

A brief update on the B&B owners taken to court by two sodomites for refusing to give them a double bed room

We are very grateful for your prayers for today's hearing.

The judge was changed at the last minute and we were pleased with the new judge, Recorder Claire Moulder's handling of the case, not **least her refusal at the outset of the claimants late request for an injunction to force Susanne to take homosexual couples into her double rooms.**

This was good news because should the injunction have been permitted, Susanne would have been in contempt of court had she not applied it.

There was common ground on the facts of the case and cross examination was quite uncontentious. The differences lay in the legal interpretation of the facts.

Susanne's counsel James Dingemans QC and the support team were excellent. James argued Susanne's defence expertly, his main points being;-

- There was no discrimination on sexual orientation (the issue here was sexual practice, not orientation)
- Susanne was entitled to refuse unmarried persons or those not in a civil partnership to share a double bed. The Sexual Orientation Regulations ("SORs") only refers to homosexuals in a civil partnership
- A small intimate B&B with a personal service in a private family home was not intended to be caught by the Equalities Act which refers instead to a hotel or boarding house
- Indirect discrimination can be justified by religious belief under the SORs
- The Human Rights Act 1998 is primary legislation (therefore ahead of the SORs as secondary legislation) and this makes allowance for freedom of religion and its manifestation

The Claimants' counsel, of course, made robust arguments contesting these and other points. However, both sides agreed the judgement should be about getting the right balance between the competing rights of homosexuals and Christians. It was described as 'an appraisal requiring considerable skill and care' and that the 'least intrusive outcome should be obtained'

Susanne Wilkinson's case at Reading County Court 17 September 2012

Written by Mike and Susanne Wilkinson
Sunday, 23 September 2012 09:20

The judge stated that she reserved judgement, was well aware of the 4 cases of Christians currently at the ECHR in Strasbourg (judgement due in 3 months) and of the Bull's case (going before the UK's Supreme Court in about 1 year.) She said she'd make her decisions while the case was still fresh in her mind and provide her judgement in 1 to 2 weeks time.

Prayer points

- Thanks for strength for Susanne to answer the questions in cross examination (and for minimal questioning)
- Thanks for expert work of James Dingemanns who made all the points we could have wanted
- Thanks for a pleasant and professional judge
- Thanks that the hearing was over in one day and not the two days allocated for it by the court
- Pray that the judge will have the courage and the conviction to make a balanced judgement which permits Christians to act in accordance with their faith.

We thank you all again for standing with us today and over the past 2 and 1/2 years.

With love in Jesus

Mike and Susanne