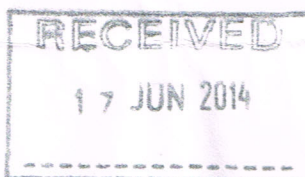




Department
for Education

Robert Goodwill MP
House of Commons
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Department
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Our ref: MCB2014/10531

6 June 2014

Thank you very much for your letter of 19th May, on Behalf of Mr William Kidd of Seaton Hall, Staithes TS13 5AT, who contacted you about damp proofing services.

As you indicate Mr Kidd has previously contacted the Department on this subject in relation to the TrustMark scheme which is operated by TrustMark (2005) Ltd under our Master Licence. We have responded to Mr Kidd on the points which would be in our remit to do so, a copy of the most recent letter is attached.

The Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) are not accountable to this Department, and I am sure you would appreciate that we would therefore be unable to comment on their policy. May I suggest that Mr Kidd re-contact RICS setting out his case and request a response from RICS justifying their policy position.

MATTHEW HANCOCK MP

ROBERT GOODWILL M.P.



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA



Ref: RG/SFB

23 June 2014

Mr. W. Kidd,
Seaton Hall Farm,
Staithes,
Saltburn by the Sea,
TS13 5AT

Dear Mr. Kidd,

I enclose a copy of a letter I received from Matt Hancock MP, the Parliamentary under Secretary of State for the Department for Business Innovation and skills. As you will see from the letter he maintains that the ball is now very firmly in the RICS. Although the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveys are not accountable to the Department, I feel that they should review their policies so as to ensure that they are not complicit in any restrictive practices that do not allow full competition between qualified individuals in the provision of services.

Could I suggest that you contact RICS again and enclose a copy of the letter from Mr. Hancock which may well ensure that this receives their attention.

I am sorry that we do not seem to be making a great deal of progress but maybe perseverance will pay off in the end.

Yours sincerely,

Robert Goodwill MP
Scarborough & Whitby

Enc.

Member of Parliament for Scarborough and Whitby

Please reply to the address indicated beneath:

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Our ref: TOB2014/08938
Your ref:

13 May 2014

Thank you for your letter of 26 April, raising concerns about TrustMark's standards remediation of 'damp homes'.

The Minister receives a large amount of correspondence every day and is unable to respond to each one personally. I have been asked to reply as I provide oversight of TrustMark's Master License. I have followed up with both TrustMark and BBA on the matters you have raised.

As indicated in our previous letter, it is TrustMark and not the Department who are responsible for developing and maintaining the standards of the scheme. It is the responsibility of TrustMark Scheme Operators to inspect and ensure that TrustMark Standards are maintained by trade members of the scheme, a process regularly audited by TrustMark.

In order to continue to receive Government endorsement, TrustMark are obliged to demonstrate that their standards are 'fit for purpose'. Accordingly, I requested Liz Lister, the independent chair of the scheme, to review their approach in relation to this issue. To recognize your sensitivity of a PCA member being a TrustMark Board member, I additionally requested that she take the lead in these investigations.

Turning to BBA, the Department has no authority over the activities of BBA. However, I have approached the CEO of BBA, Clare Curtis-Thomas, for some background information on their activities in relation to this matter.

Having reviewed all the statements, I do not propose to take any action at this time in relation to the Master License we hold with TrustMark.

I have, however, noted your concerns and have requested that the Chair of TrustMark closely watch developments in this area and to be prepared to review any further evidence which you or others may care to provide her. Liz Male assures me that she wishes to maintain appropriate standards within the scheme and has agreed to review the evidence and, further, to recommend changes to the standards when necessary.

BBA has issued its own statements on chemical damp proofing creams which I understand you have seen.

Thank you for writing.

Yours sincerely

Barry Blackwell
BIS CONSTRUCTION UNIT