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Rossendale ex-deputy head harassed couple

Wendy Barlow, Court reporter

A FORMER deputy head-teacher bombarded a couple with letters telling them to get out of their home as it was still his, a court heard.

Vincent Campbell, 41, a foster carer who has also been a professional football coach, sent six letters to heavily pregnant Helen Thornton and her husband Chris laying claim to their house at Marl Pits, Rawtenstall.

Campbell, who had also seemed to have got hold of the couple's confidential mortgage details, was warned by the police but was arrested after he kept on doing it, Burnley magistrates were told.

The court heard how father-of-two Campbell was disgruntled after he declared himself bankrupt, the family home was repossessed and he thought it was sold with 'indecent haste' without giving he and his wife a chance to keep it.

Campbell, of Springhill, Higher Cloughfold, Rossendale, admitted harassing the Thorntons, between May 17 and June 30 and was bailed for a pre-sentence report.

The Bench told the defendant, who is facing a restraining order, he would probably receive a high level community sentence.

Andrew Robinson, prosecuting, said Mr and Mrs Thornton moved in to their home on April 30.

On May 17, the couple received a letter by recorded delivery from Campbell, saying that he had a commercial claim on the property and his solicitor and mortgage company had

He threatened to sue for repossession and said the Thorntons had 28 days to move out.

The victims sought advice from their own solicitor and a reply was sent to Campbell, telling him the house was legally purchased.

Philip Turner, for Campbell, said the defendant, who had coached young people at football at more than one professional club in the North West, had employed builders to extend the house at Marl Pits.

He would say the work was not satisfactory, he was left with an empty shell, owed £40,000 and tried to finance the debt by defaulting on other liabilities.

He declared himself bankrupt.

It was not his intention to harass the couple and he was simply trying to establish what he believed to be his claim on the property.

Lancashire Telegraph, 29 July 2010

Conditional discharge for Rossendale ex-deputy head who harassed couple

Wendy Barlow, Court reporter

A FORMER deputy head teacher, who kept claiming he still owned a house a couple had just moved into, has been banned from contacting them.

Burnley Magistrates Court had earlier heard how Vincent Campbell, 41, a foster carer, had owned the house Chris and Helen Thornton made their home, but it had been repossessed.

He bombarded the couple with letters laying claim to the property at Marl Pits, Rawtenstall, and telling them to get out.

Mrs Thornton, who was eight months pregnant, feared she would lose her house.

Campbell was warned by police but arrested after he carried on the campaign.

The hearing had been told how father-of-two Campbell was upset after he had declared himself bankrupt, his home was repossessed and he thought it had been sold with 'indecent haste'.

Campbell, of Springhill, Higher Cloughfold, Rossendale, had earlier admitted harassing the Thorntons, between May 17 and June 30.

He had been warned to expect a high level community order, but a district judge imposed a 12-month conditional discharge.

He was also made subject to a three-year restraining order prohibiting from contacting the victims or approaching them.

He had no previous convictions.

Rossendale Free Press 14 July 2010

Man harassed couple who moved into his former house

A former deputy head bombarded a heavily pregnant woman and her husband with poison pen letters after moving into his former home.

Vincent Campbell, 41, a foster carer who has also been a professional football coach, sent Helen Thornton and her husband Chris with letters laying claim to their house at Marl Pits, Rawtenstall, and telling them to get out.

Campbell, who had also seemed to have got hold of the couple's confidential mortgage details, was warned by the police but was arrested after he kept on doing it, Burnley Magistrates were told.

The court heard how father of two Campbell was disgruntled after he declared himself bankrupt, the family home was repossessed and he thought it was sold with "indecent haste" without giving he and his wife a chance to keep it.

Campbell, of Springhill, Higher Cloughfold, admitted harassing the Thorntons, between May 17 and June 30 and was bailed for a pre-sentence report.

The bench told the defendant, who is facing a restraining order, he would probably receive a high level community order.

Andrew Robinson, prosecuting, said on April 30 this year, Mr and Mrs Thornton moved in to their home but on May 17, the couple received a letter by recorded delivery from Campbell, saying that he had a commercial claim on the property and his solicitor and mortgage company had committed fraud.

Mr Robinson said the victims sought advice from their own solicitor and a reply was sent to Campbell, telling him the house was legally purchased and any further correspondence should be sent to his mortgage company.

Campbell then sent several more letters.

Philip Turner, for Campbell, said the defendant had employed builders to extend the house at Marl Pits.

He would say the work was not satisfactory, he was left with an empty shell, owed £40,000 and tried to finance the debt by defaulting on other liabilities.

Eventually he declared himself bankrupt. Campbell had expected the family would be able to keep the home because of his wife's share in the property.

He claimed she wasn't given the opportunity to make proposals and the house was sold on with what he considered indecent haste.