

PRESS RELEASE

1 September 2022

Metropolitan Police pays £10,000 following stop and search and handcuffing of a Black man inside his gated mews garden

Navern De La Kruz (aged 31) was opening the gate of his home to a friend when he was handcuffed and detained for the purpose of a search after officers wrongly claimed he fitted the description of a knife crime suspect.

The search was conducted in the communal garden of Mr De La Kruz's gated mews. The police claimed to use a power of search under the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 but that cannot be used in a private dwelling.

The officers at the scene did not apologise to the claimant after the search. Despite agreeing to pay him damages, the Metropolitan Police have not made any admission of liability nor offered any apology to the claimant to date.

Mr De La Kruz said: *"I felt so belittled to be stopped, searched and handcuffed in my garden for something I had nothing to do with. More than two years have passed since the incident and I still haven't received any apology from the police but sadly that is exactly what I expected. I sought to hold the police to account because I want others, and particularly the younger generation of Black queens and kings, to know that the misuse of stop and search and handcuffs is not okay, and that it can be challenged. I sincerely hope that lessons will be learnt from my case to ensure that officers act within their powers and understand the impact incidents like this can have on confidence in policing."*

The claimant's solicitor, Sohini Mehta of Bhatt Murphy, said: *"This case is yet another example of the heavy-handed use of stop and search and handcuffing on Black people without adequate justification. My client has still not received an apology from the police. The Met must show that they are committed to stamping out discrimination and disproportionality in their practices and implement the recommendations made to them by the IOPC and HMICFRS."*

ENDS

NOTES TO EDITORS

For further information, please contact Sohini Mehta at s.mehta@bhattmurphy.co.uk

Mr De La Kruz was represented by Sohini Mehta and Sophie Naftalin of Bhatt Murphy and Michael Etienne of Garden Court Chambers.

Bhatt Murphy Solicitors

See further HMICFRS's February 2021 [report](#) on the disproportionate use of police powers, and a [review](#) by the Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC) which identified eleven opportunities for the Met to improve on stop and search.