

# News story: HCA response to Dispatches programme



The Homes and Communities Agency and the Regulator of Social Housing have issued statements in response to the Channel 4 Dispatches programme, 'The Great Housing Scandal', aired on Monday 13 November.

## **In relation to its investment functions:**

As the Government's national housing delivery body, the Homes and Communities Agency plays a key role in ensuring more affordable homes are built, including for sub-market rent and shared ownership. We take any concerns raised about the HCA extremely seriously; however, the accusations made in tonight's Dispatches programme are based on a misunderstanding about our statutory responsibilities and role.

Our role is to get more homes built now and invest in increasing long-term housing supply. One of the ways in which we support housing associations and councils to meet different housing needs is a £4.7 billion capital grant fund to increase the number of homes for affordable rent or shared ownership. Since being established in 2008, we have supported a third of new homes built in England and we are currently transforming our business to further speed up housing delivery and make places better.

In appointing staff and board members with the necessary skills and experience it is inevitable that conflicts will arise. The HCA takes a robust approach to managing conflicts of interest, in line with guidance on Public Appointments and ensures that appropriate arrangements are put in place when they arise.

## **In relation to the Regulator of Social Housing:**

The accusations made in the programme are based on a misunderstanding about the remit of the Regulator of Social

Housing, which is discharged through an independent regulation committee. The Regulator of Social Housing promotes a well governed and financially viable social housing sector. It sets standards and intervenes where there is evidence of a breach that could lead to serious detriment to tenants. The Regulator is currently considering whether the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea has breached its standards taking account of the police investigation and public inquiry.

Landlords are responsible for dealing with their tenants' complaints. Since 2008, the Housing Ombudsman has been responsible for dealing with tenant complaints that are not resolved by social landlords. Nonetheless, where tenants directly approach or are referred to the Regulator (including where we have been contacted directly via social media), it will consider whether there has been a breach of its standards, and if so, whether there has been, or is, a risk of 'serious detriment'.

### **Further information**

The HCA wrote to the production team to clarify some of the points that the programme was proposing to raise.

[HCA response – covering letter](#) (PDF, 168KB, 2 pages)

[HCA response – annex](#) (PDF, 155KB, 3 pages)

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