

18 July 2007

Our Ref:  
Your Ref:

Dear Chief Executive

### **Flood Recovery - Insurance Advice for Flood Affected Households**

You may be aware of recent reports, highlighted by the media of 'entrepreneurs' targeting flood affected areas with offers to help households progress their insurance claims for a percentage of the payout.

This has come to the attention of John Healey, Minister for Local Government during his visits to the affected areas and he is keen to ensure that practical information is made available to flood affected communities on where they can go for free independent advice on insurance matters.

The Minister is keen that flood damaged communities are made aware of the following key messages:

- Claims can be made directly and free of charge to your insurer. They are regulated by the Financial Services Authority (FSA) and they have to handle your claim fairly;
- Free, independent advice is available face-to-face and by telephone from the Citizen's Advice Service;
- The FSA and the Association of British Insurers (ABI) are also useful places to turn to for further information on Insurance matters;
- You should think carefully before enlisting a third party's help in progressing your insurance claim;
- If you do decide to hire a third party - make sure you check how much it will cost you first as they may charge a share of any sum paid out by the insurer. You should also check that they are regulated by the FSA or are an exempt professional firm such as a law firm.

In discussion with the FSA and the ABI we have pulled together a short note (attached) outlining where people can go for help and giving some basic information

on insurance matters and things to be aware of before hiring a third party's help. This information has also been given to the regional press in the hope that they will feature the story to raise awareness.

We would be grateful if you could make this information available in your local authority and disseminate to households who may be targeted by this sort of practice through your existing networks where possible.

Yours Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Teresa Vokes". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line above the first letter 'T'.

**Teresa Vokes**