

My name is Mike Shelton and I am a former executive member of the CLA where I had so-called responsibility for historic abuse issues. I resigned from the CLA last summer because of what I and others consider the complicity of the current CLA in stitching up the Jersey Victims on behalf of the Jersey States. They did this by setting up a front organisation the Jersey Care Leavers Association (JCLA), and putting in situ malleable, passive individuals whereby the current CLA Executive have total control over the direct affairs of such organisations and individuals.

The current CLA is in essence working against the interests of true victim survivors in Jersey, Scotland and the UK. The CLA make exaggerated claims as to their legitimacy and support among care leavers. In the 5 years or so that I was on its executive I never once met the full paid membership. The current CLA gives the impression of a large membership base by counting subscribers to the Care Leavers Reunited social networking site as de-facto members. Its actual paid membership is miniscule and is totally inactive.

I am in close contact with many of the abuse victims and others on Jersey including those leading individuals who exposed the duplicity of the CLA and the Jersey States. I can assure you that the current CLA Executive is utterly despised by the majority of victims.

In essence the current CLA and the JCLA are simply front organisations for facilitating deals on behalf of the State and the Establishment to close down the Historical abuse issues and minimise further bad publicity to the current care sector. These backroom deals are clearly not in the interests of the historical abuse Victims but are done by the CLA Executive purporting and claiming to represent such issues with the apparent support of historical abuse victims. The reality is the CLA Executive have neither the permission, consent or the support of the majority of historical abuse victims in Jersey or elsewhere to conclude such agreements with others including State bodies.

I would go as far as to say that beneath the façade of being on care leavers side they have more of an affinity with those who would deny abuse and defame adult victims and care leavers alike. On my resignation from the CLA I gave the Executive the opportunity to address these serious concerns about the management of both the CLA and the JCLA. The current CLA executive declined to respond properly to those serious concerns.

I note your comments on the CLA Blog site, and you are absolutely right to challenge the CLA's attempt to inveigle themselves into historical abuse victim's issues and organisations in Scotland. This is a tactic I have watched many times. I cannot contribute to the so-called Blog since they control every aspect of communication and are not permitting open and transparent debate on the issues.

The CLA has excluded open and transparent debate on these issues, and acts in a duplicitous and disingenuous way, and does so in blatant, callous and cynical manner. The CLA frequently introduces the phoney equation of 'positive and negative' experiences of and in the care system, or of individual carers, in order that the so-called positive negates the supposed negativism of true victim survivors. This was a tactic used in Ireland by the religious orders and their supporters to deflect from the substantive issues of historic abuse. This ostensible 'positive' position of the current CLA Executive enables it to obsequiously ingratiate itself in to power centres that it seeks to groom such as the historical abuse issues.

I could go on further, but my advice to you would be to get the message out to all Scottish historical abuse victims that the current CLA as an organisation and Executive are not to be trusted under its current self-selecting leadership. CLA and JCLA members must exercise fully their Rights and insist that both organisations are returned to good, open and transparent governance rather than being run by a small caucus of opportunist's academics.

If you would like to discuss these matters further then please get in touch with me. I give you full permission and consent, if you so desire, to publish my comments.

Best Wishes to FBGA
Michael Shelton, 17th February 2010

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