

My solicitor from Sheffield Law Centre read through 20 hours of evidence and concluded with the following judgment (7th June 2005), that the dismissal was unfair because:

“1. The allegation of misconduct initially made against him was withdrawn

2. The employer had decided that prior to making any decision as to whether or not to dismiss Mr Clare it would obtain an occupational health report. Whilst Mr Clare was waiting for the employer to arrange an appointment to have this done, the employer dismissed him by letter.

3. There was a failure in the investigation in relation to the allegation of misconduct against Mr Clare.

4. In addition, the employer failed to follow the proper statutory procedure prior to dismissing him and a tribunal on this basis alone would have been bound to find that the dismissal was automatically unfair.”

I now think I was very timid in accepting the offer of financial settlement.

I did this partly on advice from my legal-aid solicitor, to avoid using up more tax-payer's money, but also because the defendant's responses were so intimidating and punitive that I just wanted it to be over.

Although my claim was based on point 4 , automatically unfair because the statutory procedure was not followed, Unstone continued to make personal allegations against me, such as that I had grown Cannabis in the gardens, which 1000 visitors, volunteers, students and clients a year would prove untrue.

The reality for me has been the loss of ten years' work, developing the gardens, and complete disruption of my career path.

My dismissal and claim for unfair dismissal are both typical of the conditions I worked under for more than four years, which I would have to describe as malicious incompetence.

Dismissal: I spent three months waiting to reassure my ex-employers that I was mentally and physically fit for work. Then I was informed that I had already been sacked, although my P45 had not been issued. Then I was shown 8 “allegations”, which concluded with a “professional judgement” that I was ‘unfit to work with vulnerable adults’, which I saw as an attempt to punish me and jeopardise my future employment prospects.

And so what was really going on?... There was definitely political manouvering to discredit me to restrict my autonomy in running the courses and the gardens (which was the day-to-day reality), so that the manager would stay in charge. But I always experienced this as aggressive over-defensiveness, as if they had something to hide.

Everybody at Unstone Grange knows that the Chairman of the Trustees and the Manager are co-habiting partners, but maybe they don't want the outside world to know about this nepotism because it raises organisational problems of accountability and of running a charity for personal benefit.

Whilst volunteering and working at Unstone Grange for ten years, I knew that I was not supposed to mention certain subjects, such as my understanding that the 'Deer Tribe' (manager and chair both members) are a paying sex cult or that it was illegal to launder public funds through Unstone's main bank account in order to pay the manager's wages over a period of more than three years.

The current project amounts to a misuse of public funds and is not fulfilling the aims and ethics maintained formerly.

I believe I have a mythical duty in this affair to confront corruption and restore good governance because my work there actually did demonstrate the principles of unity in diversity and allowing people to take responsibility.