

## **BHATT MURPHY SOLICITORS**

### **Press release**

#### **BIRTH PARENTS TO DELIVER CALL FOR PUBLIC INQUIRY**

Tonight, 9 November 2016, ITV will broadcast a landmark documentary capturing the experiences of young unmarried mothers who faced pressure to give their children up for adoption between 1948 and the early 80s, called *Britain's Adoption Scandal: Breaking the Silence*, made by Ronachan Films for ITV. Religious bodies played an important role in the adoption system during this time and the Catholic Church has now formally apologised for their role in the events depicted in the film, while the Church of England and Salvation Army have expressed regret.

Tomorrow morning at 10.30am, a group of birth parents will personally deliver a letter to the office of the Home Secretary Amber Rudd MP, calling on her to convene a public inquiry into historical adoption practices. A public inquiry is the only way to properly scrutinise whether those who arranged adoptions during this time engaged in coercive and possibly even unlawful practices. While an inquiry could of course make practical recommendations for the future, a key benefit would be the opportunity to finally recognise that unmarried birth parents during this time were all too frequently denied any real choice about keeping their children; that in fact their children were wanted and were not given away willingly.

Carolynn Gallwey, a partner at Bhatt Murphy Solicitors and Karon Monaghan QC of Matrix Chambers represent the birth parents and adopted adults calling for an inquiry. Carolynn Gallwey said: "A compelling body of evidence has emerged suggesting that widespread and systemic abuses of the adoption system occurred between the 50s and the early 80s. The only way to establish the truth of what happened and to address the harm caused is through a public inquiry, and we hope that the Home Secretary will now do the right thing by all those affected".

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