



Annual Report

2008 – 2009

Will McMahon (Chair)

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Care Leavers Association is a not-for-profit company, registered in England and Wales
and limited by guarantee: company number 5204243.

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Our Aims and Values

The Care Leavers' Association is a not-for-profit organization, run by care leavers for care leavers. All individuals over the age of 18 with experience of being in care as children are entitled to full membership. We work for the benefit of all care leavers, of any age.

Our Purpose:

To end the economic and social disadvantage of those who were in care by achieving significant, positive change.

Our Vision:

Care leavers being fully represented and participating at all levels of economic, social and public life.

Means of Achieving Our Purpose:

- Provision of an arena where care leavers can work together to achieve common goals;
- Supporting care leavers who have suffered neglect or abuse;
- Helping with access to childhood case records, so that care leavers may understand their past;
- Provision of other support and information services to care leavers.
- Advocating the improvement of leaving-care provision, so that current and future care leavers may enjoy better life outcomes;
- Highlighting discrimination when it occurs, so that care leavers may enjoy the same rights and opportunities as others;
- Challenging negative stereotypes, so that care leavers do not suffer from the ignorance of others;
- Promoting, conducting and publishing research so as to raise public awareness of the needs of care leavers.

The C.L.A. is an independent organization and is not affiliated to any political party.

A message from the Chair

Welcome to the 2008-09 Annual Report from the Care Leavers' Association!

We enter September, 2009 with two years' core funding secured thanks to Esmée Fairbairn and the Lankelly Chase Foundation. Short-term financial security really helps a small organization work out what it is going to do in the long term and to develop a working infrastructure, so the CLA executive, staff and volunteers have spent a lot of the last year working behind the scenes preparing the CLA for growth.

An example of this work is the launch of the new website that brings together the CLA website and the CareLeaversReunited website into one place. It took quite a lot of patient work to decide what we wanted, how it would look and what it would do and then getting it redesigned – never mind re-editing the whole of the site. The launch of the new site has brought immediate benefits; the most important being that the many care leavers who join the CLR page are now much more likely to take up CLA membership. So, slowly but surely, our membership is growing. For years the CLA membership has struggled to get out of double figures; within two months of the new site going live we had already reached what would have been previously thought to be the dizzying heights of 100 members.

Meanwhile, membership of the CLR social networking site grows daily. In October, 2007 there were 2,400 members in 1,025 homes. By the end of October, 2009 we will have broken the 5,000 members barrier and the number of registered homes will be well over 1,500. The new social networking facility will enable care leavers to contact each other easily and safely.

Behind the scenes our office staff, Victoria Hull and Vicky Halliwell have also been working away at ensuring that all the legal, financial and other statutory mechanisms are in place for the CLA to be able to approach a broader range of funders with the wide range of project ideas that our fundraising team has been developing over the last two years. We have a number of funding bids in the works, particularly for a new project worker and we hope that 2010 will see us be able to employ another staff member to further develop the reach of the CLA. At this point it seems appropriate to thank the Tudor Trust which was there in the past when the going got tough financially, providing us with £16,000 to reach out to young black and minority ethnic care leavers through a project that will come to fruition in 2010. In addition we would like to thank the Yapp Charitable Trust which has given us a vital £6,000 to cover executive and volunteer expenses over the next two years.

We have also managed to fit in another office move. We decided to take advantage of the cheap rents produced by the credit crunch to get ourselves an office three times the size of the New Mount Street premises at half the cost and in a much better location. We have used the new space to get a team of local volunteers into the office to help with a wide range of tasks vital to the growth of the CLA. So whereas two years ago we had one staff member on a four day week, we now have two staff members (one 3 days a week) and a team of volunteers building the work of the CLA week in, week out.



**Will McMahon
Chair**

Our public advocacy and campaigning work on behalf of care leavers has also grown in the last year. The Jersey Care Leavers' Association has developed a high profile and is now self-funded; the failure of the Jersey judiciary to find and prosecute many of the people who abused so many care leavers is a scandal of the first order. Still the JCLA presses on and it is hoped where the justice system has so comprehensively failed, there will be proper and substantial redress for the harm caused.

We have also begun to work with care leavers who were subject to drug regimes in care which has caused them lifelong harm and for which the UK state must take responsibility alongside those who were running the institutions at the time. In addition, we have also begun an annual count of those children who go missing from care and are unaccounted for; we feel it is important that older care leavers stick up for those in the care system today.

In late 2008 during National Care Leavers' Week, the CLA launched CLEARmark: a quality mark for access to childhood care records designed by care leavers. It will be awarded to local authorities and voluntary agencies that are providing a good standard of service in this area. We are hopeful that the CLEARmark will enable many more care leavers to access their records in future years.

In the last twelve months the CLA has been developing its work to reach out to social work students, foster carers, policy makers and other professionals working in this area through delivering presentations and training on leaving care issues. In 2009 so far we have delivered training sessions to Who Cares? Scotland, In Care Survivor Scotland and to the Post Care Forum. We have also hosted a joint conference with the British Association for Adoption and Fostering and the Alliance for Child Centred Care on the experiences of post-care adults.

Hopefully all of this work combined together will enable us to secure the long-term future of the CLA. As Chair of the organization I know that we could not do it without the generosity of our funders, the unstinting hard work of our employed staff and the dedication of our office volunteers. Zachari Duncalf, our new Treasurer, has played an excellent role in keeping us on our toes financially and bearing down on costs and Jim Goddard, our National Secretary has, as ever, steadied the ship when the waters got choppy.

We have spent the last few years getting the CLA into shape. None of this would be worthwhile without the end result of membership and participation growing and also without public recognition of our work as an organization. There are now signs that this is beginning to happen so we look forward to meeting and working alongside a growing number of care leavers across the country over the next few years.

Will McMahon
Chair
August, 2009

Secretary's Report

The role of the Secretary is varied and has evolved over the years as the CLA has grown. As well as the activities detailed below, I have been in touch with various members, other care leavers, individuals and organizations during the year about a wide variety of matters.



Jim Goddard

Minutes of Meetings.

Since the employment of an administrative worker, Victoria Halliwell, from September 2008, the practice of taking and editing minutes has altered. I am no longer responsible for these at all meetings. Victoria Halliwell now takes the minutes at Executive and Open meetings held in Manchester. These are then typed up, agreed with the Chair and the National Development Worker and distributed to the rest of the Executive Committee.

Since the Annual General Meeting on 1st November 2008, the Executive and Open meetings during the past year have been as follows:

- 6/7th December: Executive Committee Development Weekend, Shipley (Residential).
- 10th January 2009: Executive Committee, Manchester.
- 7th February 2009: Executive Committee and Open meetings, London.
- 7th March 2009: Executive Committee, Manchester.
- 18th April 2009: Executive Committee, London.
- 9th May 2009: Executive Committee and Open meetings, Manchester.
- 6th June 2009: Executive Committee, London.
- 11th July 2009: Executive Committee, Manchester.

Remaining meetings before the AGM are:

- Sunday 13th September: Executive Committee, London (switched from our usual Saturday due to commitments in Jersey)
- 11th October: Executive Committee, Manchester.

Other Meetings and Public Events.

On behalf of the CLA, I have also been involved in external work in a number of contexts this year:

- 26th November 2008: Along with the Chair, Will McMahon, and the National Development Worker, Victoria Hull, I took part in a meeting in London with members of the UK government's Social Exclusion Task Force.
- 3rd March 2009: Training on historic abuse issues and 'access to records' to Scottish workers dealing with abuse victims and those trying to access their records from the care system.
- 19th May: Interview about my experiences in the care system with BBC Radio Leeds as part of their 'Foster Care Fortnight'.

Local and Care Leavers' Meetings.

- 20th June: attended Fazakerley Cottage Homes reunion in Liverpool on behalf of the CLA.
- 27th June: attended Glasgow local care leavers' meeting, organized by Zachari Duncalf (CLA Treasurer).
- 18th July: attended own local meeting, held in Leeds.

Line Management of National Development Worker.

As Line Manager, on behalf of the Executive Committee, I see Victoria in the office in Manchester at reasonably regular intervals (we also keep in touch regularly by telephone and email). Meetings took place on the following dates during the past year:

- 4th December, 2008
- 30th December, 2009
- 14th January 2009
- 2nd February, 2009
- 25th February, 2009
- 15th July, 2009 (annual appraisal)
- 14th August, 2009



**Victoria Hull
National
Development
Worker**

Alongside this, I held a review meeting with our Administrative Worker, Vicky Halliwell, on 13th May 2009. Vicky is line-managed by Victoria, whilst I deal with personnel issues such as leave and contractual matters.

Move to New Office.

Last year's move to 23 New Mount Street in central Manchester was, as noted at the time, viewed as possibly temporary until we could find less expensive premises. Added to this was the need for larger premises once we employed a second worker. With the need to renew our lease for another twelve months by the end of March 2009, we decided to start looking for alternatives in January 2009. We viewed new offices on two days in mid-January, found a suitable one that was both larger and at a much lower price than our existing premises and moved in to the new office in the Express Building, George Leigh Street, Manchester on 30th March.

Jersey.

Having spent a fair bit of time helping to develop and support the Jersey Care Leavers' Association (JCLA) in 2008, we continued to do so in 2009. This involved visits to Jersey by both Will McMahon (Chair) and me on several occasions. It also involved a meeting in London (along with Will McMahon and Victoria Hull) with some supporters of the Jersey Care Leavers Association (Valerie Sinason, Fay Maxted and Liz Davies) on November 12th 2008. My own trips over to Jersey, at the request of the Jersey Care Leavers' Association (who now have their own funds for funding such help), were as follows:

- 15th/16th December 2008.
- 9th – 12th February 2009 (included helping with the appointment of a new development worker and chairing an open meeting with the head of health and social services on Jersey).
- 30th April to 1st May (attending event marking the 1st anniversary of the JCLA).
- 6th – 8th July (included attendance at JCLA Open Meeting).

As well as these visits, support has been ongoing via phone and email, as requested.

Fundraising Sub-Committee.

This now consists of the Chair, Treasurer, Secretary and the National Development Worker. As before though, it remains open to any Executive Committee member who has the time to commit to it. The sub-committee met several times during the year to develop funding bids:

- 26th November 2008 (briefly) in London whilst there for the meeting with the Social Exclusion Task Force (just the Chair, Secretary and National Development Worker).
- 6th March 2009.
- 8th May 2009.
- 10th July 2009 (all in Manchester).

We also attempted a fundraising meeting as a telephone conference call via Skype on 16th of April. This was not totally successful but set a precedent for web conferencing that we hope to develop in the future.

New Websites.

Following discussions at last year's AGM and since, Mike Arrowsmith was appointed to redevelop our websites. The National Development Worker and I were charged by the Executive Committee with dealing with this. Preparation included a training day held at the office with Mike Arrowsmith, Victoria Hull, Vicky Halliwell and me in late February. The work has proceeded in two stages. The first stage was the development of our existing CLA website. The new CLA site went live in late Spring 2008. The second stage, the redevelopment of the CLR site and its merger with the CLA site is ongoing at the time of writing.

Jim Goddard
Secretary
August 2009

Treasurer's Report



Zachari Duncalf
Treasurer

This has been a very productive year; our fundraising committee has been working hard. Since our last annual report we have raised a total of £75,538.34.

We have successfully applied to the following funding bodies:

- Lankelly Chase Foundation for £49,000 for a part-time Administrator for 3 years.
- Tudor Trust for £16,000 to run a BME care leavers event.
- Yapp for £5,000 to go towards travel and volunteer costs.
- Coop Community Dividend for £1,000 to go towards a leaving care guide.

In addition to these monies we have been very active in gaining monies for presentations and training. A total of £1,050 has been received so far with a further £1,100 guaranteed for work already booked in.

We have also received a number of individual donations from regular standing orders and one-off gifts amounting to £2,013. Gift Aid funds claimed during this year have amounted to £193.21 with a further claim of £237.50 still outstanding.

We have also had continuing monies from Esmée Fairbairn.

To date we have 100 members and over 5,000 care leavers registered on our CareleaversReunited website. Membership is now free to all care leavers but our organizational membership is £25.

We have moved offices since our last Annual Report and as such are saving nearly £300 per month in rent. However, as you will know, a large expenditure this year has been on re-vamping the websites (www.careleavers.org and www.careleaversreunited.org)

We organized a sponsored bike ride for August of this year but due to unforeseen circumstances this has been moved to early next year. We hope that this move will enable us to reach our target of raising £1,000 from this event.

We have implemented policies and procedures which better regulate our finances, in particular our executive expenditure (i.e. the cost of travel to and from meetings, accommodation and meeting room facilities).

Thank you to all those who have invested in our work and the charity. We could not have carried out many of our projects without this greatly valued input.

Zachari Duncalf
Treasurer
August 2009

About the C.L.A.

The Care Leavers' Association is a registered charity and a not-for-profit company registered in England and Wales and limited by guarantee. It is governed by its Memorandum and Articles of Association.

Charity Number: 1111988

Company Number: 5204243

Registered Office: Care Leavers' Association,
F113, 23 New Mount Street,
Manchester.
M4 4DE

The Care Leavers' Association has a board trustees. These trustees form the Executive Committee. Members of the Executive Committee are nominated and elected annually at the AGM by members of the Care Leavers' Association in accordance with its Memorandum and Articles of Association. The trustees are also directors of the company.

Current Executive Committee/Trustees:

Will McMahon	(Chair)
Jim Goddard	(Secretary)
Christopher Simpson	
Stephen Norman	
Honor Donnelly	

Staff: Victoria Hull (National Development Worker).
Victoria Halliwell (Office Administrator).

Principal Bankers: The Cooperative Bank Plc,
PO Box 250,
Delf House,
Southway,
Skelmersdale.
WN8 6WT

Accountants: Community Accountancy
Services Ltd.,
The Grange,
Pilgrim Drive
Beswick,
Manchester.
M11 37Q

Current Funders: The Tudor Trust,
The Esme Fairbairn Foundation,
Lankelly Chase,
Yapp Charitable Trust,
Coop Community Dividend.