

HPW has acted for two clients injured at weddings – though going to a wedding is not usually considered a dangerous activity. One client's enjoyment ended abruptly when leaving the reception with his relatives, as for unknown reasons, the guests were herded out of a fire escape exit in the rain onto a badly uneven pavement. A relative had to drive the poor man back to Edgware from hospital in Northampton, and they both missed the rest of the fun that day.

The 53-year-old engineer had broken his ankle, and had to arrange for colleagues to cover his customers while he recovered, or he would have lost his regular bookings. Even when he returned to work, he had to pay for a young lad to drive and to carry heavy boilers and the like, until his injury healed completely.

Northamptonshire County Council admitted liability for the pavement, but court proceedings had to be issued and the case fought nearly to trial, while we argued over exactly what earnings were lost, and whether the rain (over which Northamptonshire County Council claimed to have no control) or the bad paving caused the fall. Why would a sober Indian gentleman wearing sensible shoes have gone flying on a pavement just because it was wet? And why, we argued, should he not be refunded every pound he had to pay other people to keep his business going?

Sometimes (as in this case) we have to fight years to get our clients their full compensation, and local authorities are often the opponents who run up the highest costs, disputing every angle possible. We would rather they settled early, but we do not compromise our clients' claims for the sake of a quick payout, if the offer adds insult to injury.

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