

THE ARCHITECTS REGISTRATION BOARD

PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT COMMITTEE

In the matter of

CHRISTOPHER RICHARD CHAPMAN (047299I)

Present:

Andrew Webster KC (Chair)
David Kann (PCC Architect Member)
Rachel Childs (PCC Lay Member)

In respect of the charges against Christopher Richard Chapman (047299I) (“the Registered Person”):

The Registered Person:

- a. accepts the facts and matters set out below and consents to the Consent Order Panel of the Professional Conduct Committee making a disciplinary order against him in the terms set out below; and
- b. confirms that he has been offered the opportunity to appear before a Hearing Panel of the Professional Conduct Committee to present his case, but has foregone his right to do so.

The Architects Registration Board accepts the facts and matters set out below and consents to the Professional Conduct Committee making a disciplinary order against the Registered Person in the terms set out below.

The Allegation

The allegation made against Christopher Richard Chapman (“the Registered Person”) is that:

1. *He has been convicted of a criminal offence other than an offence which has no material relevance to his fitness to practise as an architect, in that he was convicted on 9 August 2022 of:*

(i) Arson, contrary to Criminal Damage Act 1971;

(ii) Possess a Weapon for the discharge of a noxious liquid/gas/electrical incapacitation device/thing, contrary to Firearms Act 1968;

(iii) Intimidate witness in Civil Proceedings, contrary to Criminal Justice and Police Act 2001; and

(iv) Possess a Weapon for the discharge of a noxious liquid/gas/ electrical incapacitation device/thing, Contrary to Firearms Act 1968.

Statement of agreed facts

1. The Registered Person is a registered architect and owns his own practice, Christopher Chapman Associates Ltd.
2. On 9 August 2022, the Registered Person was convicted, following a guilty plea, at Slough Magistrates Court of the following offences:

(i) Arson, contrary to Criminal Damage Act 1971;

(ii) Possess a Weapon for the discharge of a noxious liquid/gas/electrical incapacitation device/thing, contrary to Firearms Act 1968;

(iii) Intimidate witness in Civil Proceedings, contrary to Criminal Justice and Police Act 2001; and

(iv) Possess a Weapon for the discharge of a noxious liquid/gas/ electrical incapacitation device/thing, Contrary to Firearms Act 1968.

3. The Registered Person had been commissioned in 2019 by Person A on an 18-month contract for works on his home. The relationship deteriorated in or around 6 March 2021, following the Registered Person receiving a Letter Before Action informing him that Person A, who had been a long-term client and business friend, intended to commence civil proceedings against him in connection with the work done on his home and issues regarding payment and allegations of negligence. On the same day as receiving the letter, the Registered Person drove to Person A's home address with a can of petrol and a stick. He poured the petrol over Person A's Range Rover, worth £67,000, and set it on fire whilst Person A was inside having dinner with his partner and children.
4. The Registered Person returned to Person A's property the following day and posted two letters, one of which was intimidating in nature and read words to the effect of: *"Withdraw your proceedings or your family will never be safe from that 'tragic accident' ever. Try and escalate and pay severe costs. Life-changing. Just how truly valuable are they? This is not a battle you would ever win, so walk away now"*. This threat was aimed at Person A's children. The second letter was not threatening in nature, and set out the Registered Person's response to the Letter Before Action.
5. Both incidents were captured on CCTV. The Registered Person sent a "Whatsapp" message later the same morning, drawing Person A's attention to both letters.
6. Following a police search of the Registered Person's home address, he was found in possession of two cans of pepper spray, unrelated to the incident at Person A's address.
7. On 26 October 2022, the Registered Person was sentenced to a total of 26 months immediate imprisonment. He completed half of his sentence in prison and has been released on license. In addition, a victim surcharge of £190 was imposed.

Admissions

8. The Registered Person admits that he has been convicted of a criminal offence other than an offence which has no material relevance to his fitness to practise as an architect. The allegation, as set out above, is admitted in full.

Disciplinary Order

9. Section 15(1)(b) Architects Act 1997 states that the Professional Conduct Committee may make a disciplinary order in relation to a Registered Person who has *“has been convicted of a criminal offence other than an offence which has no material relevance to his fitness to practise as an architect.”*
10. The Consent Order Panel of the Professional Conduct Committee, with the consent of the parties and having taken account of its responsibilities to protect the public and maintain the reputation of the profession, makes the following disciplinary order:
 11. In all of the circumstances, the Registered Person agrees to a disciplinary order of **ERASURE**.
 12. The Registered Person has no previous disciplinary history. He has engaged in the regulatory process and has admitted the allegation in full. He has no intention of resuming practice as an Architect in the future.
 13. The admitted allegation has the potential to diminish both the Registered Person’s reputation and that of the profession generally and therefore the parties agree that the Registered Person’s conduct is sufficiently serious to require the imposition of a disciplinary order. In light of the very serious nature of the offences the parties agree that the imposition of an **ERASURE** order is an appropriate and proportionate disciplinary order to impose.

