Dr. W E Walker
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15 July 2014

Felicity Chadwick-Histed
Chair of Trustees
The Camphill Village Trust
The Kingfisher Offices
9 Saville Street
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Dear Felicity Chadwick-Histed

I wish to express my deep concern regarding your recent letters dated 13th May & 3rd June 2014, in particular your intention to force the long term co-workers in CVT communities to accept employed status or leave.

My son, Eddie, has Learning Difficulties and has been living in Botton Village for the past five & a half years having previously spent three years at another Camphill community, William Morris House in Gloucestershire.

Your letters do not of course explain the context of this latest development; namely, that for the past few years a bitter power struggle has been fought out within CVT between those committed to preserving the traditional Camphill way of life and the senior management of CVT who wish to impose a management structure in which long-term co-workers have no place. You will be aware that many angry words have been exchanged. Some co-workers have been treated in a harsh and ruthless fashion by the Trust; behaviour that should have no place in a charity like CVT.

This latest ultimatum to the co-workers has much of the flavour of previous spiteful actions against them. I strongly suspect that this situation has largely been contrived by the management and is merely the Trust's latest move in this power struggle. No doubt the senior management at CVT is hoping that it will be a decisive one.

I visited my son at Botton a couple of weeks ago. The sense of shock and sadness in the Village was palpable. The upbeat tone of your letters bears no resemblance to the reality of how this latest move has demoralised the co-workers. There was actually a Folk Festival taking place at Botton that weekend but it seemed that few of the co-workers felt like participating. One longstanding co-worker was too upset to speak when I asked how she was. Others said that because of personal circumstances they would have to accept having employed status imposed but made it plain that they fully supported the co-working model.   I was told that some 80% of

the co-workers at Botton might not accept employed status. It would be a disaster and a disgrace if large numbers of co-workers are forced to leave Botton.

Most upsetting of all was the sense of betrayal among those co-workers who for the past year have been engaged in the process of dialogue with CVT managers. One of them said to me "I feel that I have been taken for a fool." I myself have been one of those among the friends and families of Botton Village residents who have argued for dialogue rather than confrontation with the Trust. It seems that those who took the view that the senior managers were determined to get rid of the traditional co-workers by any means have been proved correct.

When I drive my son back from Birmingham to Botton Village, we must pass by hundreds of residential units and care-homes along the way. I'm sure nearly all of these will have websites proclaiming grandiose mission statements and produce glossy brochures listing ideals similar to those of Camphill. But Camphill is different; its co-workers live out those ideals on a daily basis.

Camphill is different and Botton Village is special because the co-workers there choose to live as equals with people needing support. Their relationship is not one of client/carer but one of friendship. If you and the other Trustees do not realise this then frankly you do not deserve to hold your positions within CVT.

I think that you and the other Trustees need to belatedly recognise that shared living is the very essence of the Camphill way of life. It should not be beyond the wit of the Camphill movement to find a formula that preserves the co-worker model whilst satisfying HMRC. Above all, you need to stop colluding with senior managers who are trying to turn something that is very special and precious into something very ordinary.

Yours Sincerely

William Walker