

Nick Mirsky  
Head of Documentaries  
Channel 4 Programmes  
124 Horseferry Road  
London  
SW1P 2TX

10 October 2014

Dear Mr Mirsky

**Be a responsible broadcaster – Don't screen the Southampton 'Immigration' programme**

Southampton Connect is a strategic partnership with representation from public, private and voluntary sector organisations in Southampton. Further to the public meeting held at Maytree School on 22 July 2014 and subsequent meetings with Newtown Residents Association, we call upon Channel 4 to listen to the people of Derby Road and their elected representatives and to reconsider without delay the plans to screen the ill named and ill-advised "Immigration Street."

Over the last few months Southampton Connect and representatives of local community organisations have tried to engage in a dialogue with Kieran Smith of Love Productions, with a view to securing reassurance that the filming will not result in a negative and inaccurate portrayal of the community. We have also sought confirmation that adequate safeguards are in place to deal with any potential adverse health or harm that might result from its screening. We have statutory obligations which we need to discharge. No doubt Channel 4 has too. Satisfactory confirmation on these issues has not been forthcoming from Channel 4.

We have also raised the complaints we have received from some residents who have changed their minds and do not wish to be involved in the filming. It seems that they have not been able to withdraw from the filming. That is of concern to us.

Health organisations, local doctors and voluntary organisations have already voiced their concerns about the inadequate measures to protect vulnerable people and the threats to community cohesion and we regret that the offer of a meeting with the local specialists to address these concerns has been rejected by Love Productions. That approach is irresponsible and may result in adverse health or harm coming to one or more residents. If adverse health or harm does arise then we will be most concerned and we will make this letter available to any suitable party.

Over decades, residents of Derby Road have worked hard to create a harmonious, open, thriving, successful and diverse community. Local people have made it abundantly clear that they do not want their community stigmatised or damaged by the making and aftermath of this programme, nor the unwelcome

attention it is likely to attract from extremist groups. There is real concern that this series could put that success at serious risk. That could set community relations back years and years.

The majority of people living in Derby Road have been there for generations, regardless of their ethnic origins. They do not want to be forever regarded as 'immigrants'. It is their home and they surely have the moral right to safeguard the wellbeing of their place. Many of them have done well and thrived, which is the real reflection of the area. We are concerned that will be "lost" in the planned programme as it may not be sensationalist enough for television. Derby Road is also seen as a place that welcomes new migrants into its harmonious and thriving community and they do not want the planned programme to damage this.

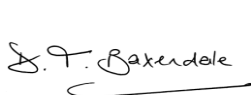
Our concerns are exacerbated by the likely timing of this prior to the elections when the issue of immigration will be a controversial topic with the associated risk of attracting extremists and potentially violent reactions to our diverse local communities in and around Derby Road, but also across other parts of Southampton. We believe there is potential to directly or indirectly incite racism and therefore a risk to the residents, their children and wider community using local faith community buildings and local businesses, as well as a real risk to Southampton's reputation and social cohesion.

The reports in the media about James Turner Street evidence the aftermath of this type of programme; that the once close-knit community seems to have been left in disarray, with residents mocked by those who do not know the people who live there.

We have tried to work with the production team but have been unsuccessful due to their reluctance to work constructively with the local community and us. Nevertheless, we have been working hard and will continue to do so, to ensure we deliver our professional responsibilities to protect the local community as well as the production team. Please be in no doubt about that.

Whilst we respect and support the media's freedom of expression and value its importance in an open society, we are clear that the greater public interest will be served by not screening this programme. We wholeheartedly support the majority of the local community in its opposition to the making of it. Therefore we call upon Channel 4 and Love Productions to show their integrity by abandoning the screening of this programme now and to leave local people to resume their lives without this unwanted, unwarranted and damaging intrusion.

Yours sincerely



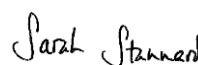
Dawn Baxendale  
(Chair of  
Southampton  
Connect)



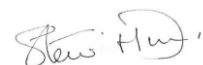
Sue Leamore (Vice  
Chair and  
representing  
University Hospitals  
Trust)



John Richards  
(Chief Executive of  
Southampton  
Clinical  
Commissioning  
Group)



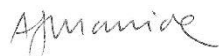
Sarah Stannard  
(Principal and  
Chief Executive  
City College (FE  
representative))



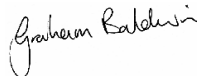
Stewart Dunn  
(Chief Executive,  
Hampshire Chamber  
of Commerce)



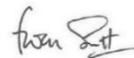
Jo Ash (Chief Executive, Southampton Voluntary Services)



Andrew Mortimore (Director of Public Health)



Graham Baldwin (Vice Chancellor Southampton Solent University (HE rep))



Ewan Scott (Head teacher representative)



Sally Thompson (Chief Executive: Business South)



Cllr Jeffery (Chair of the Employment, Skills and Learning Partnership)



Sue Harriman (Chief Executive Solent NHS)



Cllr Shields (Chair of Health and Wellbeing Board)



Supt. James Fulton (Chair of the Safe City Partnership)



Simon Rhodes (Chair of Future Southampton)

**We fully support the letter from Southampton Connect:**



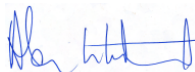
Pat O'Dell, Chair of Newtown Residents Association



Jan Goatley, Headteacher, Maytree Nursery and Infant School



Cllr Simon Letts, Leader of Southampton City Council



Alan Whitehead, MP



Cllr Satvir Kaur, Cabinet Member, Communities



Simon Hayes, Police and Crime Commissioner



Katrina Percy, Chief Executive, Southern Health NHS Foundation Trust

- cc Jay Hunt, Chief Creative Officer, Channel 4  
Helen Jay: Senior Manager Policy and Public Affairs, Channel 4  
Ralph Lee: Deputy Chief Creative Officer, Channel 4  
Kieran Smith, Creative Director for Factual, Love Productions