



### Decision not to investigate

<b>Case reference number:</b>	RGC-000163422
<b>Date:</b>	27 March 2026
<b>Investigation officer:</b>	Kirsty Price
<b>Relevant person and SRA number:</b>	Rebecca Hume (151368) Ajay Fournillier (531876) Mark Stephens (125097) Howard Kennedy LLP (557188)

### Matters considered

On 4 July 2025, we received a report from Alkiviades David raising concerns about Rebecca Hume, Ajay Fournillier and Mark Stephens, solicitors, and other employees of Howard Kennedy LLP (the firm), an SRA-regulated firm. Mr David has cognitive impairment due to brain trauma. He is currently a litigant in person. He is not, and has never been, the firm's client.

Mr David is currently engaged in a number of legal proceedings, most of which stem from a conviction in relation to sexual assault and battery of a number of individuals, with damages awarded by the Supreme Court of California. He is a British citizen but is resident in Antigua and Barbuda.

Mr David is litigating on a number of fronts in different jurisdictions, including in relation to a Trust, from which he has been removed by his relatives. Mr David is concerned that different individuals across many countries and disciplines, including family members, are conspiring against him in relation to his reputation, finances and businesses. He also has concerns about conspiracies not immediately relevant to this decision.

Howard Kennedy LLP has been engaged by one of the individuals. This is in respect of the domestication and enforcement of a judgment debt obtained against Mr David on 21 January 2020 in the Supreme Court of California. This was amended on 3 March 2021 to include a judgment for punitive as well as compensatory damages. The matter has been domesticated to England so that part of the damages can be recovered from his assets in England.

Mr David has assets in a number of countries, where the matter has also been domesticated. He is continuing to use appeals processes, and appeal-as-of-right, in countries where this is applicable. Although a number of these matters have been concluded, some are ongoing, notably in the United States, Greece and Antigua and Barbuda.

In respect of the firm and its employees, Mr David is appealing against the freezing of his assets in England, the enforcement of an order enabling use of these assets and a finding of contempt against him for failure to obey a court order to disclose assets held in England.

Mr David believes, in the course of its proceedings against him, the firm has:

- acted in a conflict of interest
- discriminated against him as a person with brain trauma and cognitive impairment
- assaulted him and laughed at his disabilities
- taken advantage of him as a litigant in person
- undermined a litigant in person, suggesting he lacks capacity and attacking his right to represent himself
- acted in contempt of a court of England and Wales. This was by failing to include some of his documents in bundles it submitted to the Court and / or raise some of the issues he believes are relevant about litigation in process in other jurisdictions, including California and Antigua and Barbuda
- acted / been found to be in contempt of the High Court of Justice in Antigua and Barbuda, failing to provide responses and / or accept its jurisdiction.

### **Our assessment**

We assessed the report by:

- reviewing the report and further documentation and communications sent to us by Mr David, including in excess of 150 emails
- requesting and considering a response to the concerns and further documentation from the firm
- reviewing open-source information
- reviewing our internal records and
- considering our statutory framework, published guidance and rules.

When we look into reports made to us, we make a decision on whether to investigate based on [our assessment threshold test](#). We look at:

- whether there has been a potential breach of our rules
- if there has been a breach of our rules, the nature of the breach or whether the conduct forms part of a pattern of behaviour. However, we typically only investigate the most serious allegations
- whether there is enough evidence to prove the breach.

### **Our reasons for not investigating**

The concerns raised by Mr David raise a potential issue around compliance by the firm and its employees with Principles 1, 2, 3, 5, 6 and 7 of the [SRA Principles](#) (Principles) and paragraphs 1.2, 1.4, 2.5, 2.7 and 6.2 of the [SRA Code of Conduct for Solicitors, RELs, RFLs and RSLs](#) (the Code of Conduct for Solicitors). These require that the individuals and the firm:

- Principle 1: act in a way that upholds the constitutional principle of the rule of law, and the proper administration of justice.
- Principle 2: act in a way that upholds public trust and confidence in the solicitors' profession and in legal services provided by authorised persons.
- Principle 3: act with independence.
- Principle 5: act with integrity.

- Principle 6: act in a way that encourages equality, diversity and inclusion.
- Principle 7: act in the best interests of each client.
- Paragraph 1.2: do not abuse their position by taking unfair advantage of clients or others.
- Paragraph 1.4: do not mislead or attempt to mislead their clients, the court or others, either by their own acts or omissions or allowing or being complicit in the acts or omissions of others (including their client).
- Paragraph 2.5: do not place themselves in contempt of court, and comply with court orders which place obligations on them.
- Paragraph 2.7: draw the court's attention to relevant cases and statutory provisions, or procedural irregularities of which they are aware, and which are likely to have a material effect on the outcome of the proceedings.
- Paragraph 6.2: do not act in relation to a matter or particular aspect of it if they have a conflict of interest or a significant risk of such a conflict in relation to that matter or aspect of it.

In response to Mr David's concerns, the firm provided a detailed response, including full copies of the orders and documents already in Mr David's possession. Its response can be summarised as follows:

- Mr David unsuccessfully appealed the original judgment against him in 2020 all the way to the Supreme Court of California, which denied his petition to appeal on 14 September 2022.
  - The firm commenced proceedings to domesticate the judgment debt obtained in the Supreme Court of California. This was with a view to enforcing that judgment over a Mayfair property owned by Mr David. This was obtained, in default, on 11 July 2025.
  - Mr David has a history of frustrating the judgment in their client's favour in other countries. The firm applied for and obtained a freezing injunction over his bank accounts in England and a receivership order over the Mayfair property. These *ex parte* orders were made on 26 June 2025 by Mr Justice Calver.
  - On 4 July 2025, these came back before Mr Justice Freedman, who continued the Freezing Injunction. There was no application to vary the Receivership Order at that time.
  - On 25 July 2025, the Freezing Injunction came back before Mr Justice Cotter, who continued it. Mr Justice Cotter allowed Mr David to take up the majority of the hearing to assess his fitness to defend himself and what allowances he might need because of his disability. This judgment records that:
    - the firm has no conflict of interest
    - Mr David had failed to provide disclosure required by the Freezing Injunction, (this gave rise to the firm applying for an order for contempt)
    - the judge allowed time for Mr David to apply to set aside the judgment in default, which the firm had properly applied for when Mr David failed to provide disclosure
    - the judge continued the Freezing Injunction and confirmed the period of extra time allowed for Mr David to provide evidence about his assets.
- The Receivership Order was varied in relation to the need to access the property for valuation related to insurance purposes.
- Mr David disclosed during this hearing that he had assets in a Revolut bank account.

- As permitted by the Injunction, the firm notified Revolut of the Freezing Injunction after the hearing. Mr David's Revolut account was frozen.
- As no further disclosure was provided by Mr David, despite him stating that he could comply with this, the firm made an application for the Contempt Order to be relisted.
- On 16 October 2025, it came before Mrs Justice Stacey, with Mr David participating by video link from Antigua. The judge was satisfied that he was in contempt. The Order refers to Mr David's disability and that this was taken into account. It considered Mr Fournillier's service of the Contempt application on Mr David, which Mr David refers to as an assault: it was not independently viewed as such. It also records that the Freezing Injunction and obligations under it were explained to Mr David by Mr Justice Cotter and the firm. Mr David's brain injury was considered and Mr David confirmed he needed no further accommodation.
- On 5 November 2025 the firm applied for a third-party debt order over the Revolut account to enforce the costs order in the sum of £80k made in the Contempt Order.
- On 27 November 2025, an interim third-party debt order was made by Senior Master Cook with a return date for the hearing of the final order of 19 January 2026.
- The firm became aware that Mr David had appealed the Order of Mrs Justice Stacey. It downloaded a copy of the Appellant's notice and grounds of appeal from the file on 7 January 2026. It was only given access to this by writing to the court. The documents are both dated 18 October 2025. Neither have been formally served on the firm.
- Although Mr David has no stay in relation to this order, the firm have sought various adjournments of the Third-Party Debt Application to allow his appeal to progress and be determined.
- The firm is separately enforcing the default judgment against Mr David's assets in England.
- In terms of corresponding with Mr David, it receives a high volume of emails, frequently copied into other recipients. It limits interactions to professional correspondence. It did try to help Mr David to file applications properly and not bombard the court with emails. This was not successful.
- In terms of Mr David's assertion that the firm is in contempt of proceedings in Antigua and Barbuda, the firm properly wrote to the High Court of Justice. In this letter it explained that the court had no jurisdiction over it and that it was not, in fact, a party to the case. The firm is satisfied that this position has been accepted by that court. It is not, and has not been found to be, in contempt.

A chief concern of Mr David is his litigation in other jurisdictions and the behaviour of other actors in relation to this. These are not matters for us. Our jurisdiction is England and Wales.

We can only consider the conduct of the firm and its employees.

There is no evidence that the firm acted in a conflict of interest in respect of Mr Stephens and Julian Assange. This was properly considered by the Court and dismissed. We do not look behind this.

There is no evidence that the individuals or the firm discriminated against Mr David or took advantage of him as a disabled litigant in person. There is evidence the firm and the sitting judge tried to make sure that Mr David's disability and position as a litigant in person did not disadvantage him. There is evidence Mr David said he did not require further accommodation and declined to seek medical assistance or legal assistance.

There is no evidence Mr David was assaulted and / or humiliated in the Court. This was considered. No action was taken. We do not look behind this.

There is evidence Mr David believed he has followed court procedures but has not, in fact, done so. This includes application, preparation and submission of his appeals and defence. There is evidence that he received guidance, and lee-way, on this from the Court and the firm. There is evidence he has been advised to seek independent legal advice to assist him.

We understand Mr David reported the alleged assault by Mr Fournillier to the Police. As of the date of this decision, no action has been taken. Criminal allegations are for the Police to consider in the first instance. This is the case for any criminal activity Mr David suspects has taken, or is taking, place. This point has been made clear to him in the Court. If there is a conviction in relation to the individuals and / or the firm, we will look into this.

In terms of Mr David's allegation the individuals and the firm acted in contempt of the Court of England and Wales by not submitting documents in its bundle which he believed should have been included, or referring to proceedings he believed relevant, it is for him to present his own case: he is not the firm's client. It is also a fact that Mr David presents, and represents, documents to the courts and others repeatedly, including updates about the progress of cases he believes relevant in other jurisdictions. There is evidence that he has repeatedly raised his concerns about other matters. There is no evidence that the individuals and the firm have been in contempt of court in any of its actions. There is evidence that Mr David has not filed these updates and applications in the procedurally required manner, despite having this brought to his attention.

There is no evidence the individuals and the firm have acted in contempt of the High Court of Justice in Antigua and Barbuda. There is evidence the Court has no jurisdiction over the firm, but that the firm did write in detail to this court. There is no evidence this court has found the individuals or the firm to be in contempt.

All of the relevant matters in Mr David's report remain subject to ongoing litigation. We do not involve ourselves in legal disputes and have informed Mr David of this on a number of occasions. These are matters for the courts.

Where there is any judicial criticism of the conduct of individuals and / or the firm, we will look into this.

While we understand Mr David has found the lengthy litigation frustrating and detrimental to his health and, potentially, financial well-being, it is not our function to intervene on his behalf. We also suggest Mr David obtains independent legal advice to assess the merits of his case and the most appropriate method of advancing it.

## **Decision**

For the reasons set out above, I have decided not to investigate this matter. This decision is made under Rule 1.1 of the SRA Regulatory and Disciplinary Procedure Rules (RDPRs) as to whether the matter should be considered under Rule 3 of the RDPRs.

## **Appeal/Review**

Under the SRA Application, Notice, Review and Appeal Rules, there is no right of appeal or review of this decision by either the person who reported the concerns to us, or the subjects of this decision.

