



22 May 2024

Race discrimination case settled against the Ryandale Inn

Six Irish Travellers have settled their race discrimination case against the Ryandale Inn (Moy) Ltd, in County Tyrone for £24,000. The case was supported by the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland.

The group of family and friends visited the Ryandale Inn in May 2023 where they planned to have a meal. When they attempted to order drinks at the bar, they were refused service. They were then asked to leave.

The incident was recorded on a mobile phone and staff were made aware that they were being filmed. A staff member behind the bar was captured saying, "we can't serve you," and when then asked if the reason for this was because they were Travellers, the person behind the bar replied "Yes."

The group of friends said they were upset and embarrassed by how they were treated by the staff at the Ryandale Inn. They felt humiliated that other customers could see and hear everything that was going on.

Martin Cawley, speaking for the group, said: "We were really hurt at how we were treated. It was so blatant, they didn't care, they didn't even try to hide that they were discriminating against us because we are Travellers. We felt we had no option but to challenge this, it's not right and we should not have to accept it. We just wanted to have a meal together like any other group of friends."

Mary Kitson, Senior Legal Officer, Equality Commission for Northern Ireland said: "Let me be clear, what happened was wrong. This type of behaviour is never acceptable. Irish Travellers are protected by the Race Relations (NI) Order 1997.

"Business owners must ensure that their staff know that it is unlawful to refuse service to someone because of their race. All businesses here must operate within our equality laws. It is important that we continue to challenge this type of racial prejudice."

As part of the settlement agreement, the Ryandale Inn is working with the Commission to ensure that their policies and procedures are effective and conform with the requirements of the Race Relations Order (NI) 1997.