



Action for Botton
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7th July 2014

The Chair, Trustees and Senior
management of Camphill
Village Trust.
The Kingfisher Offices
9 Saville Street
Malton
North Yorkshire
YO17 7LL

OPEN LETTER

We are writing this open letter to you in response to the recent article in the Whitby Gazette (4 July 2014). A copy of this letter has been sent to the Gazette to publish if the editor thinks fit. We would be grateful if you could please ensure a copy is sent to each of the addressees.

In the Gazette, the Trust is quoted as claiming that:

“Most residents no longer want to share their homes with the carers, preferring independent living.”

We assume you do not wish to challenge the veracity of the Gazette's reporting and believe this brings us to the very heart of the current debate surrounding Botton Village and is a claim we cannot leave unchallenged.

The Botton Villagers have been repeatedly presented with the choice of independent living in your sponsored consultation processes (eg. Search 2011, Groundswell 2013). Additionally, each individual is routinely asked about possible alternative living situations by an independent social worker in their annual review. The management has also made considerable efforts to identify suitable candidates for independent living in recent years.

Despite all this, only 5 of Botton's 100 villagers have been identified as both willing and able to make this step. Overwhelmingly, shared living with the co-workers is the option of choice (as clearly identified by the Groundswell consultation process, 2013). If you have further properly conducted consultation information which supports a statement, which we believe to be simply wrong, please share it. If you do not then we must assume that our belief that you are simply wrong is correct.

This raises the question of whether CVT is really concerned to ascertain what residents want or is actually seeking answers according to a preconceived plan and closing its eyes to everything that does not fit in with that plan. It may be that you genuinely believe that it will be in the villagers' interests to live independently but clearly they do not want this and we believe their wishes and feelings should be an important part of your planning process. In the absence of this your continued use of the phrase 'The beneficiaries are at the heart of all we do' is empty of real meaning.

Yours Sincerely,

Neil Davidson
Chair, Action for Botton