

2 October 2014

Dear Botton Co-workers,

We want to write to express our deep concern and distress that CVT is on the brink of carrying through a policy that we fear, will lead to the end of a way of life at Botton that is special and of deep value for those in supported tenancies, and also for co-workers, for family of people living in Botton, for those who come as short-term volunteers and for the many people who came into contact with it in other ways.

We are aware of the problems that have faced the CVT and Botton over the last years and of the shortcomings that have been identified. We are also aware of the regulatory and financial pressures from authorities and the Charity Commission and we fully understand the need to change to be able to create a sustainable, dynamic and appropriate future.

The trustees had always given assurances that they value and support the concept of people in supported tenancies living in community with co-workers. We hoped that, with the support, skills and input of the professional senior management, the co-worker group could work to transform Botton to meet the economic and regulatory challenges and to offer people in supported tenancies a range of living options, greater choices and greater personal control.

We had hoped that this could be done without sacrificing the quality of relationships made possible in Botton; the relation to other members of the community, to one's work, to a vibrant and creative social and cultural life and to engagement in a unique social venture.

We are concerned that the steps that CVT and Botton are now taking will result in the loss of this quality of authentic community. That what has been extraordinary and could again be extraordinary will become ordinary; worse than that, it will be a far poorer life for many who now call Botton "home"

It has been a unique, unconventional and unusual social experiment, and, at its best, a wonderful place to live and an inspiring venture. We had hoped that all those involved could have worked together to make the changes needed to carry Botton into the future while upholding the ideal of sharing lives in authentic community.

We send our warmest greetings and loving thoughts to you all, conscious of the distress and pain these changes are causing and the struggles you face.

We have appealed to the Trustees, even at this late stage, to engage with all the Botton co-workers to find a way forward that can allow Botton to flourish without losing the treasured qualities it has built up as a Camphill community.

From all the co-workers of Loch Arthur Community