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26th May 2014

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Felicity Chadwick-Histed
Chair of Board of Trustees
The Camphill Village Trust
9 Saville Street
Malton YO17 7LL

Dear Felicity

My son Daniel chose to live in Botton as part of a 'family group'. This way of life has given him the care, understanding and support he needs to enable him to learn and grow as an individual. He is very happy to be able to work and he has a very busy and interesting life.

Parents and family members are regularly told that the charity has the people it supports at the heart of all it does but so much of what has happened and is happening seems to be moving further and further away from this.

The fact that any of you would even try to say that it is possible to explain these proposed changes to my son and many other villagers shows an enormous lack of understanding of those you say you are caring for.

If these proposed changes come about, the way of life my son and ourselves chose for him will disappear. The understanding care he is receiving in this environment enables him to be supported, cared for safely, his needs met and thereby able to use his skills and abilities. This level of care and understanding can only come from the relationship developed from living, working together and sharing life.

I have the experience of being a Shared Lives carer, living with those I cared for. In this situation I was able to develop a real understanding of them and the lives they really wanted to live and enabled them to do it, something that had not happened during their many years of being cared for.

It is inevitable that the change from the present co-worker, sharing way of life in Botton to people working as paid carers, living separately from those they care for, will change everything. There is nothing new or innovative about any of the care options you have outlined and I do not believe they would give my son the care he needs to keep him safe and well. Botton is very isolated and I have serious worries about how you would provide sufficient care staff. I would have to seriously consider removing him from Botton and finding him care elsewhere. I believe that many other families would feel the same.

Botton is considered to be a very special place, the ethos, the co-working, the sharing of lives and work all appeal to those who support it. The proposed changes will inevitably change all that and much of the support from the public will gradually disappear as Botton gradually becomes an isolated care facility.

The co-workers in Botton have worked extremely hard to fulfil the requirements of both CQC and North Yorkshire and Botton is now ready to move on. At a recent families meeting, we were assured that all was well and given no sign that these changes were about to be put forward. Now these changes are being rushed through with haste, the evidence that this is necessary being withheld whilst the evidence that it is not, is being shown.

If these changes take place many co-workers will leave, my son and many other villagers will be devastated at the huge loss they will have to deal with and there is no way I or anyone can comfort them.

I sincerely hope that the trustees will re-think the decisions they have made and find an acceptable way of moving forward.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Frances Francis