

THE GRAPEVINE

Spreading the Word

The CLA has been developing its activities in the area of consultation and training. Using the voices of care leavers to impact on current policy

Over the past six months, the CLA has been involved in a growing amount of training and consultation work, both with professionals and social work students. This is an area of our work that we intend to build on over the coming year.

Mary and Stephen have been busy presenting on Access to Records, at both Manchester Metropolitan University and at a recent BAAF conference. Their double-act is always very well received and prompted the following quote from David Holmes, the CEO of BAAF:

The resilience of care leavers is demonstrated in an engaging, powerful, and professional presentation of the personal experiences of people brought up in care. An essential experience for all those who provide services for former care adults or with children in care today

Victoria Hull, our National Development Worker, has done a number of presentation sessions with university social work students at several universities in the North West on various aspects of care and leaving care. For one of these she was joined by Clare, another CLA member, to speak about the role of communications and relationship-building in working with young people in care.

Victoria's presentation to our social work students was very well received indeed... It brought the issues to life in a way which made a big impact upon the students and provided them with much food for thought. An excellent, well bal



anced and well organised presentation which contributed greatly to the education of our students! (Prof. B. Featherstone, Bradford University)

Victoria also recently spoke at the Community Care Live! Event in Manchester (pictured above). She outlined the CLA's response to the Green Paper and where we thought the reforms could go further.

Training and consultancy work helps us to use the experiences of people who have lived in care care to push for change in the current care system and hopefully to have an impact on future practice. It also provides a way for people to learn more about the aims of the CLA and the work we do, as well as generating an independent source of income.

If you would like to learn more about our activities in this area, click on the following link to visit the website: [Consultation & Training](#)

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GET IN TOUCH!

If you would like to comment on anything you have read in *The Grapevine*, or if you would like to submit a story or article yourself, then contact us:

By Post: Care Leavers' Association, St Thomas Centre, Ardwick Green North, Manchester, M12 6FZ

By Email: grapevine@careleavers.com

General enquiries: 0161 275 9500 or email, info@careleavers.com

Recent Meetings

3 March 2007, London

The first Saturday in March saw in our first London meeting of the year. It was a great day, with a lot of new faces and lively discussion!

The day started with an Executive Committee meeting in the morning, where various management issues were taken care of and discussion started on a new CLA policy on the current care system. This will be an ongoing policy discussion over the next few months, as there is a lot to cover! If you have any views on this area, why not email us! (info@careleavers.org)

In the afternoon we were joined by a number of CLA members and other care leavers for the main meeting.

Barbara O'Grady, a CLA member and former member of the Exec, spoke to us about her experiences of education as a child in care and a care leaver and she also spoke about the findings from her recently completed PhD. It was extremely interesting and it was followed by a discussion on peoples' various experiences of education and the way that being in care had effected those.

At 3.15pm, we all moved on to the Great Court at the British Museum for a coffee and a chat.

The next meeting will be held in Birmingham on Saturday 5th May, in Birmingham.

It is open to all care leavers -do come along and say hello! Feel free to bring a friend or family member along with you, if you prefer.

More photos of the meeting can be seen here: [Photo Gallery](#)



NEWS & UPDATES

Media Round-Up

(To read any story on full, click on its title)

[15/03 - Community Care interview Victoria Hull](#) - In Community Care's Big Interview, CLA National Development Worker, Victoria Hull, speaks about the Green Paper and what more needs to be done.

[09/03 - Bring back children's homes](#) - Phil Frampton argued for the benefits of children's homes over foster care in this Channel 4 *The Insider* documentary on Friday 9th March

[07/03 - Could have been a lot worse...](#) - David Conn of *The Guardian* newspaper reported on Phil Frampton's documentary on Children's homes.

[07/03 - £2 Million Payout for victims of abuse in Manchester](#) - The *Society Guardian* reports on the payout received by alleged victims of sexual abuse at children's homes across Manchester.

[08/03 - Reforms to leaving care services for asylum seekers](#) - *Community Care* report on the government plans to reform services for unaccompanied asylum seekers and the backlash from councils due to costs.

[08/03 - Payments for foster carers](#) - Simeon Brody of *Community Care* reported on new figures, which show many foster carers receive less than the minimum wage and some receive no payment at all.

Did you know?...

You can donate to CLA when you sell on



Click [HERE](#) for more info.

Campaign Leaflet Update

We have now sent out **4000** of our campaign leaflets to individuals and organisations across the country. If you want to help distribute leaflets in your area, in order to reach other care leavers out there, please contact the office:

Info@careleavers.org

NEW!!

Online Photo Galleries 2005-7

Click [HERE](#) to view

CareleaversReunited is growing all the time. We currently have **1914 users** and **915 homes**.

Haven't logged on recently? Do so now!

www.careleaversreunited.org

2007 MEETING DATES

5 May - Birmingham

6 October - London

2 June - Manchester

3 November - Manchester

4 August - Manchester

(AGM)

Meetings are held between 2-4pm. If you would like venue details for any meeting please contact Victoria:

0161 275 9500 info@careleavers.org

Knowing Me, Knowing You

The Grapevine Questionnaire

This month we quiz **Jim Goddard**, Secretary and long-standing member of CLA

- **Name:** Jim Goddard
- **Profession:** University Lecturer
- **Placement type when in care:** Children's homes for fourteen years. Four years in large homes run by nuns, then ten years in a Family Group Home.
- **Who, or what has had the greatest influence on your life?** Books and reading. I've lost count of the number of books that have helped change my way of thinking.
- **What three words best describe you?** Stoic. Stubborn. Independent.
- **What is your favourite film?** Let me pick a book instead - 'Middlemarch'. It's still a miracle to me that the author enables me to identify with the plight of an upper-middle-class English woman of the mid-nineteenth century.
- **What has been your greatest achievement?** Getting my PhD, in 1993.
- **Who do you most admire?** My Aunt Edna. One of the steadiest, soundest people I know.
- **What is your idea of happiness?** A good book, in a room on my own. Possibly with some buttered toast.
- **What has been the greatest lesson life has taught you so far?** How ignorant I remain, no matter how much I think I know. Also that everyone sees the world differently.



Project Round-Up

Spread the word!

If you know other care leavers who might enjoy being a member of the CLA, or joining *CareleaversReunited*, let them know about us! Promotional cards are available from the office, for an easy way to spread the word.

NEW FACES!

This month, the CLA has recruited three new volunteers to work out of the office. Vivienne, Andrea and Vivian are all students at Manchester University programme and Victoria recruited them to the CLA via the Manchester Student Volunteers Programme.

Vivian will be helping out as a financial administrator, administrating our accounts, monitoring donations and helping with funding searches.

Both Vivienne and Andrea are helping out with our campaigns and communications. They have been busy sending out leaflets around the country, compiling databases of contacts for our campaigns and cataloging our resources, with a view to launching a Resource Library later in the year.

Victoria has been busy introducing the new volunteers to the organisation and overseeing and managing their work. They have been a great help so far and a welcome edition to the CLA team!

CAMPAIGN LEAFLET DISTRIBUTION

We are doing brilliantly so far with the distribution of our campaign leaflet, which is aimed at making care leavers aged between 18-29 aware of the CLA and offering them free membership.

To date, we have distributed just over **4000** leaflets. These have gone out across the UK, to numerous leaving care teams and access to records officers and we are already receiving responses - both from care leavers who want to join and professionals who have requested more leaflets.

The next stage of the campaign will be to distribute to the Student Support offices of further and higher education institutions across the UK.

In the longer term, we want to incorporate this campaign into a broader campaign aimed at raising awareness of CLA amongst care leavers of all ages.

For more information, you can click the following link: [Campaign](#)

CARELEAVERSREUNITED

The [CareleaversReunited](#) site is continuing to grow everyday. In the past year we have had almost 1000 users join and soon we will reach **2000** members.

We think this is fantastic and when this happens, we want to publicise it to the media and other organisations. If you have met up with or contacted other care leavers through the site and would like to be part of a media campaign about it, or would not mind telling your story to others, please get in touch and let us know: info@careleavers.com

Have Your Say!

Send your stories, letters or news articles to grapevine@careleavers.com or Care Leavers' Association, St Thomas Centre, Ardwick Green North, Manchester, M12 6FZ

Get Involved!

We know that all people have different interests and want to be involved in CLA in different ways. Some people are more interested in newsletters than meetings, some people want to help fundraise and others might want to share their stories.

Fill in this short form, send it back to us and let us know what your interests are!

Name:

Town:

Contact details:

<input type="checkbox"/>	I would like to be a local contact
<input type="checkbox"/>	I would like to volunteer for the CLA
<input type="checkbox"/>	I would like to give out leaflets
<input type="checkbox"/>	I would like to write for the newsletter
<input type="checkbox"/>	I can help to organise a fundraising event
<input type="checkbox"/>	I have skills to offer a small campaigning organisation
<input type="checkbox"/>	I would like to come to meetings
<input type="checkbox"/>	I would like to make a donation (please see below for details)
<input type="checkbox"/>	I would like to take part in a 'history of care' project

.....

If you simply don't have the time to get actively involved in the CLA, but you still want to support our work, you could think about making a donation.

All donations will go towards helping the CLA to keep going and to running our projects and campaigns. Here are some of the ways your donation could help:

- £5** Will pay for one info pack for schools and colleges
- £10** Will keep our little printer going for 1 month
- £20** Will keep the telephone line going for a month
- £50** Will hire a room for a local meeting
- £100** Will buy 1000 campaign leaflets
- £400** Will enable us to send an Access to Records Guide to every Social Services department in the country, to help towards building good practice in this area.

There are lots of ways that you can make a donation:

- Standing Order (see opposite for details)
- Online through our [Justgiving](#) page,
- Through the post

Whatever you choose to donate, whether £2 or £200, will be a great help and will go towards providing services for care leavers, running our projects and working for change to the current system.

Why Not Become a Member?

Any care leaver, over the age of 18, can be a member of the CLA. Non-care leavers and organisations can also join as supporters. It's simple, just fill in the form below and return it to us.

Your Personal Details:	Telephone:
Title: Mr/Mrs/Ms/Miss/Other:.....	Email:
Forename:	Profession:
Surname:	Where did you hear about us?
Address:
..... Postcode:	Date of Birth:
<input type="checkbox"/> The CLA will keep in touch with you with new newsletters & other information about our work. Please tick if you do NOT want to receive this.	

Annual Membership (please tick the category that applies to you):
<input type="checkbox"/> Full Member (care leaver waged/unwaged): £5/£2
<input type="checkbox"/> Individual Supporter: £25 (someone who supports our work but is not a care leaver)
<input type="checkbox"/> Group Supporter: £50
<input type="checkbox"/> I am a care leaver. I can't afford the membership fee, but still want to join the CLA
I wish to make an additional donation of £
Total payment enclosed £

The CLA keeps membership fees for care leavers low on purpose, to make it easy for any care leaver to join. However, as a charity, we do need funds to keep running. If you do feel that you can pay for membership, that's great. If you would like to make a further donation, whatever you feel you can give will be a great help.

If you want to set up a standing order so that your membership fee is paid automatically each year, or if you want to set up a standing order donation, you can use the form below.

Standing Order Membership
Donating to the CLA by standing order is a great way to give regular support. It helps us to budget more effectively and cuts down on our administrative costs. This gives us more time to devote to our projects, services and campaigns. Just a small amount per month can make a real difference.
I would like to make a monthly/quarterly/annual gift of £.....
Please provide your bank details below:
To the manager of Bank,
Bank Address
..... Sort code A/c No
Please pay the above amount to: Care Leavers' Association, A/c No 65095940, at The Co-operative bank Plc (08-92-99), Kings Valley, Yew Street, Stockport, Cheshire, SK4 2JU
Start date: Signed: Date:

Gift Aid Declaration

Please tick the box above if you would like the CLA to reclaim the tax that you have paid on your donations to us since 30th November 2005 and on any future donations.

NB: You must have paid an amount of income and/or capital gains tax (in the UK) equal to the tax that will be claimed (currently 28p for every £1 you give)

Thank you for your support.

Please return this form to: Care Leavers' Association, St Thomas Centre, Ardwick Green North, Manchester, M12 6FZ.