



## Department for Communities and Local Government

Nick Bailey

Our Ref: F000xxxxx

[By email to: Nick.Bailey@glasgow.ac.uk]

13 August 2012

Dear Mr Bailey

Thank you for your email of 23<sup>rd</sup> July seeking additional information under FOI provisions on the Report 'Listening to Troubled Families', published on 18<sup>th</sup> July.

You asked:

1. Does DCLG have a policy on research ethics for work which its staff carry out or for work which it commissions? If it does, please may I see a copy of the policy?
2. Was ethical approval for this research sought by the researcher? If so, please may I see a copy of the ethics application form and all appendices (e.g. information sheets for participants, consent forms etc.)?
3. Was approval granted? If so, please may I see a copy of the approval notice (memo/email/minute of meeting)?
4. Please may I see a copy of any written information given to participants (e.g. about the purpose of the study, and how it would be conducted and reported)?

Your request has been considered under the Freedom of Information (FOI) Act 2000. I can confirm that the Department does hold information falling within the terms of your request.

Louise Casey, head of the Troubled Families Programme, interviewed 16 troubled families in April- June 2012. The primary purpose of carrying out the interviews was to listen directly to families about their lives, the problems they have experienced and caused and to begin to understand the sort of help that will enable them to really change.

The report that resulted from these interviews, 'Listening to Troubled Families' was not research, and it clearly stated this in the Introduction. *"It must also be noted that this is not formal research and that these interviews and the information they gave us is not representative of the 120,000 families that are deemed as 'troubled'"*

The report describes meetings between Louise Casey and families working with Family Intervention Projects. Families who had benefited from some of these projects were approached by their support worker and asked whether they would be interested in talking to Louise in her role as the Head of the Troubled Families Unit about their experiences.

Participants were asked if they were willing to discuss their experiences and have the material recorded and used on the basis that the material would be anonymous. It was made clear to them that there was no obligation to do so.

When it does carry out social science research, DCLG subscribes to the Government Social Research Code available at : <http://www.civilservice.gov.uk/networks/gsr/gsr-code>

The Department aims to be as helpful as possible in the way it deals with requests for information under the FOI Act. If, however, you are not satisfied with the way in which your request has been handled or the outcome, you may request an internal review within two calendar months of the date of this letter. Information about the Department's review procedures and how to apply for an internal review of your case can be found on the Department's website at <http://www.communities.gov.uk/corporate/foi/foicomplaints/>. This also explains your right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision in the event that you remain dissatisfied following the Department's review.

Generally, the Commissioner's office cannot make a decision unless you have exhausted the internal review procedure provided by this Department. The Information Commissioner's address is at the web link referred to above.

If you have any queries about this letter, please contact me. Please remember to quote the reference number above in any future communications.

Yours sincerely,

**Nick Burkitt**  
**Troubled Families Team**