

# Meet the Code Compliance Officer for TJ Morris Limited

News story

Find out what happened when Ruth Clarke, CC0 at TJ Morris Limited (trading as Home Bargains), answered News from the Adjudicator's questions.



## **Tell us something about yourself and your path to becoming a CC0?**

I am a commercial solicitor and I sit within the legal function of Home Bargains. I report directly to our Group Legal Council and audit chair. Essentially, I am responsible for ensuring compliance with the Code. My role is to understand, and identify Code related issues.

## **What are the most challenging aspects of your CC0 role?**

Achieving effective compliance without excessive administration to ensure responsible business continuity.

## **If you could change one thing about the groceries market, what would it be?**

To reduce the amount of unnecessary and non-recyclable packaging.

## **What achievement as CC0 are you most proud of?**

Having achieved 92% in first survey results of 2020. And having received an acknowledgement for that achievement from the Adjudicator.

## **What 3 things do you want to achieve in the next 12 months?**

1) To maintain efficient and responsible business. 2) To reinforce the good work which we have started in achieving Code compliance. 3) To assist the buying team in maintaining good relations with our grocery supplier base. I believe that for compliance to be effective it must be simple. And I want to continue to develop and integrate a compliance function which relates to our strategic objectives.

## **Is there anything else you would like to share with readers of News from the Adjudicator?**

My aim is to have an open dialogue with of all our grocery suppliers, to enable us to share knowledge and collaborate effectively to assist in Code compliance. You can contact me at [gscop@tjmorris.co.uk](mailto:gscop@tjmorris.co.uk).

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## **Groceries sector more competitive after seven years of GCA**

A competitive groceries sector with stronger and more effective communication between retailers and their direct suppliers is the legacy of seven years of successful regulation, the outgoing Groceries Code Adjudicator says today.

In her end-of-term report Christine Tacon, the UK's first GCA highlights the impact of her work and how the sector has changed since the Groceries Supply Code of Practice was introduced 10 years ago.

We have seen an increase, not a decrease, in competition in the sector as three more retailers have exceeded £1 billion turnover of groceries and been designated by the Competition and Markets Authority," she says in the foreword to the 2019/2020 Annual Report and Accounts.

Furthermore, fresh produce suppliers have been growing in size and are confident under the protection of the Code to work closely and on longer contracts with retailers.

And there is stronger and more effective communication between retailers and suppliers; this is a significant change, the value of which has been apparent in the current Coronavirus crisis and the

resultant need to maintain very efficient supply chains.

Suppliers feel more able to challenge the retailers to get the best joint solutions – no longer is the response “how high?” when the retailers ask them to jump.

Ms Tacon added:

I came into this role because I wanted to make a difference and I believe the evidence shows I have.

I will leave the GCA in the knowledge that by working with the sector, I have shifted the regulated retailers from practice-based compliance to enduring culture change, driving effective compliance risk management at all levels in every regulated business. This should ensure that breaches don't happen and that if they do, they are quickly picked up and put right.

The Annual Report and Accounts for 2019/20 is Ms Tacon's final report as GCA as she announced a year ago she would step down after her second term in office ends in June. However she is staying on for a short period to provide continuity and consistency in dealing with issues that may arise from changes to supply arrangements during the early stages of the COVID-19 emergency.

In the report the GCA points to other significant positives.

The original 10 regulated retailers are now exemplars among businesses for paying on time. The Duty to Report on Payment Practices and Performance results submitted to the Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy cover all invoices, not just groceries, so are only a guide.

These 10 retailers notably paid between 93%-100% of all their invoices on time, whereas only 13% of all the suppliers to those retailers achieved the same level of prompt payment.

Working between retailers and suppliers has become more efficient. For example the business practices implemented in response to inconsistencies arising as a result of drop and drive have eliminated masses of paperwork as well as reducing time wasted on challenges.

Consumers have benefitted from an increase in innovative products on the supermarket shelves, created by a growing number of speciality suppliers which the retailers are welcoming to increase differentiation.

“I believe my success has come from the unique way I established of working with the retailers. I have taken a collaborative approach

which should also be at the heart of healthy supplier-retailer relationships.

Over the past seven years I have had more than 300 meetings with retailers' Code Compliance Officers to take up issues I was hearing from suppliers and ensure retailers were making progress in putting things right.

In her foreword to the Annual Report the GCA stresses that her collaborative approach is "not a soft touch" but one that enables tough, honest conversations and prompt remedial action and one which can be escalated to closer engagement to resolve issues or even to a formal investigation.

As well as her approach to regulation Ms Tacon identifies the GCA's annual survey as another vital tool to secure progress, with the 2020 results telling a very positive story. She concludes:

I strongly believe that the Code, combined with the changes in culture and behaviour I have encouraged over the past seven years, provided the foundations for the excellent reaction of the groceries supply chain to the Coronavirus emergency.

The regulated groceries retailers and their suppliers overwhelmingly responded with the best interests of the consumer at the heart of everything they did and there has been a high level of communication between them throughout.

Notes to editors

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## Windrush Compensation Scheme Oral Statement

With permission, Mr Deputy Speaker, I would like to make a statement on the Windrush Compensation Scheme.

Mr Deputy Speaker, yesterday we celebrated Windrush Day which marks the 72nd anniversary of the arrival of the Empire Windrush at Tilbury Docks.

The ship carried hundreds of people who had left their homes to build a new life in the United Kingdom, and to help this country to rebuild following the destruction of Second World War.

These are the men and women who built their lives and went on to build their homes in the United Kingdom.

They, alongside many thousands of others who made similar journeys, along with their descendants, have made an immeasurable contribution to the social, economic, and cultural life of our country.

When Britain was in need, they answered the call.

Yet Mr Deputy Speaker, as we all know, they were the very people who went on to suffer unspeakable injustices and institutional failings spanning successive Governments over several decades.

I have apologised for the appalling treatment suffered.

And on the 19th March, Mr Deputy Speaker, I made a statement after I received the long awaited Windrush Lessons Learned Review from Wendy Williams.

I have apologised for the appalling treatment suffered by the Windrush generation.

The review itself was damning about the conduct of the Home Office and unequivocal about the 'ignorance and institutional thoughtlessness towards the race and history of the Windrush generation' by the department.

There are serious and significant lessons for the Home Office to learn in relation to the way the Department operates. I and the Permanent Secretary are currently reviewing its leadership, its culture, practices and the way it views and treats all parts of the community it serves.

These reforms, Mr Deputy Speaker, are only the start.

I was clear when Wendy Williams published her lessons learned review that I would listen and I would act.

I have heard what she has said. And I will be accepting the recommendations she has made in full.

I am committed to ensuring that the Home Office delivers for each part of the community it serves and I will come back to update the House on how we will be implementing the recommendations before the summer recess.

And I look forward to discussing the plans further with Wendy this week.

Mr Deputy Speaker, we have been working tirelessly to support the most urgent cases and those most in need.

In April 2018, the Home Office set up the Windrush Taskforce to ensure those who needed documentation immediately could get it. A month later, the Windrush Scheme was launched, providing free citizenship to those who are eligible for it.

The Home Office has a dedicated vulnerable persons team in place to provide immediate support to those people suffering with a range of vulnerabilities, including the financial hardship and destitution that had been well documented.

The team also administers the Urgent and Exceptional Payments scheme, which provides immediate financial payments. And to the end of March the team had made 35 payments totalling over £46,000.

And Mr Deputy Speaker, work is continuing unabated to ensure that those who suffered, receive the documentation and the compensation they need.

So far over 12,000 people have been granted documentation by the Windrush Taskforce, including over 5,900 grants of citizenship.

And the Windrush Compensation scheme continues to make payments to compensate the losses and the impacts individuals suffered as a result of not being able to demonstrate their lawful status.

The scheme was set up and designed with the backing of Martin Forde QC, in close consultation with those who were affected by the scandal. And in February I announced that I would extend the scheme until April 2023 to give those who need our help as much time as they need to apply.

We are continuing to process individual claims as quickly as possible. The first payment was made within four months of the scheme launching and many interim awards are being made where parts of the claim can be resolved more easily and quickly than others.

But let me clear, it is not a blanket one size fits all scheme. It was deliberately designed, with community leaders and Martin Forde QC, so that the claimant is at the heart of it.

Cases deserve to be processed individually, with the care and sensitivity they deserve, so that the maximum payment can be made to every single person.

I simply won't call for targets when it comes to dealing with claims. These are incredibly personal and individual cases that must be treated with the care, dignity and respect that they deserve.

I want everyone who has been wronged to get the maximum compensation to which they are entitled to, and through this bespoke scheme, we are working to achieve that.

This compensation covers a very wide range of categories, far more than any comparable compensation scheme. It covers immigration fees, it covers loss of earnings, it covers benefits, it covers homelessness, it covers destitution. Overall it covers thirteen separate categories.

Assessing claims in this way is ultimately beneficial to those who are making the claim, but it takes time to assess and takes time to get it right.

And while claims are being processed in full, many interim and exceptional payments have been made to make sure that people have access to money, to the funds they need now.

But clearly Mr Deputy Speaker, I share the desire to see more claims completed.

The rate of claims has already increased significantly in the last few months.

As of the end of March, more than three hundred and sixty thousand pounds had been awarded.

And further offers had been made of approximately two hundred and eighty thousand pounds.

And I can confirm today that over one million pounds has been offered in claims so far.

And more payments and offers are being made each week.

But Mr Deputy Speaker, we can and of course, must do more.

My determination to right the wrongs and injustices suffered by the Windrush Generation is undiminished, and I will do all I can to ensure more people are helped and compensated in full.

And if additional resources are needed, they will be provided.

Now is the time for more action and we all have a duty to do more to help those affected by this terrible injustice.

Individuals will only benefit from the compensation scheme if they are sought out and encouraged to apply.

We are working extensively with community groups and leaders to raise awareness of the Windrush Taskforce and the Compensation Scheme.

Including with vulnerable people through the vulnerable persons team.

Anyone who needs help or support to make a claim will receive it.

The Home Office has funded Citizens Advice to provide free independent advice and support.

And the Home Office has hosted or attended over 100 engagement and outreach events throughout the United Kingdom.

And as members will know, my door is always open.

I would urge members of the House to ensure that constituent cases or concerns are raised immediately with me and my team so that they are progressed and resolved.

And Mr Deputy Speaker, throughout the coronavirus pandemic I have made sure that no-one is left behind.

Working with community leaders I have launched a digital engagement programme so that outreach can continue despite the current social distancing measures. The first virtual support event was held on 21 May.

And on 19th March I announced a dedicated new communications campaign to promote the Windrush schemes.

As well as a five hundred-thousand-pound fund, for community organisations to run outreach, promotional and support activities to increase awareness.

But Mr Deputy Speaker, we know that there are a range of other issues and injustices affecting the Windrush generation and their families.

So yesterday, I announced a new Windrush Cross-Government Working Group, which I will co-chair with Bishop Derek Webley.

This group brings together community leaders with senior representatives from a number of government departments to address the challenges faced by the Windrush generation and their descendants, spanning programmes on education, work and health and much more.

The Prime Minister and I spoke to members of the group yesterday to discuss the actions needed to deliver solutions.

The first formal meeting of the group will take place this Thursday and I look forward to taking this work forward with the whole group, alongside working with the inspirational co-chair, Bishop Derek Webley.

Mr Deputy Speaker, nothing can ever undo the suffering experienced by members of the Windrush Generation.

No one should have suffered the uncertainty, complication and the hardship brought on by the mistakes of successive Governments.

Now, is the time for more action, yes across Government to repay that debt of gratitude, and to eliminate the challenges that still exist for them and their descendants.

Only then can we build a stronger, fairer and more successful country for the next generation.

Mr Deputy Speaker, I commend this statement to the House.

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## **Over £1 million offered in compensation to the Windrush generation**

More than £1 million has been offered in compensation as part of the ongoing work to right the wrongs experienced by the Windrush generation, Home Secretary Priti Patel announced today.



In a [statement to Parliament](#), the Home Secretary announced that internal figures show that over £1 million has been offered to applicants of the Windrush Compensation Scheme. Once the offers are accepted by the applicants, the payments will be made.

Home Secretary Priti Patel said:

I am pleased that the compensation scheme has now offered over £1 million to those members of the Windrush generation.

But I want us to continue to work to put things right. That is why I launched a Cross-Government Working Group this week, bringing together talented experts from across the country, to get more people to come forward so they can claim the compensation they rightly deserve.

Independent adviser to the compensation scheme, Martin Forde QC said:

I am pleased that the rate of offers and payments under the scheme is increasing and I am certain that this will continue. What is more impressive is that the rate of offers is increasing during a pandemic, which highlights the dedication of the caseworkers.

It is also important to note that a high proportion of these are interim payments, so people will get higher awards in the coming weeks and months.

The scheme, which has been operational since April 2019, continues to make payments week on week. Payments are being made as quickly as possible, with the first payment made within just four months of the scheme operating.

The payments made under the scheme vary, depending on the facts of the case, with some claimants receiving offers of over £100,000. Payments also include interim payments, which means people will likely receive more at a later date.

All those who have applied to the compensation scheme are then contacted by the Home Office and case workers work closely with claimants to process the claims as quickly as possible.

While the scheme is making good progress and continues to process claims as quickly as possible, the Home Office is committed to getting more people to come forward and claim.

That is why the Home Secretary has this week launched the [Windrush cross-Government Working Group](#).

The group, co-chaired by the Home Secretary and Bishop Derek Webley, brings together stakeholders and community leaders with senior representatives from a number of government departments to address the challenges faced by the Windrush generation and their descendants.

The Home Office, as requested by Wendy Williams, is carefully considering the lessons learned review. The Home Secretary has agreed to respond in full by the end of September and has also committed to provide an update to Parliament before summer recess.

The working group will play an important role in assisting with the Home Office's response by providing insight and guidance, as well as help to ensure that the lessons from the Windrush review are shared across government. The group will meet for the first time this Thursday 25 June.

Bishop Derek Webley, co-chair of the Windrush Cross-Government Working Group said:

As much as it may be difficult for some, it is so important to engage with the Windrush Compensation Scheme process for your benefit.

You need to make an application through the compensation scheme if you or a family member feel they have been treated in any way that is unacceptable.

There is support available to help you to do this. It is your right and not a favour that is being granted to you to be compensated.

As announced by the Home Secretary in March, the Home Office will shortly launch a separate £500,000 Windrush Scheme community fund for grassroots organisations, to help improve uptake and awareness of the schemes supporting those who were directly affected.

This includes the Windrush Scheme, which has so far provided over 12,000 people with documentation confirming their status. One of the first tasks for the group will be to work with stakeholders to co-design and deliver this Fund.

To ensure that all those affected are reached, the Home Office is also launching a £750,000 targeted advertising campaign, using a range of channels, such as adverts and social media, to make sure those most affected around the UK are aware of the support available to them and know how to apply.

In order for a payment to be made, an individual must first accept the offer made. As part of the scheme, anyone unhappy with their offer can request a

free internal review. If they still do not agree with the outcome, the claimant can request a further review the Independent Adjudicator.

Citizens Advice, funded by the Home Office, are continuing to provide free, independent claimant assistance during the pandemic for those wishing to apply to the Compensation Scheme. This can be accessed by referral through the Windrush Helpline: 0800 678 1925.

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## Houthi attacks on Saudi Arabia: Foreign Secretary statement

Press release

The Foreign Secretary has condemned an attack on Riyadh, Saudi Arabia by the Houthis.



The Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab has condemned the Houthis' drone and ballistic missile attacks on Saudi Arabia, urging the Houthis to prove they are serious about peace.

I condemn these latest attacks on Saudi Arabia by the Houthis, and their continued offensives within Yemen which cast further doubt on their claims to want peace.

The Yemeni Government and Southern Transitional Council chose to put the Yemeni people first by agreeing a ceasefire yesterday.

With over a million Yemenis believed to have contracted Coronavirus, it is more vital than ever that the Houthis cease their hostilities and allow the UN-led humanitarian response to get

on with saving Yemeni lives.

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