

## Statement from Rich Hadley of LOTS

Written by Rich Hadley

Saturday, 24 September 2011 12:58 - Last Updated Thursday, 03 November 2011 13:58

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During the last few weeks I have been subject to a malicious and sustained attack by members of Ledbury Approves Tesco Superstore (LATS) through its Facebook Group. Though some of the comments about me have been grossly offensive and clearly defamatory, I have refrained from taking action as I did not want to distract attention from the LOTS campaign.

Yesterday however a more serious incident took place which has prompted this statement.

A bogus Facebook account was set up in my name and this was added to the LATS Group by Andrew Ellis who is the Group administrator. I can only assume that the intention in doing this was for the purpose of ridiculing and embarrassing me.

This move followed on from a post by Mr Ellis in which he said:

'I am sick of hearing the name. Richard Hadley is an ignorant, disillusioned, fantasizing moron with fictional beliefs.' He continued: 'This statement can be backed up by evidence.' And then: 'He is just a drama queen'.

The impersonation of my identity was immediately reported to Facebook which took prompt action in removing it.

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Throughout the last weeks I have experienced a concerted hate campaign by certain members of the LATS group, quite out of proportion to the circumstances of the anti-superstore movement of which I find myself a figurehead.

Fully available in the public domain via the internet, there have been malicious, factually untrue and extremely damaging allegations about me as an individual. My professional activities have been held up for derision and mockery. Not only have these have been calculated to damage my standing at work and in my home town of Ledbury but, due to their inflammatory nature, they have given some concern as to my own personal security.

I am also dismayed that allegations that I have been involved in criminal acts, have been allowed to remain in the public domain by the Facebook site moderators.

On a personal note, I must say that I find it shocking that someone in my position, simply a Ledbury resident involved in a popular community-led movement, should be bullied and insulted in such a manner. I stand to gain nothing by being involved in this campaign other than I care about the future of Ledbury. I respect other people's right to their opinions, and think the same consideration should be extended to me, and other supporters of LOTS without fear of harassment or intimidation.

I am now seeking advice on what action might be appropriate for me to take.