

In a message dated 24/01/2010 16:39:45 GMT Standard Time, phil@philframpton.co.uk writes:
To the CLA Executive and CLA members

When Delma Hughes, Maggie Lane and I founded the CLA in 2000, we did so with the words “The Care Leavers Association: an ever-growing union of careleavers.”

The events of the last few years however have shown that the current leadership has led the CLA to being at best an irrelevancy for most careleavers and at worst a spreader of disunity by failing to treat other careleaver activists with respect.

The activities of the CLA Executive in Jersey have led to disunity and demoralisation amongst many victims of abuse in care, and so much so that they are now publicly antagonistic to the CLA. Leading figures in the abuse campaign, Simon Bellwood and Stuart Syvret have openly expressed their dismay. In Scotland, the CLA Executive has also stirred up antagonism by exaggerated claims of CLA membership. The CLA claims it has a large non-paying membership but that is a nonsense when there is no obligation on those members. It is a sham to hide the fact that the real CLA membership had dwindled to hands full. Indeed the CLA has not been able to organise a national conference for the members since 2002. Then the CLA had no funding but was successfully able to stage national lobbies and hold a conference attended by 100 people.

The sad truth now is that this leadership has driven good committed and energetic people away from CLA such as Delma Hughes, recently given a national award by the BBC for setting up the sibling camps of her organisation Siblings Together. Equally the CLA leadership dismissed the 2008 campaign to remove the senior representative of Glaxo (a company very much associated with drug trials on children in care) from his newly appointed position on the Board of OFSTED. It refused to do anything, even write an email, whilst other careleavers and allies were able to remove him within three weeks.

The same leadership also refused to campaign against historical abuse from 2003 onwards claiming that it would upset the government. They did respond in regard to Jersey but sat on their hands in regard to any significant campaign for justice in Jersey in the rest of the UK. They did virtually nothing to deliver justice for victims of abuse in the UK yet they are now claiming to be experts on historic abuse of young people in care in order to win a contract with the Scottish Government. What involvement have Jim Goddard and Will McMahon from CLA Executive had with the issues of care abuse in Scotland? They simply do not have the credentials. Indeed, their record in Jersey is abysmal. Scottish careleavers who have been through the struggle over many many years to seek justice from the courts, and the government will be understandably angry at the CLA leadership’s posturing, particularly when it has done nothing for years regarding campaigning on historic abuse in England and Wales despite requests from its members.

I have long thought of staying in CLA to avoid disunity of careleavers but the CLA is uniting nothing anymore but instead has become an empty shell with only the Careleavers Reunited website having any useful progressive purpose. Careleavers will actively come together again in the future but it will not be under the banner of the CLA. I resign as of today from the Care Leavers Association.

For those who feel they must stay in the CLA I urge them to insist on a full and open discussion amongst **all** the members about the attached correspondence regarding Jersey and Scotland, consider the suitability of the CLA Executive to bid for remunerated work in Scotland, and the failure to establish any form of campaign following the CLA's publicising of young people missing from care for over one year. They should also enquire into the number and proportion of members who voted in the elections for the CLA Executive and whether this represents any real mandate.

With sadness

Phil Frampton
Ex- Barnardo's Boy
Founding Chair of CLA (2000-03)