

IN THE MATTER OF RHODRI VAUGHAN DAVIES, solicitor

- AND -

IN THE MATTER OF THE SOLICITORS ACT 1974

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Mr A H Isaacs (in the chair)  
Mr A Gaynor-Smith  
Mrs S Gordon

Date of Hearing: 12th April 2005

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## **FINDINGS**

of the Solicitors Disciplinary Tribunal  
Constituted under the Solicitors Act 1974

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An application was duly made on behalf of the Law Society by Linda Louise Rudgyard, solicitor advocate employed by the Law Society at Victoria Court, 8 Dormer Place, Leamington Spa, Warwickshire, CV32 5AE on 20th October 2004 that Rhodri Vaughan Davies of Arundel, West Sussex, (now of Bangor, North Wales) solicitor, be required to answer the allegations in the statement which accompanied the application and that such order might be made as the Tribunal should think right.

The allegation against the Respondent was that he had been guilty of conduct unbecoming a solicitor in that he had been convicted upon indictment of three counts of theft and one of obtaining a money transfer by deception.

The application was heard at the Court Room, 3rd Floor, Gate House, 1 Farringdon Street, London EC4M 7NS on 12th April 2005 when Linda Louise Rudgyard appeared as the Applicant and the Respondent appeared in person.

The evidence before the Tribunal included the admission of the Respondent.

At the conclusion of the hearing the Tribunal made the following Order:-

The Tribunal orders that the Respondent, Rhodri Vaughan Davies of Bangor, North Wales, solicitor, be struck off the Roll of Solicitors and they further order that he do pay the costs of and incidental to this application and enquiry fixed in the sum of £1,063.56.

**The facts are set out in paragraphs 1 to ... hereunder:-**

1. The Respondent, born in 1947, was admitted as a solicitor in 1976 and his name remained upon the Roll of Solicitors.
2. The Respondent appeared in the Crown Court at Mold on 2nd October 2003 and was tried and convicted upon indictment of three counts of theft and one of obtaining a money transfer by deception. In respect of each of those offences the Respondent was sentenced to a period of three years imprisonment (concurrent) and ordered to pay compensation of £30,000.

**The Submissions of the Applicant**

3. The offences had been committed in the course of the Respondent's practice as a solicitor and related to the estates of two elderly sisters. The Compensation Fund had paid some £22,000 in respect of the offences of theft. The Respondent had paid £30,000 by way of compensation as ordered.
4. The Respondent was collating evidence for an Application for Leave to Appeal against the convictions but as at the date of the hearing the convictions were undisturbed.
5. The Tribunal was referred to the sentencing remarks of His Honour Judge Rogers QC, and in particular to the following comments:-

“Abusing your responsibilities as the executor, you plundered the estate of a family friend stealing more than £10,000 and then you turned to her elderly blind sister from whom you effectively stole more than £40,000. The aggravating features are threefold. Firstly, you abused the trust of two elderly and vulnerable ladies; secondly, these offences were committed with cunning and great care; and thirdly, offences of this kind undermine the confidence of the public in the legal profession.”

6. The Respondent had agreed the Applicant's costs.

**The Submissions of the Respondent**

7. The Respondent accepted that the Tribunal would strike him off the Roll of Solicitors and said that if he was successful in his appeal he would come back to the Tribunal.

**The Findings of the Tribunal**

8. The Tribunal found the allegation substantiated, indeed it was not contested.
9. While the Respondent intended to seek leave to appeal against his convictions they were as the Applicant had said at present undisturbed. The convictions represented misconduct of the most serious kind on the part of a solicitor and caused grave damage to the reputation of the profession. It was right that the Respondent's name be removed from the Roll of Solicitors. The Tribunal made the following Order:-

The Tribunal orders that the Respondent, Rhodri Vaughan Davies of Bangor, North Wales, solicitor, be struck off the Roll of Solicitors and they further order that he do pay the costs of and incidental to this application and enquiry fixed in the sum of £1,063.56.

Dated this 10th day of June 2005  
On behalf of the Tribunal

A H Isaacs  
Chairman