



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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### **Islington woman haunted by gun hold up**

A woman from Islington who was held at gunpoint in the jewellery shop in Clapton Common where she worked is now claiming compensation from her employers.

There were two robberies within a week at Harvey and Thompson's in Clapton Common. On the first occasion, a gang wielding baseball bats threatened Mrs Nessa Ali, 31, and other staff before smashing glass cabinets and taking jewellery. On the second, the robbers were armed with a hand gun and a sawn off shotgun. A gun was pointed at Mrs Ali, the sales manager, who was alone on the shop floor, and she was forced to open some of the cabinets. The men escaped with over £3000 of goods.

In both incidents the thieves were able to walk in to the shop because the door was always unlocked and often propped open. The shop is close to a busy bus stop, and staff had always been concerned that it was very vulnerable.

"Staff weren't allowed to lock the door," said Mrs Ali, "because the owner's thought it would put people off coming in. Although the pawn brokers part of the shop had

a bandit screen, we weren't allowed one for the jewellery for the same reason. We didn't get any training in security."

Since the robberies, Mrs Ali has suffered from post traumatic stress disorder and depression and has been unable to work. She has lost her home and now she and her husband are in temporary accommodation provided by Islington Council.

Cheryl Abrahams of Islington solicitors Bolt Burdon Kemp is representing Mrs. Ali. "We expect Mrs Ali to get a five figure sum in compensation," she said. "Despite complaints from staff and customers, nothing was done to improve security, even after the first incident. The employers have clearly failed in their duty to look after their staff."

"My life is so different now," said Mrs Ali. I shall never forget how scared I was when he pointed the gun at me. I just can't face going back to work, and I only go out if my husband comes with me. I feel really let down by the people I worked for.

Harvey and Thompson Ltd. has denied liability.

Ends

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