relation to the Claimant's allegations of voicemail interception and/or other unlawful information gathering at The Sun.

Counsel for the Defendant

8. My Lord on behalf of the Defendant I confirm everything that my learned friend has said.
9. The Defendant is here today, through me, to offer its sincere apologies to Ms Julia Sawalha for the distress caused to her by the invasion of her privacy by individuals working for or on behalf of the News of the World. The Defendant accepts that such activity should never have taken place.

Solicitor Advocate for the Claimant

10. In light of the order which has been made and this statement, the Claimant considers that the matter is now concluded.



**James Heath, Solicitor Advocate
Thomson Heath & Associates
Solicitors for the Claimant**



Solicitors for the Defendant