

## **Gwent pensioner whose car windows were violently smashed by police officers receives compensation**

Gwent Police has paid compensation to 70 year old Robert Whatley as a result of an incident during which an officer smashed his car window 15 times with a baton whilst another officer jumped onto his car bonnet and kicked in his windscreen. Although the force has not admitted liability the payment indicates that it seeks to compensate Mr Whatley for post traumatic stress disorder.

The payment follows threats by Mr Whatley's lawyers to bring civil proceedings for excessive use of force. It comes in stark contrast to the findings of an internal police disciplinary panel in June 2011 which concluded that the officers' actions were entirely justified.

The incident was captured on a camera mounted within the officer's police car and the footage has attracted over 30 million viewing on the internet.

Mr Whatley said that "rogue officers were quick to turn to aggression. I brought the claim as a matter of principle, not for compensation".

Mr Whatley's solicitor, Nogah Ofer of Bhatt Murphy solicitors, said

"this payment shows up the police disciplinary system as a cosy club in which police officers' explanations are accepted unquestioningly. An out of court settlement demonstrates that the force was concerned that an independent court would reach the opposite conclusion. Police support for officers who act in this way does little for public confidence in the police complaints system."

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