

Camphill Families and Friends

Supports the work and life of the residents of Camphill communities and their families and friends

Position Statement January 2013 re the CVT Review

Our essential argument

Reform is needed so that Camphill can go forward with confidence into the future. To us the most important aspects of the CVT are the social therapy, shared lives and intentional community which we all deeply value as bringing success, love, independence and enrichment to the lives of our relatives. We thoroughly support the main thrust of the CVT Review that the essential aspects of Camphill can and should be incorporated into modern management and regulation.

Our current role

- We have almost three hundred members, mostly the families of people living in Camphill communities
- We constantly support Camphill, particularly with our recent series of six meetings regarding the challenges facing Camphill in the modern world. These have resulted in many suggestions regarding how Camphill can cope with these challenges
- Our submission to the CVT Review and our subsequent response have been widely regarded as effective commentaries, attempting to help the CVT to find solutions to its challenges
- Our role has been and remains, we trust, one of moderation, reason and partnership. We are a critical friend of the CVT.
- We would like to emphasise that our very purpose is to uphold the wonderful experience of life-sharing, social therapy and intentional community which Camphill brings to our relatives. Their daily lives and their wider community life both inside and outside the community create a shared understanding, a sense of real independence and confidence, shared concerns, active challenges and choices, a wide menu of real experiences and great human warmth. These are the things which attract residents and their families to Camphill and which CFF's members regard as essential components of the past, present and future CVT.

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Our main concerns and recommendations

We would like to emphasise the importance of the Review's following proposals to us families.

- **Modern governance and management** provide an essential underpinning for a charity dedicated to the maintenance of intentional communities providing social therapy for beneficiaries. We support the form of governance suggested by the Review and the Charity Commission based upon local diversity. We support the management proposals contained in the Review, which provides for local diversity, co-worker-led management, where it is applicable and successful, and inclusive, participatory arrangements elsewhere.
- **We are very happy that the CVT is clearly recognised in the Review as a values-driven charity.** We heartily support its attempts to retain Camphill values and recommend clear policies on recruitment, training, peer supervision, publicity and the inclusion of beneficiaries, co-workers and employees in decision making. We strongly believe that Camphill charities which are not in the CVT have a lot of experience which would be of immense value to the CVT.

- **Co-working.** We support the Review's appreciation that co-workers remain the main carriers of Camphill values within framework of managed accountability and modernised remuneration. We strongly emphasise that co-workers carry the ethos and knowledge of social therapy which underpin the life-sharing and community-based experience that is so important to our relatives. We support the Review's proposals to retain needs-based co-workers wherever possible and to create a "positive offer" to attract new ones. We also believe strongly in the Review's proposal to reconceptualise co-working by widening and developing its principles and practices throughout the CVT among a wider workforce. We believe that it is the Steiner-based intention of co-working that distinguishes co-workers, not their method of remuneration.
- **The household model.** The Review recognises the immense value of shared lives to our relatives. So do we. We support the CVT providing independent, separate homes for those who prefer them, but **we are in no doubt that the shared household model, in its traditional or adapted form, is the preferred option of most families and beneficiaries.** We strongly believe in independence and choice, but we realise that independence comes in many forms, one of which is to live separately and another is to have the confidence and self assertion to choose to live and flourish in a Camphill household.
- **Personalisation.** We believe, along with the Review and the CVT, that personalisation can be successfully applied within the context of an intentional community and a Camphill ethos. We strongly believe that families should be fully incorporated into the process of personalisation and person centred planning. We are highly satisfied with the Camphill work ethos and with the therapeutic work which is such an important part of each community and adds so much to our relatives' sense of independence and worth. While we recognise that paid work can be very valuable, we are very wary of any commitment to such work which might harm current practices.
- **Greater family participation.** We strongly support the Review's recognition that families are important to the CVT. At an individual level we would expect family involvement in annual reviews, person-centred planning and in significant decisions about an individual's life. We also believe that family partnerships would greatly enhance the governance, management and co-operative relationships of each community. We thoroughly support the Review's suggestion that the CVT should work with CFF on making the most of families and friends in these respects.

Camphill Families and Friends is a registered charity which helps and supports individuals who wish to live in Camphill communities in England & Wales. We provide this support by involving families and friends so that they can help us in assisting individuals and communities.

We aim to give our members and supporters a forum through which to share information, experiences and raise awareness of the many current and crucial issues that concern us and those that we love and support. We do this mainly through our newsletter and regional meetings.