

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

**B E T W E E N:**

**HEATHER AND FIONA MILLS**

**Claimant**

**and**

**NEWSGROUP NEWSPAPERS LIMITED**

**Defendant**

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**STATEMENT IN OPEN COURT**

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**Solicitor for the Claimant**

1. In this action for misuse of private information, I appear for the Claimants, Heather Mills and Fiona Mills. My learned friend, Mr Silverstone appears for the Defendant, News Group Newspapers Limited.
2. The First Claimant, Heather Mills is a philanthropist, charity campaigner, author, public speaker, and founder and director of the award-winning VBites Vegan Food company, an international ethical food company. She has been a passionate campaigner for a number of charities which she has supported for a number of years. In particular, she became passionate about campaigning for the removal of landmines and those affected by them after working in the war in the Former

Yugoslavia.

3. Heather Mills became a household name in 1993 when she was tragically injured after being struck by a police motorcycle, and during the course of her subsequent charity work. She was also of particular interest to the media as a result of her relationship with Sir Paul McCartney, their marriage and subsequent divorce.
4. The Second Claimant is Fiona Mills, who is a businesswoman in the vegan foods sector in her own right. She has been a fellow campaigner with her sister, Heather, on a variety of issues for animal welfare charities.
5. The Defendant was the publisher of the *News of the World* newspaper 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 is, and was, the publisher of *The Sun* newspaper, which, during the relevant period, also enjoyed a substantial circulation and readership. In addition, the Defendant published its articles on its websites and syndicated them globally.
6. The Claimants claimed that from about 1998 to 2008, they both experienced strange activity with their telephones, journalists and photographers turning up in unexpected locations, and intrusive private information about Heather Mills' private and family life (including private information about her sister, Fiona) appearing in the Defendant's publications without any apparent identifiable source.
7. The Claimants were part of a close-knit family and had a close network of friends, and they believe that the repeated publications by the Defendant in the *News of the World* about their private information caused a lot of distrust and suspicion that one of their group was betraying them and selling stories to the press. The Claimants were, and still are, profoundly upset to discover the invasions of their privacy by

individuals working for or acting on behalf of the *News of the World*. In hindsight, the Claimants now believe that the feelings of distrust and suspicion within their close-knit family and close network of friends were consistent with the unlawful invasion of their privacy rather than people close to them leaking their private information to the media.

8. The Claimants believe that the Defendant's intrusion into their private lives, and the continued disclosure of private information had a detrimental impact on Heather Mills' reputation, as well as on her career and her charitable work, including her work for Adopt-A-Minefield.
9. The Claimants were notified by the Metropolitan Police in May 2012 during Operation Weeting that they may have been victims of unlawful activity. The Claimants issued proceedings in March 2017 and on 24 November 2017 served a Particulars of Claim in which they relied upon 141 articles published in both the *News of the World* and *The Sun* over a period of 9 years from 1999 until 2008.
10. The Defendant provided disclosure to the Claimants during the course of their claim. As a result of the analysis of the disclosure provided by the Defendant, Heather Mills was also able to identify a number of further articles that she believed derived from unlawful information gathering by the Defendant's journalists.
11. The Claimants were, and still are, profoundly upset to discover the sustained and repeated invasions of privacy by individuals working for or acting on behalf of the *News of the World*. The Claimants believe that the publication of articles in the Defendant's newspapers had a seriously corrosive effect on the Claimants' relationships with their friends and family, some of which can never be repaired.
12. I am here today to announce that the Defendant has agreed to join in this statement

and publicly apologise to each of the Claimants for the distress caused to them by the invasion of their privacy by individuals working for or on behalf of the *News of the World*. It has agreed to pay a substantial amount in compensation for the distress the Claimants have suffered, as well as to pay the Claimants' reasonable legal costs. It has also agreed to give undertakings to the Court. These include that it will not unlawfully access or attempt unlawfully to access voicemail messages left for or by the Claimants, and will not access or attempt to access by unlawful means the Claimants' private information.


13. The settlement of this claim is on the basis that the Defendant makes no admission of liability in relation to the Claimants' allegations of voicemail interception and/or other unlawful information gathering at *The Sun*.

**Counsel for the Defendant**

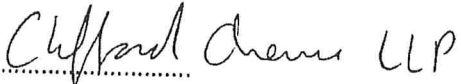
14. My Lord on behalf of the Defendant I confirm everything that my learned friend has said. The Defendant is here today, through me, to offer its sincere apologies to Ms Heather Mills and Ms Fiona Mills for the distress caused to them by the invasion of their privacy by individuals working for or on behalf of the *News of the World*. The Defendant accepts that such activity should never have taken place and, that it had no right to intrude into the private lives of Ms Heather Mills or Ms Fiona Mills in this way.

**Counsel for the Claimant**

15. In light of the order which has been made and this statement, the Claimants consider that the matter is now concluded.

  
PP ON BEHALF OF DAVID SHERBORNE

**Solicitors for the Claimant**

  
Clifford Chance LLP

**Solicitors for the Defendant**