

EVERY CHILD LEAVING CARE MATTERS

Campaign Newsletter - A letter from the Chair

November 2015

EVERY CHILD LEAVING
CARE MATTERS

PLEASE SIGN
THE PETITION

In This Issue

- Petition
- Care Leavers Association
- Funding
- Academic Support
- Children's Residential Care Review
- Politicians & Lobbying

PETITION

You know every signature of our petition really does count and we now have in excess of 9500. I guess that many if not all of you who are reading this will have signed up but we really do need a massive growth in numbers. I met a couple of social workers last week and was talking to them about the campaign – they had never heard of it. That's not their fault it's ours. They were really enthusiastic about what we are doing and said they would tell their teams. They did and the signatures rose by about 30 in a few days. I guess we must all know people who we think might know about our campaign but actually don't. Please check them out and encourage them to sign up.

CARE LEAVERS ASSOCIATION

We are extremely pleased to say that we have been forging ever stronger links with the Care Leavers Association. David Graham and Jim Goddard were good enough to come to our board meeting in September and we have been discussing since then how, working in collaboration, the two organisations may be able to be even more effective in supporting care leavers. Obviously the CLA Agenda is rather wider than Staying Put but it will come as no great surprise to find that many of our beliefs are entirely in resonance. We have already agreed to meet regularly and share information that we feel would be helpful to each other in our common goals.



Care Leavers' Association

An ever growing union of care leavers

FUNDING

In keeping what we hope is our reputation for transparency we want to make it public that somebody has very kindly offered to make donations towards the costs associated with maintaining the campaign. We are currently in the process of opening a bank account which will, effectively, be managed by two independent trustees. Any money donated will be used exclusively for out-of-pocket expenses incurred by ECLCM members. Thus far on our innumerable trips around the country we have always paid our own fares and any associated expenses and it will be much appreciated in the future to have some assistance with this. This will, in no way, compromise our independence.



ACADEMIC SUPPORT



It occurred to us that we have gathered quite a mass of very eminent supporters from 'academia' to

our campaign and shameless as ever, we would like to exploit this. We are in the final stages of planning a letter to the press signed by as many of our university and or other 'learned' supporters as we can.

More ambitiously we hope that by taking advantage of their good nature we may be able to conduct an exercise where we ask each of

them to contribute a written piece on a selection of questions related to children in care and care leavers. We would then hope to receive assistance from a postgraduate student in collating and organising all of these (no doubt wonderful) contributions into something worthy of publication. I would like to thank Professor Brid



Featherstone from Huddersfield University and Anna Gupta from Royal Holloway University for supporting our possibly muddled thinking on this project.

CHILDREN'S RESIDENTIAL CARE REVIEW



You will all be aware that the government have asked Sir Martin Narey to conduct the above review. Whether a review is necessary or

Sir Martin is the correct person to conduct it is irrelevant. We take the view that we will cooperate with and engage fully in this review and implore all others to do likewise. We have decided that we should have an ECLCM submission and then consider on an individual basis if we wish to make personal submissions

from Board members. The former is completed and submitted and most of us who decided to make personal submissions have already done so – having shared them with our colleagues. Whether all submissions will eventually be published is not yet known but if this is not the case then we will gladly share ours at an appropriate time after the review has had time to consider and if they see fit respond to them. We already have the offer of a meeting with Sir Martin Narey and have happily taken that offer up.

POLITICIANS & LOBBYING

Things continue to go well. As I write this I am looking forward to being at Southport Town Hall tomorrow evening (19.11.15) hear Councillor Nina Killen, a long term supporter of our campaign, present her motion to council. This will be, to all intents and purposes a reflection of the motion passed in Warrington in September and given Nina has secured the support of her leadership I am confident that the motion will be carried. Two fantastic women Nina and Councillor Jean Carter from Warrington who have not only carried the ECLCM banner but have also carried through supportive motions in council. Lest I be accused of prejudice the same might be said of Councillor Ralph Berry from Bradford whose plans to repeat the exercise are now well underway.

We have arranged a meeting with Blackburn and Darwen next week too and they are very sympathetic to our cause and I hope we can persuade them to follow suit. In fact we have written to councillors in (the City of) Manchester, all the Merseyside, Calderdale, Solihull, Sandwell, Lincolnshire and Greater Manchester local authorities in the last few weeks with a view to expanding our message and invite their support. To be frank the responses, or lack of them, leaves us with mixed thoughts at this stage but as ever we will continue, within our means. We have had a very heartening contact from Councillor Jenny



Whittle in Kent who is currently exploring the possibility of putting together a motion there.

Contact with MP's are also mixed Sarah Champion from Rotherham has been most explicit in her support but others who seem to respond positively to initial approaches and then 'go cold' just confuse us. We will be represented at the APPG on 9th December when they are scheduled to discuss Staying Put so have issued a general invite to all those MP's with whom we have been in contact to meet us in Westminster which, presumably would be least time consuming and disruptive for them. The next Newsletter will no doubt be able to report who, if anyone, we go to meet

I'm not yet sure if we will get a Christmas Newsletter out – though I will try. Just in case can I wish you all a good festive period and remember that for lots of care leavers it's possibly one of the hardest times of the year.

If you have any questions or observations, please feel free to contact any of us to share your view.

Ed Nixon
ECLCM Chairman

