The Sickening Arrogance of the Untouchable

They can lie, and how; they can deceive, in the extreme, and they can distort facts and reality better that anyone else. I'm not talking about criminals; I'm talking about legal professionals, the solicitors and barristers that we have no option but to trust.

Not only are they dishonest, but they take on the public in a game for which only they know the rules. An innocent man caught up in this circus can go mad with anger and frustration at the injustice of it all. It often appears that they make the rules up as they go along. Truth and honesty play no part in this game apart from shooting yourself in the foot if you are so foolish as to be of an honest nature.

At the core of *Inveigled* is the destruction caused by NCR and it's solicitors, Taylor Wessing. They painted their distorted pictures and persuaded a judge to approve a certain destructive judgement.

As I have tried for 13 years to unravel the stitch up, Taylor Wessing have been responsible for a string of lies and distortions as I touch various 'nerves' whilst pursuing and exposing the truth.

In September 2009, David de Ferrars of Taylor Wessing told me that the charge on my home had been transferred from NCR to Teradata, when Teradata was floated off from NCR in 2007. I asked for something in writing to confirm this but received nothing.

For approximately 3 years I negotiated with Teradata in order to reach a resolution. In mid 2011, I found that Teradata did not have a charge on my house at all. For six months I wrote many letters and emails to Teradata and Taylor Wessing asking for an explanation of this deception and they ignored me. It transpired that not only did Teradata not have a charge on my home, there had been no deed of transfer at all between NCR and Teradata. How can these people tell such damaging lies?

This cannot be acceptable. Clearly David de Ferrars lied to me in September 2009. That is a proven fact. When he refused to explain the situation I complained to the Solicitors Regulation Authority (SRA). They reviewed my written complaint and presented my complaint to David de Ferrars asking him for a number of clarifications. His response was simply to lie to the SRA telling them, amongst other lies, that he does not represent Teradata. The sickening part of this it that they believed him and declared that there was no case to answer. Where is our protection?

A few months after I had moved to Cornwall in August 20120 and let my house in Essex, my wife told me that her relationship with Bill had ended and she wanted to move back into Knighton Lane. This was, of course impossible. She then arranged for a solicitor to write to me advising me that my wife and my daughter, Ellie, were about to be made homeless and it was my responsibility to house them. It was all so clearly a sham.

Because she had involved a solicitor, I did the same with a view to getting divorce proceedings underway. I hired Stephens Scown solicitors in Truro.

During the few months of involvement with Stephens Scown, they were extremely incompetent, told many lies and invented and charged me for phone calls supposedly made but provably not made. When I made a formal complaint to Stephens Scown, I got the usual smokescreen response consisting of weasel words, sidestepping of issues and pages of irrelevant drivel. They made me a pathetic financial offer of what they call 'good will' (Note: they always avoid the use of the word 'compensation' because that word acknowledges guilt). We went around in circles a number of times before I submitted a formal complaint to the Legal Ombudsman (LeO).

LeO took my complaint to Stephens Scown and came back to me suggesting that the compensation offer made was reasonable. I rejected it. Leo went back to Stephens Scown and came back to me with an increased offer. Again, I rejected it.

I cannot accept that a solicitor can lie and raise fraudulent charges and then simply pay a paltry sum in 'good will' without fully acknowledging their 'crime'. Solicitors should not be allowed to get away with these 'crimes' as they are in such a position of trust.

Because Stephens Scown had already invoiced me for actions that they did not carry out, I had not paid their invoices for a few months, so there were outstanding invoices for legitimate work as well as for illegitimate work. The offers I had received so far were simply reductions of the outstanding invoices. I told LeO that I would not pay any further money to Stephens Scown and if they wanted to take me to court for non-payment, then I would be delighted. I would revel in standing up in court explaining exactly why I would not pay.

The consultant from LeO told me that they would never accept it. He went back to Stephens Scown and they did accept it and wrote off all outstanding invoices, which was about £1,500.

As this issue included fraudulent actions by Stephens Scown, the consultant from LeO told me that he would also refer the complaint further to the SRA but he never did. I followed this loop for a while but it led nowhere and even I had to give up.

The important thing to note about the Stephens Scown affair is that LeO sided with the solicitor as an initial position and negotiated on behalf of the solicitor. This appears to be the usual default position of LeO if you complain about a solicitor. LeO appear to be focussed on the protection of the solicitor rather that the protection of the consumer.

I only succeeded in this case because of the outstanding bill that I hadn't paid. It I had not had that lever then I doubt that I would have 'won' the case. Where is our protection?

Obviously, I had dismissed Stephens Scown and had been recommended to Martin Real of Bowling & Co, who took over my case when Fiona commence proceedings through the courts to gain an Occupation Order hearing in 2011. Martin Real did a superb job in representing me in this case.

I now move onto a far more damaging case, which became the subject of my book, 'Mugged'. In 2012, for reasons unknown to me my wife started divorce proceedings through the courts, avoiding any attempt at an amicable agreement and avoiding any attempt at mediation. Unfortunately Martin Real was too busy to take on my case so I was passed on to Urmilla Seenath of Bowling & Co. Within this brief essay I will not catalogue the unbelievable levels of incompetence I experienced at the hands of Urmilla Seenath.

Urmilla Seenath hired Richard Tambling, a barrister of 1 Garden Court Chambers, to represent me at the First Directions Hearing planned for 2nd October 2012.

I need to briefly explain the divorce process briefly for those that have not been through the hell themselves. First of all both sides complete a long form called the Form E detailing their financial and personal situation. These Form Es are then exchanged and submitted to the court 35 days before the first hearing. Each side then review the Form E of the other side and prepares a number of other documents including a Questionnaire, which seeks clarification on points raised in the Form E.

The incompetence of Urmilla Seenath led to our Form Es being exchanged less than 5 working days before the hearing and my Form E being submitted to the court the day before the hearing.

I met with Richard Tambling one hour before the hearing was due to start and he had prepared a Questionnaire that was for the most part generic and included none of the issues that I had found with my wife's Form E. I told him that the documents he had produced must not be submitted to the court, as they were irrelevant. He told me that there was nothing that could be done in court that day because the 'other side' had prepared no documents for the hearing.

Richard Tambling told me that we should enter the court, apologise to the judge, and set new dates for submission of documents and for a rescheduled hearing. This, I thought was what we did in our few minutes in court.

As I found out many weeks later, my barrister had conspired with my wife's solicitor to bypass the first hearing without my knowledge. They had convinced the Judge, using documents that I had not been a party to, that the hearing was not necessary. The Judge had agreed a Court Order setting new dates for submissions of documents, but in woolly words that I did not understand at the time, had accepted a joint submission from my barrister and my wife's solicitor, to bypass the hearing.

Why my barrister should take such an action I do not know, maybe he was trying to protect his instructing solicitor. It was certainly extremely detrimental to my case.

When I realised that the barrister had deceived the court and deceive me, I started, what was to be a complaints process that generated such a smokescreen, as you would not believe.

First of all I complained to Bowling & Co as it was the incompetence of Urmilla Seenath that had laid the foundations of this deception and they had hired Richard Tambling to represent me when he clearly hadn't. It took Bowling & Co seven weeks to find the weasel words of the smokescreen to respond. They accepted some of the minor incompetences of Urmilla Seenath but failed to accept that the first hearing did not take place. They told me to complain directly to Richard Tambling's chambers.

I submitted a complaint to 1 Garden Court Chambers regarding the damaging actions of Richard Tambling and I escalated my complaint against Bowling & Co to the Legal Ombudsman (LeO).

After many months of exchanges I received a response from the Senior Clerk of 1 Garden Court Chambers in which he admitted that nothing regarding my case was discussed at the hearing, nevertheless the hearing did happen. I honestly through that I was getting closer to the truth. But not close enough.

I explained my complaint to the consultant from LeO, who then took my complaint to Bowling & Co who simply told him that because the Judge had issues an 'Order' then the hearing must have happened. As far as LeO was concerned that was 'end of story'.

There were a number of exchanges between myself and LeO during which they were clearly 'batting' for Bowling & Co against me. Where is our protection?

My complaint to 1 Garden Court Chambers was escalated to Alison Ball QC, a founder of the chambers, for a review. This took another few months and was yet another massive smokescreen. They suggested that if I did not accept the finding on the internal review of the case then I could take my case to the Legal Ombudsman. I'm afraid I just see that as a joke in very bad taste.

The Legal Ombudsman and the Solicitors Regulation Authority are simply a part of the odious protectionism that exists in our injustice system.

It emanates from the senior solicitors that manage complaints; it emanates from the experienced legal professionals themselves; this arrogance they carry of being untouchable. It is sickening.

Things must change, as we desperately need protection from these lying, deceitful people that destroy so much.