

Dear member,

First of all I apologise I have not been able to contact you before now.

The meeting with Ruth Kelly went as well as I believe we could reasonably expect.

She expressed her commitment to HIPs in general and the date of June 1st 2006 and the inclusion of an HCR as a standard part of the HIP in the long run. I believe that there is now an understanding that it is likely a mandatory date for HCRs will need to be set, but at the moment the Government will say no more than it remains on the table if industry cannot deliver widespread use on a voluntary basis. I said that the delivery channel is the impediment to achieving this and there is little that providers can do to change the situation. What would be useful is a date for date i.e. a timing by which the announcement of a mandatory date will be announced if it is deemed necessary and the criteria that will be used.

Without going into detail there was agreement that the Government must find a way to provide strong reassurance to trainee Home Inspectors this week to avoid widespread abandonment of the qualification amongst their ranks. I believe Ruth understands that there could be a serious backlash for the Government if they do not achieve this.

There then needs to be meaningful support extended to our industry on the lines of AHIPP's letter to her. I advised her that this is not a wish list, but represents a realistic statement of what is needed to keep the programme on track. The officials present advised that it may take two or three weeks to formulate the support that will be extended to industry, but undertook that we will be actively consulted as this is being formulated.

I have checked back through the officials present that the impression of a strong commitment from Ruth to the HIPs programme is accurate.

David Lane is still with the programme.

I believe that we now need to see delivery of adequate reassurance to the HI profession by the end of this week as the first step for Government to start to rebuild any level of trust with our industry.

In the meanwhile I would like to suggest that we stay with the programme, although I realise that it is relatively easy for me to say and potentially much more difficult for you to do

Mike Ockenden