



EVERY CHILD LEAVING CARE MATTERS



Campaign Newsletter - A letter from the Chair

December 2016

EVERY CHILD LEAVING
CARE MATTERS

PLEASE SIGN
THE PETITION

In This Issue

- Politics & Stuff!
- Bradford College/University Conference
- The Petition
- Budding Writers out there
- Auf Wiedersehen

Yet again I'm afraid that I must apologise for the late production of this Newsletter. It's not that it's unimportant simply that I struggle to find the time and discipline to write it. I can offer no defense but would like to reiterate that contributions from others would be most welcome and might even give me the kick that I so obviously need as I know I would not leave others' material uncirculated. If you have an event, a piece of writing or simply a letter or point of view that you would be willing to include in a Newsletter then please do send it to us.

POLITICS AND STUFF!

Slowly but sure and in the most part thanks to the relentless efforts of Board Member, Ian Gould, we continue to attract MP's who are willing to 'sign up' to the ECLCM cause. Ian has sent dozens of emails and information packs to MP's asking if they are willing to add their names and we now have thirty or more (Ian is always telling me to keep up!) who have signed the petition.

I have listed these below but without adding their parties as this is truly becoming a cross-party support and as you will know ECLCM has never had and has no wish to be seen as having an affiliation to any political party

Jess Phillips
Ian Mearns
Kate Osamor
Margot James
Gordon Marsden
Jenny Chapman
Johnny Mercer
Jonathan Reynold

Bill Esterson
Holly Lynch
George Howarth
Alan Johnson
Cat Smith
Sarah Champion
Lucy Allen
Mike Wood

Sir David Ames
Jim Shannon
Jeff Smith
Khali Mahmood
Alex Cunningham
Simon Buck
Andy McDonald

Stephen Twigg
Kerry McCarthy
Tom Brake
Thangam Debbonaire
Emma Lewell-Buck
Craig Whittaker
Liz McInnes

Self-evidently the greater the number of MP's we can persuade to support the ECLCM campaign the greater the chance of us succeeding and with this in mind we would ask that all members and supporters of the campaign lobby their own MP and ask if they support us and if not, why not?

We have approached each of the Party Leaders but none have responded to us and so we particularly ask those of you who may be within their constituencies to approach Mrs. May, Mr. Corbyn et al. we fully appreciate that they will have massive agendas to attend to but a signature takes a matter of seconds which does not seem too much to ask to change the lives of care leavers now and in the future.

Ian Dickson and I remain, on behalf of our Board, in close consultation with the DfE on the construction of a definition of Staying Close that will, as far as is possible, mirror the Staying Put arrangement that is already in place for children in foster care. I regret that we are unable to share detailed information about this at this time but we have been asked and will of course respect the fact that we must maintain confidentiality in this matter. What I can say, I believe is that those with whom we are working in the group from DfE with have been very receptive to our ideas and I feel that our thinking is not too far apart.

BRADFORD COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY CONFERENCE 3rd NOVEMBER 2017



Thomas O Driscoll

Andi Brierley

Antonio Alexis

I was fortunate enough to be invited to this event on behalf of ECLCM. This is the second year that the College has staged an event to mark Care Leavers week and we have been at both. I have to say that this year's conference was excellent – last year's was good but clearly Lenka Kaur & Alison

Daley learned from last year and put on a sparkling day with presentations from the fantastic Care Experienced Alumni Andi Brierley, Antonio Alexis and Thomas O Driscoll. I must say that their presentations of their lives before, during and after care were absolutely inspiring, as indeed are those of so many care leavers. I was pleased to meet up with an old friend Jim Goddard of the CLA, who like me was delivering a workshop.



For my workshop I chose the topic 'The Care Cliff' – I'm not sure who first used this expression but whoever it was got it absolutely right. The event was a great success as were, I'm certain many others around the country but the key message is that Care Leavers matter for fifty-two weeks of the year; much though I admired and respected the journeys travelled by Andi, Antonio and Thomas I don't want to be around in another ten, twenty or more years to hear other survivors; ECLCM wants the system to change to enable such stories to be redundant. We want care leavers to be afforded the opportunities that all children have and specifically we want to end the discrimination against residential care leavers – with your help, support and action we will.

THE PETITION

As ever our petition is the manifestation of the degree of support that the campaign has – though we have a sneaky feeling that the numbers who have signed up (11520 currently) is a very small proportion of the total number of people who would support us if they only knew about it. Once again I'm afraid that I am asking all of those who read this to tell your friends, family, work or school colleagues about us and what we are trying to do. I remember well that in the few days before Christmas last year we were able to gain literally hundreds of signatures in only a few days. If you are reading this than you have probably signed the petition please to find ten people you know to add their names. it will make a difference.



BUDDING WRITERS OUT THERE?

I make no apology for repeating this from last month we really would be delighted to hear from you and ideally have something from you that we could include in our Newsletter.

Our Newsletter is really a campaign Newsletter and we would like to invite all of you out there to contribute to it. Ask questions, write a letter, write a blog or an article, tell us of your own experiences and we will happily try to include them in a forthcoming issue. Much as I enjoy writing down and circulating my streams of consciousness I am acutely aware that this is a campaign Newsletter not vehicle for me to preach and as such I would dearly love contributions from others please.

Quite separately we continue to invite care leavers of any age to share (privately) with us their own stories which we continue to seek in the hope of publishing something once this campaign is over.

Auf Wiedersehen

Our friend and colleague on the Board, Kev has decided that he can no longer serve as a Board Member – though as you will have noticed if you follow Twitter he is no less active in his support of ECLCM!

I want to take this opportunity to thank Kev for all of his efforts for the campaign and wish him every success until we meet again – if not before to celebrate the success and therefore winding up of Every Child Leaving Care Matters, hopefully in the not too distant future.

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

Ed Nixon
ECLCM Chairman

