

Sensitivity: Confidential

BEFORE THE SOLICITORS DISCIPLINARY TRIBUNAL

Case No:

IN THE MATTER OF THE SOLICITORS ACT 1974 (as amended)

AND IN THE MATTER OF:

SOLICITORS REGULATION AUTHORITY LIMITED

Applicant

And

CLIVE GRAHAM WOOD (SRA ID: 126737)

Respondent

**STATEMENT PURSUANT TO RULE 12 (2) OF THE SOLICITORS (DISCIPLINARY
PROCEEDINGS RULES) 2019**

I, Alastair Henry John Willcox, am a solicitor employed by the Solicitors Regulation Authority Limited of The Cube, 199 Wharfside Street, Birmingham, B1 1RN as a Case Manager. I make this Statement on behalf of the Applicant, the Solicitors Regulation Authority Limited ("**SRA**").

The allegations

1. The allegations against the Respondent, Clive Graham Wood, made by the SRA are that, while in practice as a solicitor and sole practitioner through the entity at CGW Law ("**the Firm**"):
 - 1.1 During July 2022, he attempted to take unfair advantage of Person M's position as a litigant in person by repeatedly asking her for her contact details when he knew or ought to have known that:
 - 1.1.1 Person M did not want to provide him with that information;
 - 1.1.2 Person M had no legal duty to provide him with that information; and
 - 1.1.3 he did not need that information to progress his client's matter;

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and in doing so breached any or all of Principles 2 and 5 of the SRA Principles 2019 (**“the Principles”**) and Paragraph 1.2 of the SRA Code of Conduct for Solicitors, RELs and RFLs (**“the Code for Solicitors”**).

The facts and matters relied upon in support of this allegation are set out in paragraphs 6 to 36 below.

1.2 During July 2022, he obtained contact details for Person M by means of a private investigator and then disclosed those contact details to his client when he knew or ought to have known that:

- 1.2.1 obtaining Person M’s likely contact details was not necessary;
- 1.2.2 Person M would not have consented to her contact details being obtained by such means;
- 1.2.3 the relevant Family Procedure Rules directed that Person M was entitled to withhold her contact details until directed to disclose them by a court order; and
- 1.2.4 doing so would prevent the court from being able to properly determine during an upcoming hearing whether such disclosure should in fact be made,

and in so doing breached any or all of Principles 1, 2, and 5 of the Principles, and Paragraph 1.2 of the Code for Solicitors.

The facts and matters relied upon in support of this allegation are set out in paragraphs 37 to 68 below.

In the alternative, allegation 1.2 (including allegations 1.2.1 to 1.2.3) above is advanced on the basis that the Respondent’s conduct was reckless. Recklessness is alleged as an aggravating feature of the Respondent’s misconduct, but it is not an essential ingredient in proving the allegation. For further particulars of recklessness, please see paragraphs 65 to 69 below.

Appendices and Documents

2. I attach to this Statement the following appendices:

Appendix 1: Relevant Rules and Regulations

Appendix 2: Anonymisation Schedule

3. I attach to this statement a bundle of documents, marked “AHJW1”, to which I refer in this statement. Unless otherwise stated, the page references in the form of

AHJW1 [Pages 1 to 292] in this statement relate to documents contained in that bundle.

4. The bundle is divided into the following sections:

Section A: SRA Notice

Section B: Witness Statements

Section C: Correspondence between the SRA and its representatives and the Respondent

Professional Details

The Respondent

5. The Respondent, who was born on [REDACTED] 1958, is a solicitor having been admitted to the Roll on 1 September 1982. The Respondent holds a current practising certificate, and it is free of conditions. He is a sole practitioner practising through the Firm, which is located in Oswestry, Cheshire, where he practises in family law, children law, and private client (wills and probate). As a sole practitioner, the Respondent holds the roles of Compliance Officer for Legal Practice (COLP) and Compliance Officer for Finance and Administration (COFA) of the Firm.

The facts and matters relied upon in support of the allegations

Background

6. The conduct in this matter came to the attention of the SRA on 21 November 2022, when Person M made a report to the SRA about the Respondent of CGW Law, regarding several aspects of his conduct while he was representing Person M's former partner, Person B, in relation to family court proceedings. A copy of Person M's report is set out at [Pages 1 to 7].
7. The alleged conduct occurred in July 2022. Full details of Person M's complaint are set out in Person M's witness statement, dated 24 September 2024 at [Pages 56 to 61.]. This has been redacted to remove the name of Person M's child.
8. In summary, Person M believes that the Respondent has repeatedly attempted to pressure her to provide contact information that was not required for the purposes of progressing Person B's application to the Court. Person M stated that she was

not legally obliged to provide and that she did not wish to provide to Person B the information for reasons she had explained to the Respondent **[Pages 56 to 77]**.

9. Furthermore, Person M is aware that the Respondent subsequently obtained her current address and telephone number by means of a private investigator, without her knowledge or consent. Person M further reported that the Respondent had then provided these contact details to Person B, despite Person M having made the Respondent aware that she had concerns about Person B having access to this information and that she did not wish to provide these details to him.

Allegation 1.1 – Taking unfair advantage of Person M

Summary of relevant events

10. The SRA relies upon paragraphs 6 to 9 above. Additionally, the SRA relies upon the following facts and matters.
11. On 8 July 2022, the Respondent received initial instructions from Person B in relation to an application that Person B had submitted to City Court to bring proceedings against Person M **[Pages 79 to 80]**. As part of these initial instructions, the Respondent was informed that Person B's application had already been successfully served on Person M via her parent's address and that Person B did not possess Person M's current address.
12. The Respondent subsequently wrote directly to Person M on 13 July 2022 via email to inform her that he had been instructed by Person B **[Page 90]**. As part of this same email, the Respondent also requested Person M's telephone number and home address. He stated that this was for the purposes of Person B being able to contact his child. The Respondent's email also stated that should Person M not be willing to provide this information, then he would seek to obtain a court order requiring that this information be provided by Person M or her parents.
13. Person M responded to the Respondent's email on 13 July 2022, without providing her contact details, and confirmed that she had already provided her telephone number and home address to the courts, that she intended to attend the relevant hearing, which was to take place remotely, later in July 2022 and that she hoped that an agreement could be reached with Person B via the courts **[Page 90]**.
14. On 15 July 2022, between 10:17 and 10:38 (British Summer Time), Person B informed the Respondent via telephone that he did not possess Person M's current phone number, resulting in the Respondent agreeing to request his information **[Page 92]**.

15. Following this phone call with Person B, at 10:54 BST, the Respondent sent a second email to Person M, again requesting that she provide her phone number and address **[Page 93]**. The Respondent stated that these contact details would be required for the purpose of enabling Person B to make child contact arrangements and also to enable the Respondent to provide them to the Court, despite his knowledge that this would not be necessary.
16. At 18:12 BST on 15 July 2022, Person M responded to the Respondent's second request, again declining to provide these details and stating that she preferred to only be contacted by Person B via email **[Page 98]**. Person M further elaborated that her preference for email contact only was due to the nature of calls she had previously received from Person B and his current partner. Person M's response again highlighted that she had already provided her contact details to *"the courts directly so they will have no issues contacting me"*.
17. In the same email to the Respondent on 15 July 2022 **[Page 98]**, Person M also specifically highlighted that, due to concerns she had raised in the paperwork she had submitted to the court, she felt that it was best for the courts to decide the matter of safe contact arrangements between Person B and their child. Person M also informed the Respondent that she did not wish to discuss the matter further via email.
18. Despite this, the Respondent again contacted Person M via email on 18 July 2022 **[Page 105]** regarding her contact details, asking her to confirm whether a telephone number that had been provided to him from another source did indeed belong to her. The Respondent's stated purpose for this request was that the information was needed so he could provide it to the court. Person M responded to this email on 20 July 2022 to state that she had again confirmed with the court that they held her contact details and that the court had also confirmed that she was not obliged to share her contact details with the Respondent or Person B prior to the hearing **[Page 103]**.
19. The Respondent emailed Person M again on 21 July 2022 **[Page 104]** to indicate that he believed Person M was living in the Town area and that, if his information was correct, this would likely impact on the direct contact arrangements between Person B and his child. Person M replied on 25 July 2022 to repeat that the court had advised her that she was not obliged to discuss the case prior to the hearing and, with regards to her address, she would appreciate if the Respondent would consider her safety and that of her children **[Page 104]**.
20. The initial court hearing for this matter subsequently took place on 29 July 2022, having been postponed from the originally scheduled date of 20 July 2022 **[Page 107]**.

21. By way of summary only, in an email to the SRA dated 11 March 2025 [Page 43], the Respondent represented as follows in connection with this allegation:

- 21.1. It was denied that he attempted to take unfair advantage of Person M.
- 21.2. It is reasonable and proper to act on a client's instructions to confirm the whereabouts of the home address of his child.
- 21.3. Direct contact between Person B and his child had ceased, because Person M had relocated without notice to Person B.
- 21.4. Indirect contact between Person B and his child had ceased, because Person M failed to respond to Person B's emails.
- 21.5. The enquiries he made on behalf of Person B were reasonable and diligent.
- 21.6. Had Person M's Form C8 requesting that her address be kept confidential be filed and served to him (the Respondent), no further inquiry as to her address would have been made.
- 21.7. Person M gave a robust, direct and confident response to his enquiries, so she could not be described as vulnerable.

Paragraph 1.2 of the Code of Conduct

22. Paragraph 1.2 of the Code of Conduct requires that solicitors do not abuse their position by taking unfair advantage of their clients and others. In ***SRA v Andersons Solicitors [2013] EWHC 4021 (Admin) [Pages 230 to 245]***, at [38] to [40], [48], [67], and [70], it was held that taking unfair advantage involves a conscious decision.

23. As of 13 July 2022, the Respondent was fully aware that his client, Person B, wished to obtain Person M's address and contact details and that, should Person M not be willing to provide that information voluntarily, a court order would likely be required to fulfil his client's instructions. This is clear from the Respondent's initial email to Person M on 13 July 2022, which specifically stated that Person B was seeking to establish contact with his child, and that, if Person M was not willing to provide Person M's current address (where the child was residing), the Respondent would seek to obtain a court order.

24. In response to the SRA's enquiries, the Respondent stated that he sought to obtain Person M's contact details as part of his professional obligation to assist the court. However, it should have been clear to him following receipt of Person M's response that:

24.1. the relevant court papers had already been served on Person M;

24.2. Person M intended to engage with the relevant court proceedings, and hoped that an agreement could be reached with Person B through the proceedings;

24.3. Person M had already provided the court with her contact details; and

24.4. Person M could be contacted directly by email if direct contact was required at any point.

25. In addition, as an experienced solicitor working in the field of family law, it is reasonable to expect that the Respondent would or ought to have been aware at the time of the conduct that:

25.1. the court papers received by Person M would indeed have required her to provide her contact details to the court;

25.2. rule 29.1(1) of the Family Procedure Rules states that unless the court directs otherwise, a party is not required to reveal the party's home address or other contact details, or that of any child;

25.3. rule 29.1(2) of the Family Procedure Rules states that where a party does not wish to reveal the party's home address or other contact details, or that of any child, the party must give notice of those particulars to the court and the particulars will not be revealed to any person unless the court directs otherwise.

26. Accordingly, following receipt of Person M's initial email of 13 July 2022, the Respondent would have been aware or ought reasonably to have been aware that Person M had no legal obligation to provide him or Person B with her home address or other contact details, and that the relevant Family Procedure Rules specifically make provision for parties to withhold their address and other contact details from the other side. Furthermore, as an experienced solicitor in the field of family law, the Respondent knew or ought to have known that the provisions of rules 29.1(1) and (2) of the Family Procedure Rules apply even in the absence of a Form C8 being submitted by Person M.

27. Following receipt of Person M's response on 13 July 2022, the Respondent would or ought to have known that he did not require Person M's address or telephone number to progress Person B's case, that Person M was not legally obliged to provide him or Person B with this information prior to the hearing, and that Person M did not wish to voluntarily provide him or Person B with this information.
28. Despite this knowledge, the Respondent, on 15 July 2022 and 18 July 2022, made additional requests to Person M that she voluntarily provide her contact details to Person B.
29. The Respondent also sent an email to Person M on 21 July 2022 stating his belief that she lived in the Town area. It can reasonably be inferred that this email was intended to prompt Person M to confirm or deny whether she lived in the Town area. Following receipt of Person M's response on 13 July 2022, the Respondent should have sought to obtain this information by seeking a proper court order.
30. In the circumstances and given the Respondent's knowledge and belief as of 13 July 2022, his repeated requests between 15 and 21 July 2022 represented a conscious attempt to take advantage of Person M, a litigant in person who would reasonably be expected to be less familiar with her disclosure obligations. In those circumstances, the Respondent asking Person M, who was unfamiliar with her disclosure obligations, for information that she need not disclose and had made clear that she did not wish to disclose represented a conscious attempt to take unfair advantage of Person M.

Principle 5 – You act with integrity

31. The Respondent's actions amounted to a failure to act with integrity (i.e. with moral soundness, rectitude and steady adherence to an ethical code) in breach of Principle 5 of the SRA Principles. In ***Wingate v Solicitors Regulation Authority v Malins [2018] EWCA Civ 366***, it was said that integrity connotes adherence to the ethical standards of one's own profession.
32. The Respondent failed to act with integrity in that:
 - 32.1. He improperly attempted to take unfair advantage of Person M, as a litigant in person, by pressuring (or otherwise by seeking to persuade) her to reveal information sought by his client which would otherwise have to be obtained via a court order. This conduct relates directly to the Respondent's work as a solicitor instructed by Person B.
 - 32.2. He pressured (or sought to persuade) Person M, who was a litigant in person, to provide her contact details when he did not need to do so, and in

circumstances where her contact information was being controlled and managed by the court.

33. Accordingly, the Respondent's conduct falls far short of the standard described in *Wingate*. His work-related conduct did not uphold the higher ethical standards that society expects from the profession. In the circumstances, he failed to adhere to the ethical moral code the public would expect solicitors to meet, and so his conduct lacked integrity and he breached SRA Principle 5.

Principle 2 – You act in a way that upholds public trust and confidence in the solicitors' profession and in legal services provided by authorised persons

34. The Respondent's conduct during his communications with Person M in July 2022 is a breach of SRA Principle 2.

35. In addition, the public would likely take a negative view of the Respondent's conduct, in that it shows a member of the profession consciously attempting to take advantage of a vulnerable opponent who was acting as a litigant in person. The conduct also has to be considered in the context of Person M making it clear that she did not wish to provide the information sought. Conduct of this nature would likely have a negative impact on public trust and confidence in the profession.

36. In the circumstances, the Respondent's conduct is a breach of SRA Principle 2.

Allegation 1.2 – Obtaining contact details for Person M

37. The SRA relies upon paragraphs 6 to 36 above. Additionally, the SRA relies upon the following facts and matters.

38. On 15 July 2022, at 11:10, the Respondent emailed the private investigation firm Proactive Investigations Ltd ("**Proactive**") [**Page 95**] to request that they conduct a trace on Person M's known details with a view to obtaining her current address, having previously obtained a quote for these services on 13 July 2022. As a result of these enquiries, at 16:29 on 15 July 2022, he was provided with a likely address and phone number for Person M by Proactive [**Pages 94 and 99**].

39. Despite the concerns and issues highlighted by Person M in her email of 15 July 2022, the Respondent disclosed the contact details for Person M provided by Proactive to Person B on 18 July 2022 [**Page 99**].

40. Email correspondence between Person M and the Respondent in August 2022 shows that Person M was not aware that this information had been disclosed to Person B prior to the court hearing on 29 July 2022 [**Page 114**], and that the trace

request and disclosure to Person B were made without her knowledge or consent. In the same correspondence, Person M highlights that she had submitted a Form C8 (the form used to apply for contact details to be withheld from the other party) as well as the Relevant Form, and that these had been accepted by the court.

41. By way of summary only, in an email to the SRA dated 11 March 2025 [Page 43], the Respondent represented as follows in connection with this allegation:

41.1. This allegation is denied.

41.2. Person B was concerned that Person M was attempting to “*alienate*” him from his child.

41.3. At the time when disclosure of Person M’s address was made to Person B, The Respondent had no knowledge that Person M would not consent to this disclosure.

41.4. Person M’s reasons for withholding her address were vague, and were not disclosed until 29 August 2022.

Paragraph 1.2 of the Code of Conduct

42. As set out above, following receipt of Person M’s email on 13 July 2022, the Respondent would or ought to have known that he did not require Person M’s address or telephone number to progress Person B’s case, that Person M was not legally obliged to provide him or Person B with this information prior to the hearing, and that Person M did not wish to voluntarily provide him or Person B with this information.

43. Despite this knowledge, on 15 July 2022, the Respondent instructed Proactive on behalf of Person B to conduct a trace request on Person M, receiving details of a likely current phone number and home address for Person M and her child.

44. It is reasonable to infer that the Respondent’s trace request with Proactive was made for the purpose of obtaining Person M’s contact details, and thus enabling him to pass these details onto Person B ahead of the court hearing on 29 July 2022, on the basis that:

44.1. Following receipt of Person M’s response on 13 July 2022, the Respondent would or ought to have known that he did not require Person M’s address or telephone number to progress Person B’s case and that the court already possessed Person M’s contact details. It is not plausible that the Respondent could have believed that his trace request was necessary to

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enable him to progress his client's matter or meet his responsibilities to his client or the court.

44.2. He was aware that his client wanted to obtain Person M's current contact details. He had specifically agreed to request Person M's contact information in a phone call with Person B on 15 July 2022.

44.3. He disclosed the trace results directly to Person B on 18 July 2022 by email.

45. Before the Respondent disclosed Person M's details to Person B on 18 July 2022, he had received an additional response from Person M on 15 July 2022 which:

45.1. again made it clear that Person M did not wish to voluntarily disclose her contact details to Person B, in that she again declined to provide her details when requested;

45.2. explained that Person M's reluctance to provide her additional contact details was due to previous behaviour she and her family had allegedly experienced from Person B and his partner;

45.3. indicated that Person M had raised concerns regarding Person B in the paperwork she had submitted to the court and that she believed it would be *"best for the courts decide a safe and appropriate contact schedule"*.

46. At the time of the disclosure to Person B on 18 July 2022, as an experienced family law solicitor, the Respondent would or ought to have been aware that Person M would likely be seeking to rely on the right to withhold her contact details from Person B until such time as she was directed to disclose them by the court.

47. In the circumstances, the Respondent intentionally obtained and then disclosed Person M's personal contact details to Person B in circumstances where he knew that the proper course of action would be to seek a court order directing that such disclosure be made, given that:

47.1. Person M's stated wish was for the relevant matter to be determined by the court during the scheduled hearing;

47.2. Person M had the right to withhold her contact details from Person B until such time as the court directed that these details be disclosed;

47.3. The court had the right to decide whether Person M's address should be disclosed, based on a proper assessment of the evidence and an

understanding of the potential risks. Even if Person M persuaded the court during the hearing that her contact details should not be disclosed to Person B, he would already have possessed her contact details due to the Respondent's actions on 18 July 2022.

48. It was the Respondent who personally handled the instruction of Proactive. Solicitors enjoy a privileged position in society by virtue of their membership of the profession and interlocutors are likely to display greater trust in instructions received from a solicitor over those received directly from a member of the general public, entrusting them to have conducted necessary due diligence and not issue instructions that undermine the administration of justice.
49. Given the specific nature of Person B's case, which involved a dispute between former marital partners where one party wished to withhold their address from another and court proceedings were already underway, it is not unreasonable to assert that a private investigator may have declined to provide Person M's details directly to Person B had he submitted the request himself rather than through a solicitor.

Principle 1 – You act in a way that upholds the constitutional principle of the rule of law, and the proper administration of justice

50. SRA guidance [**Pages 285 to 287**] on this principle gives examples of non-criminal conduct that may engage SRA Principle 1, including:

“Premeditated actions, intended deliberately to impede or prevent the judicial process or judicial decision-making, or the lawful exercise of enforcement powers, could give rise to a breach of the duty to uphold the constitutional principle of the rule of law as well as the duty to uphold the proper administration of justice”.

51. The Respondent was considering the use of a private investigator to identify Person M's contact details outside of the court process at least as early as 13 July 2022, despite his knowledge that court proceedings were already underway at the time of his initial instruction on 8 July 2022 and that the relevant Family Procedure Rules allowed Person M to withhold her contact details until such time as a court order was made directing her to disclose them.
52. The Respondent's intention for obtaining Person M's contact details in this manner was to enable him to pass these details on to Person B before the scheduled court hearing took place, as no plausible alternative explanation exists. The Respondent's conduct in this matter must thus logically be considered to be intentional and deliberate.

53. The Respondent's decision to obtain and disclose Person M's contact details in this manner undermined Person M's right to withhold her contact details from Person B until such time as the court directed that these details be disclosed. Irrespective of any decision reached by the court on this point during the scheduled hearing, Person B would have already been provided with Person M's contact details due to the actions of the Respondent. The Respondent's conduct thus prevented the court from determining during the scheduled hearing whether Person M's contact details should properly be disclosed to Person B, thus preventing judicial decision making on this important aspect of the case.

54. As a solicitor, the Respondent is first and foremost an officer of the court. SRA guidance on SRA Principle 1 states **[Page 285]**:

"A solicitor's duty to the court may override other duties or principles, such as the duty (reflected in Principle 7) to act in a client's best interests."

55. The preamble to the SRA Principles provides that:

"Should the Principles come into conflict, those which safeguard the wider public interest (such as the rule of law, and public confidence in a trustworthy solicitors' profession and a safe and effective market for regulated legal services) take precedence over an individual client's interests".

56. This approach has been reflected by the courts themselves: in **Arthur J S Hall v Simons [2002] 1 AC 615**, Lord Hoffmann held:

"Lawyers conducting litigation owe a divided loyalty. They have a duty to their clients, but they may not win by whatever means. They also owe a duty to the court and the administration of justice... Sometimes the performance of these duties to the court may annoy the client. So, it was said, the possibility of a claim for negligence might inhibit the lawyer from acting in accordance with his overriding duty to the court. That would be prejudicial to the interests of justice."

57. Insofar as the Respondent had a duty to fulfil the wishes of his client, Person B, he owed a greater duty to the administration of justice (in accordance with the judgment of Lord Hoffmann) and thus should have acted in a way that gave greater priority to this duty. In particular, the Respondent ought to have conducted himself in a manner that acknowledged:

57.1. That an application for this matter to be heard by the Family Court had already been made prior to his instruction.

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57.2. The provisions made by the Family Procedure Rules for Person M to withhold her contact details during proceedings.

57.3. The matter of whether Person M's contact details should be disclosed to his client was thus one that should have properly been determined by the court.

Principle 5 – You act with integrity

58. Paragraph 31 above in connection with Allegation 1.1 is repeated.

59. The Respondent failed to act with integrity in that:

59.1. By using a private investigator, he obtained information for his client which should properly only have been made available to his client if the court ordered this information to be disclosed to him. Accordingly, his conduct unfairly disadvantaged Person M during ongoing court proceedings to the benefit of his client.

59.2. He was aware that Person M did not wish for Person B to be aware of her contact details and had indicated reasons for this. Society would reasonably expect an experienced solicitor working in family law, such as the Respondent, to have thus taken additional care when considering disclosing information relating to Person M to Person B, due to the potential risk of unintended consequences for Person M arising from such a disclosure. The Respondent's evidenced conduct in this matter demonstrates that no such care was taken the Respondent, and that his conduct was thus not consistent with what society would reasonably expect from an experienced solicitor seeking to act with integrity under the relevant circumstances.

60. This conduct relates directly to the Respondent's work as a solicitor instructed by Person B.

61. Accordingly, the Respondent's conduct falls far short of the standard described in *Wingate*. His work-related conduct did not uphold the higher ethical standards that society expects from the profession, and can accurately be categorised as falling into a category of conduct described by SRA guidance as conduct demonstrating a lack of integrity. In the circumstances, the Respondent's conduct lacks integrity and breaches SRA Principle 5.

Principle 2 – You act in a way that upholds public trust and confidence in the solicitors' profession and in the legal services provided by authorised persons

62. The Respondent's conduct represents a breach of SRA Principle 2.
63. In addition, the public would likely take a negative view of this specific instance of conduct by the Respondent, in that it shows a member of the profession deliberately and intentionally engaging in conduct that undermines provisions made in the relevant procedural rules to protect vulnerable parties during sensitive matters before the family courts. Conduct of this nature would likely have a negative impact on the public's view of the trustworthiness and integrity of the profession.
64. In the circumstances, the Respondent's conduct should be considered to be a breach of SRA Principle 2.

Recklessness

65. Furthermore, the Respondent's conduct was reckless.
66. The SRA relies upon the test for recklessness which was set out in the case of **Brett v SRA [2014] EWHC 1974**. At paragraph 78 in that case, Wilkie J said that for the purposes of the Brett appeal, he adopted the working definition of recklessness from the case of **R v G [2004] 1 AC 1034**. He said that the word recklessly is satisfied: with respect to (i) a circumstance when the solicitor is aware of a risk that it exists or will exist and (ii) a result when the solicitor is aware that a risk will occur and it is, in circumstances known to them, unreasonable for them to take the risk.
67. The Respondent was reckless in that he did not seek to check or confirm whether Person M had submitted a Form C8 or the Relevant Form to the Court. In so doing, he ran the risk of undermining the Court's decision-making over the disclosure of Person M's contact details. As a result, the Respondent was reckless, in that he used a private investigator to obtain the contact details, and then disclosed them to Person B without considering the risks that this posed to Person M.
68. The Respondent knew or ought to have known that disclosure of Person M's address to Person B carried a number of risks, including:
- 68.1. The risk that the court would be deprived of an opportunity to make a decision as to whether Person M's address ought to be disclosed;
 - 68.2. The risk that harm would be caused to Person M; and
 - 68.3. The risk that harm would be caused to Person M's child.

69. The Respondent's conduct demonstrates that no care was taken by him to avoid these risks. He proceeded to disclose Person M's address to Person B. In the circumstances, it was unreasonable for the Respondent to run the risk of disclosing Person M's address to Person B.

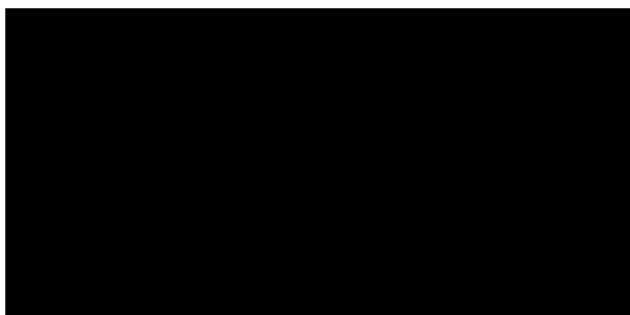
The SRA's investigation

70. The SRA has taken the following steps to investigate the allegations which it makes against the Respondent.
71. On 21 November 2022, the SRA received a complaint from Person M about the conduct of the Respondent.
72. The Assessment Early Resolution Team (AERT) Officer of the SRA acknowledged Person M's complaint on 12 January 2023 requesting further evidence from Person M.
73. On 9 February 2023 the SRA contacted the Respondent about Mr A's complaint **[Page 120]**. The Respondent responded to this on 13 February 2023 **[Pages 118 to 120]**.
74. On 31 March 2023, the SRA contacted the Respondent to confirm that two of Person M's complaints would be sent for further investigation.
75. On 9 May 2023, the SRA informed the Respondent that it was investigating the matter **[Pages 122]**.
76. On 23 May 2023, the Respondent sent a letter responding to the SRA **[Pages 133 to Page 134]** in which he stated that he only became aware of the nature of the allegations Person M was making against Person B on 25 July 2022, and that he obtained Person M's address before he was aware of those allegations **[Page 133]** .
77. On 8 January 2023, the SRA served a s44b production notice on the Respondent which is exhibited at **[Pages 138 to 139]**. An extension was agreed for the Respondent's response to the production notice on 19 January 2024.
78. The Respondent's response to the production notice is found at **[Page 142]** of the bundle.
79. On 3 April 2024 a request for further information was sent to the Respondent by the SRA's investigation officer. **[Pages 144 to 145]**. The Respondent replied on the same day, and his response is at **[Page 141]** of the bundle.

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80. On 26 February 2025 the Investigation Officer of the SRA sent a notice to The Respondent **[Pages 12 to 41]**.
81. On 11 March 2025, the Respondent replied to the notice with his representations **[Pages 43 to 49]**.
82. On 11 April 2025 and Authorised Decision Maker (ADM) of the SRA decided to refer the conduct of the Respondent to the Solicitors Disciplinary Tribunal (SDT). **[Pages 288 to 292]**.

I believe that the facts and matters stated in this statement are true.



Dated this 3rd day of September 2025.

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BEFORE THE SOLICITORS DISCIPLINARY TRIBUNAL

Case No:

IN THE MATTER OF THE SOLICITORS ACT 1974 (as amended)

AND IN THE MATTER OF:

SOLICITORS REGULATION AUTHORITY

Applicant

and

CLIVE GRAHAM WOOD

Respondent

**APPENDIX 1 TO STATEMENT PURSUANT TO RULE 12 (2) SOLICITORS
(DISCIPLINARY PROCEEDINGS RULES) 2019**

Relevant Rules and Regulations

Allegation 1.1 – Taking unfair advantage of Person M

SRA Principles 2019

Principle 2 You must act in a way that upholds public trust and confidence in the solicitors' profession and in legal services provided by authorised persons.

Principle 5 You must act with integrity.

SRA Code of Conduct for Solicitors, RELs and RFLs

Rule 1.2 You do not abuse your position by taking unfair advantage of clients or others.

Allegation 1.2 – Obtaining contact details for Person MSRA Principles 2019

- Principle 1 You must act in a way that upholds the constitutional principle of the rule of law, and the proper administration of justice.
- Principle 2 You must act in a way that upholds public trust and confidence in the solicitors' profession and in legal services provided by authorised persons.
- Principle 5 You must act with integrity.

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- Rule 1.2 You do not abuse your position by taking unfair advantage of clients or others.