"Celebrities including TV presenter Davina McCall have been paid damages after settling phone-hacking claims with Mirror Group Newspapers (MGN).

Cases involving 21 people - among them actors Nigel Havers and Rhys Ifans, and actress Kym Marsh - were settled at London's High Court.

The settlements all involve undisclosed damages, costs and an apology.

Further phone-hacking claims against MGN are due to be heard in court next year if agreements are not reached.

Counsel David Sherborne said Mr Havers, whose acting credits include Chariots Of Fire and Coronation Street, was targeted by phone hacking between 2000 and 2004.

The actor had been subjected to intense intrusion when he was nursing his late wife through the final stages of cancer, he said.

## Loss of friends

Dear Sirs,

Mr Ifans, best known for his role in the film Notting Hill, lost a number of close friends as a result of the distrust created by newspaper stories published as a result of hacking, Mr Sherborne said.

Ms McCall's case involved a March 2007 article named Davina's Stalker Terror, which MGN admitted had been published after her voicemails had been intercepted.

Other settlements involved businesswoman and socialite Caroline Stanbury, PR consultant Alison Griffin, publicist Clair Dobbs, and film-maker Jim Threapleton - the ex-husband of actress Kate Winslet.

The list also included actress and Loose Women panellist Lisa Maxwell, actress and singer Suzanne Shaw, actresses Caroline Chikezie, Tina Hobley, Holly Davidson, Kate Ford, Samia Ghadie and Lucy-Jo Hudson and actors Ben Freeman, Alan Halsall, Christopher Parker and George Calil.

Last year, <u>damages totalling nearly £1.25m</u> were awarded to eight people whose phones had been hacked by Mirror Group journalists writing celebrity stories.

Actress Sadie Frost was awarded £260,000 and ex-footballer Paul Gascoigne £188,250, while Soap stars Shane Richie, Shobna Gulati and Lucy Benjamin also received payouts.

Following the verdict, MGN announced it had set aside an extra £16m to deal with further claims - in addition to the £12m provided in 2014."
It is your job to ensure this has changed, so far I have seen nothing that gives me any confidence that this will not happen again and that the press will act responsibly in the future
We rely on a strong press for many things, but we also need them to respect peoples privacy unless there is a clear public interest. At the moment I and yourselves are defenceless against them should we happen to become a subject which may sell more papers and advertising.

This must change, it is what we were promised, now please deliver it.

Regards

Graham Bland