

# Skipton Fund

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Mrs Maureen Murphy

GRO-C

Liverpool

GRO-C

3 June 2009

Dear Mrs Murphy

Thank you for your recent letter sent to this office for the attention of Martin Harvey. In actual fact Nick Fish is the Company Secretary and Administrator of the Fund, Martin Harvey is a Director and it is myself who is the Chairman. It therefore seemed more appropriate that I should reply to you.

I note your disappointment with the Government's response to the Report of the Archer Inquiry, and am aware that this disappointment is widely shared. Indeed, in my roles as a former Chairman of the Macfarlane Trust and current Chairman of the Eileen Trust, on behalf of which I gave evidence to the Inquiry, I share this disappointment and believe all those who were or are fellow Trustees of these Trusts are in accord.

However, as Chairman of Skipton Fund Limited ("SFL") my reaction has to be neutral. The arrangement whereby SFL was set up and administers the *ex gratia* payments scheme on behalf of the Department of Health ("DoH") and, through that, on behalf of the devolved administrations is enshrined in a contract. This document, termed an agency agreement, *inter alia* states two things:

- that SFL is an agent for the DoH
- that SFL "may only alert the DoH to operational issues and may not make proposals to amend Government policy".

In my view, therefore, your request, that I "take the strongest possible action to make representation directly to government with a view to having them take a fresh look at the recommendations of Lord Archer's independent inquiry and to implement them in full", would require me to be in breach of the agreement.

I regret that both I and any other representatives of SFL are, therefore, unable to participate in the further campaigning that you support. I suggest that your letter should be directed to, for example, your own MP, the Minister for Public Health, the Secretary of State for Health, the Shadow Secretary of State, and other Parliamentarians. You might glean additional names from seeing who has asked questions, in both Houses, on issues of contaminated blood or the Archer Inquiry.

Sorry that I cannot help further.

Yours sincerely

**GRO-C**

Peter Stevens  
Chairman