

The Jersey Citizens Panel



Three years on: the final report

'How can the people of Jersey best remember the past abuse of children while in the Island's care system?'

Acknowledgements

Thank you to the members of the Citizens Panel, who placed their trust in the process and the facilitators. This brave and inspiring group of local people came together week after week to share their opinions and experiences with each other and us in the hope that their efforts will make a difference.

March 2022



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Background

Responding to the recommendations of the Independent Jersey Care Inquiry report, in 2017 the Council of Ministers, proposed that a Citizens' Panel be established. The panel was asked to respond to the following question 'how can the people of Jersey best remember the past abuse of children while in the islands care system?'

The Citizens Panel was based loosely on the model of the Citizens Jury. The bringing together of a diverse group of people, who are often called a 'mini-public' to deliberate over a long period of time, sharing opinions, ideas and experiences and challenging each other before an attempt is made to reach consensus and to write a set of recommendations.

It was essential to ensure that people who had themselves experienced harm and abuse as children in Jersey's care system (survivors), formed the majority of those invited to take part in the process. The 2018 report of the [Jersey Citizens Panel](#) explains in detail the recruitment process

The panel met over a total of five days in the summer of 2018. A total of 14 people attended at least one session with an average attendance over the 5 sessions of 11 people. Panel members worked hard to share experiences and opinions, to challenge each other, hear from external experts and finally reach consensus and agree the wording of a set of recommendations.

The Citizens Panel Oversight Group.

An Oversight Group was formed to help ensure that the project design was fair and rigorous, to monitor the process of citizen selection and to publicise the work of the Panel. The Oversight Group continued to meet once the panel agreed to continue meeting

The membership of the Jersey Citizens Panel Oversight Group (as of 2021) is *Alan Collins (solicitor): Alan represented the Jersey Care Leavers Association at the Independent Jersey Care Inquiry. Andrew Heaven: Head of Policy - Strategic Policy, Planning and Performance. Tom Walker: Director General - Strategic Policy, Planning and Performance. (Chair). Tracey Ingle: Principal Planner Historic Environment - Planning and Building Services, Department of the Environment. Support was provided by Michelle Moffat: Policy Principal, Community and Constitutional Affairs and Peter Bryant – Lead facilitator – Contact Consulting attended in an advisory capacity.*

Members of the Oversight Panel were excluded from all of the sessions except when the panel itself required their attendance to answer specific questions

Pushing for change

On July 4, 2018, members of the Citizens Panel presented their recommendations to the Council of Ministers who accepted them 'in principle'. For some of the original 14 members this point marked the end of their work. They had accepted the challenge and produced a set of recommendations.

However, for nine of the panel the work was only just beginning. They were eager to push for change and use their expertise to help ensure that the panel recommendations were implemented. As a result, the remaining nine members of the panel were asked to continue meeting. Between late 2018 and November 2021 panel members met on some twenty-six different occasions.

In the panel's efforts to build the momentum for change as well as developing their thinking on the recommendations they:

- Met with representatives from Jersey Cares, Planning and Building Services, Minister Sam Mezec, Jersey Community Partnership, Office of the Children's Commissioner, Mark Rogers (Director General, Children, Young People, Education & Skills), Sean McGonigle (Director of Community Liaison Services), Jo Poynter (Director of Operations Community & Social Services), Cheryl Power (Director of Specialist Services, Professional Head of Psychology and Talking Therapies), Lee Henry (Managing Director of the Jersey Development Company), Dr Jake Bowley: (Consultant Clinical Psychologist, Lead Allied Health and Psychology Professional for Adult Mental Health. Adult Mental Health),
- Co-designed and worked with representatives from seven different organisations/departments as part of a Children's Day workshop in order to share the recommendations on the establishment of Jersey Children's Day and to draw on local and international experience to share ideas on what the day should look like (2019). (In attendance were Jersey Cares, Barnardo's, the Chief Librarian, NSPCC, CYPES, Highlands College and the Children's Minister).
- Joined the first Children's Day steering group.
- Were represented at a Care Experienced conference in Liverpool.
- Provided a [written response](#) to and met with the Care of Children in Jersey Review Panel scrutiny review (2019) in which the panel concluded *'There has been some commitment from the government to move things forward, for example committed funding for the memorial and an in principle commitment from CYPES to ongoing funding for the Children's Day. However, we believe there has been a failure at senior level (politicians and senior officers) to make sure that there is a clear action plan with budgets attached to each recommendation and that progress on these is regularly checked'*.
- Met with members of the [Independent Jersey Care Inquiry as part of their two year review](#) (2019).
- Met with the winner of the emblem competition (the panel's fourth recommendation).
- Met with survivors and survivor organisations from the UK including Danny Taggart (University of Essex), Jane Chevous (Survivors Voices) and Fay Maxted (Survivors Trust). SV and ST then led a survivor led training weekend in September 2021 to share experiences with survivors in Jersey.

COVID restrictions meant working throughout 2020/2021 was extremely challenging. However, occasional meetings on zoom and through regular phone calls and email correspondence, members kept together. The remainder of this report is a reflection by some of the remaining members of the panel on progress after three long hard years.

Three years later: What progress has been made? A final reflection

The Citizens Panel agreed unanimously back in 2018 that in order to meet the Care Inquiry's recommendation that there be a *'tangible public acknowledgement of those that have been ill served by the care system over many decades'* a number of different permanent projects should be put in place.

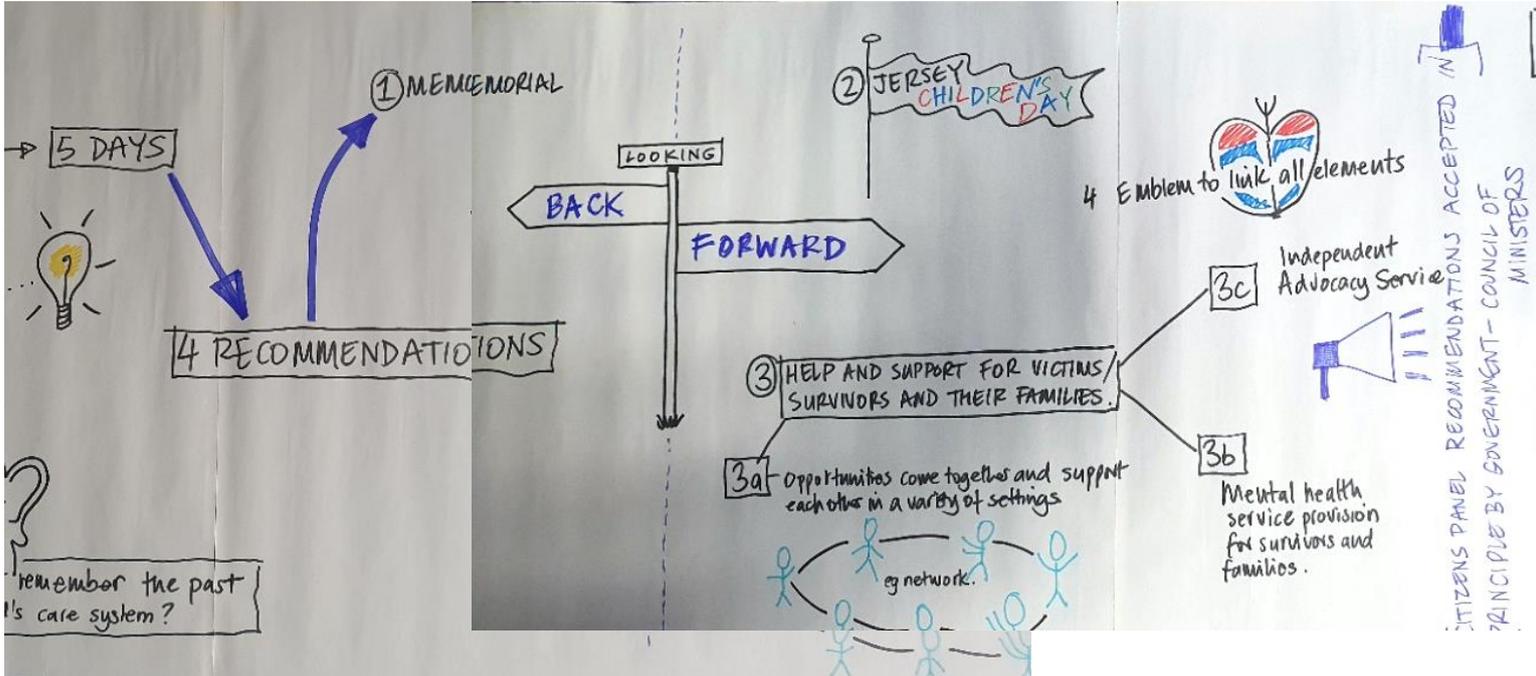
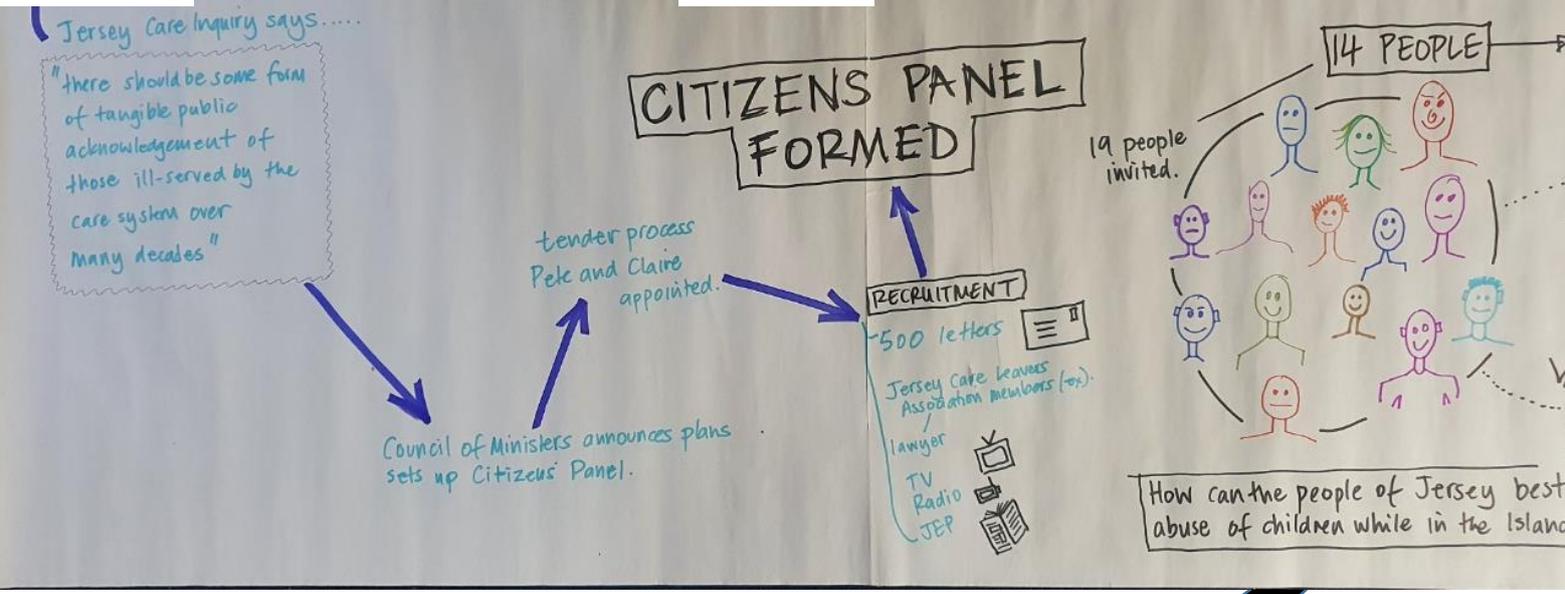
The panel was clear that in order to move forward we must look back.

The following is a reminder of our recommendations and our thoughts on what has been achieved and what still needs to be done.

Citizens Panel timeline 2018-2021 (part 1)

2017

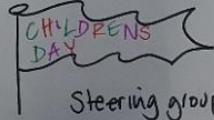
2018



Citizens Panel timeline 2018-2021 (part 2)

2019

2019 - DECISION BY CITIZENS PANEL TO CONTINUE TO MEET TO PUSH FOR CHANGE

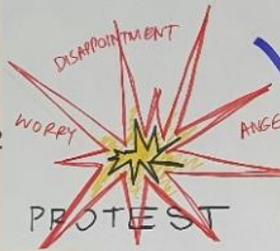


Met with CYPES to push for £
Steering group formed. + planning first Day.

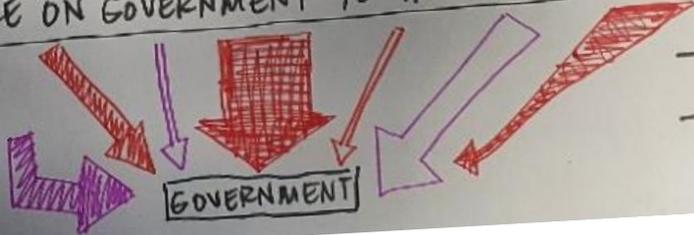


Emblem competition in schools

MEMORIAL / SPECIFICATION AGREED. DESIGNS INVITED BASED ON CRITERIA FROM PANEL REPERT.
WHERE HAVE IT?



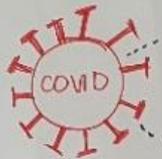
CITIZENS PANEL PUTTING PRESSURE ON GOVERNMENT TO IMPLEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS 2+3.



- PRESENTATION TO 2ND VISIT OF INDEPENDENT CARE INQUIRY.
- CHILDREN CARE REVIEW PANEL.

JEP FOCUS ON MEMORIAL ONLY + MISCOMMUNICAT

2020



NO MEETINGS.
SOME ZOOM CALLS.

REACHING OUT TO EACH OTHER.

CITIZENS PANEL CHEYENNE+

FIRST CHILDRENS DAY

3a+3c



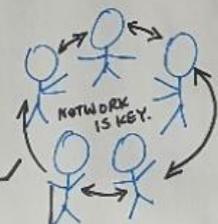
FUNDING APPROVED FOR OUTREACH WORKER FOR 3a NETWORK 3c ADVOCACY SERVICE.

TO BE INDEPENDENT OF GOVERNMENT

LISTENING / SHARING / DEVELOPING UNDERSTANDING + RESPECT

2021

CITIZENS PANEL LOOKS FOR AGREED WAY FORWARD.



huge positive growth united synergy.
MAY/JUNE WEEKEND

TENSION?

IN FACE OF GOVERNMENT PLACE TO REMEMBER

WORKER STARTS UNITY PLAN - NETWORK + ADVOCACY

1. The Memorial ‘The memorial should, we believe, honour victims and survivors, those lives lost, lives ruined and those who are still suffering’.

Taking this recommendation forward has been a long and difficult journey. Finding a suitable way to acknowledge, remember and reflect upon the injustices of the past has been a huge challenge. We have felt the heavy weight of responsibility on our shoulders as we have tried to find a way forward that does not cause further hurt but at the same time reminds those who must never be allowed to forget.

We were pleased back in 2019 when the government announced protected funding for this recommendation and we worked hard to try to find a way forward.

Our journey continued.

In 2020 some fellow survivors expressed understandable concerns over the memorial project. This led to a high-profile protest. We felt hurt that despite our best intentions our ideas could cause so much distress to others in our family of survivors.

So, we stopped, we paused, we reflected.

We had the humility to listen, to reach out and to learn. We met face to face, built trust and together we agreed a new way forward.

Where are we now?

Our work with fellow survivors has led to an agreement that this recommendation should now consist of two separate elements in new locations:

- firstly, **a place to remember and reflect** and
- secondly, **a permanent public apology**

Those who took part in those painful conversations we know who you are and we thank you.

As our panel comes to a close we now have an independent survivor led steering group to take this recommendation forward and make it a reality as well as a firm commitment from government that funding for the two elements will sit with an organisation outside government. We will have a place to remember and reflect and a permanent public apology that will be survivor not government led.

We feel the government has much to learn from how survivors in Jersey worked together to handle this potentially explosive situation with the dignity it deserved.

Recommendation 1: We urge government to prioritise the support of the survivor led steering group in its vital work of making the two separate legacy recommendations a reality. Firstly, a place to remember and reflect and secondly, a permanent public apology

In September 2021, the survivor group announced that their work together had resulted in the unanimous agreement of a way forward:

"We are all in agreement that it is essential that we are able to remember what happened and to both have the chance to look forward and back. We are in agreement that we must have:

1. A place to go to remember and reflect on what happened. This new space should be both accessible and also avoidable. We believe that this place should not be at the Weighbridge and should not be any of the previous designs.
2. There must be a permanent public apology including a statement of failure from the government

"It is essential that these two elements are delivered by an organisation independent of government, led by survivors. The further design of these important spaces should now be led by an independent group of survivors and others.

"As survivors we have worked hard to listen to each other and find a way forward. We believe our path forward demonstrates unity and strength. We hope others will support us in our journey to remember and remind."

2. Jersey Children's Day

Our recommendation was that the Jersey Children's Day should provide the opportunity to both remember the survivors and victims and provide a focus on children and young people living on the island now.

The Day would have the following aims:

- a) An opportunity to remind children and young people that they should always be able to express themselves and share their opinions at any time.
- b) To educate children, young people and adults of children's rights and how they should not be afraid to speak out. It is everyone's concern.
- c) To provide activities that celebrate childhood and family life.
- d) To make children, young people and families aware of the failures of the past and how they were let down.
- e) For there to be a yearly public remembrance

We got off to a good start with Children's Day. Within months of our first report, a workshop was arranged with professionals from education and the third sector and we shared our ambitions for Children's Day. We were reassured by the commitment from others to join us on our journey and to establish a Children's Day steering group. The steering group met several times through 2019 and plans were made for the first Children's Day.

The legacy emblem competition also took place and a young person - the winning entrant, received her prize.

However, several disappointments followed – time to plan anything ran out and we began to doubt whether CYPES shared our commitment.



Never ones to be beaten we asked for a meeting with the new Director for CYPES (Children, Young People, Education and Skills) and our faith was restored following Mark Rogers visit to the panel. We welcomed his honesty and commitment to help ensure the first Children's Day did take place in 2020. He also promised a budget to ensure Children's Day could be delivered each year and soon appointed a development worker to take the work forward.

Things progressed well and with the CYPES worker we developed our vision for the first Children's Day. We were excited by the planned activities in school and the family fun day. Then Covid hit and like so many things plans were shelved.

All was not lost and although scaled back, Children's Day did take place in 2020. Throughout the island events took place during the first week of July– art projects to help children express themselves and remind children of their rights. The joy and emotion we felt watching these videos renewed our hope that our work had not been in vain.

Each school chose a tree that was planted and marked by a plaque containing the legacy emblem. The trees we are told were planted last autumn and are now a lasting legacy in schools across the island. We hold out hope that Children's Day will like the trees grow blossom and bear fruit for the children of Jersey



Like so many in Jersey the development worker was temporary and moved on, and as 2021 rolled by and Covid continued to blight all our lives we heard very little about the plans for Children's Day 2021. Becoming increasingly concerned that Children's Day had been a flash in the pan we asked to meet with CYPES. We were told that Covid had stood in the way of plans but were reassured that something would be done to mark the day.

Although few in number a handful of activities did take place and as part of this we were pleased to hear the Chief Minister publicly pledge his support for Children's Day and recognise the legacy project and the panel's work.

Where are we now?

As our panel comes to an end, we look forward to hearing about plans for Children's Day 2022. We have received a commitment from CPYES that work is ongoing and that Mark Owers (CYPES) will lead on this work. We are also pleased to hear that **each government department will be asked to nominate a named lead responsible for Children's Day** – recognising that Children's Day is everyone's business.

We are delighted that a **new Children's Day steering group is being formed with hopes that this will be a cross-department group directly accountable to the Minister**. We stress the importance of children themselves being central to the planning and delivery of Children's Day and believe it **essential that children will be given a seat at this table alongside the professionals as these plans develop**.

Recommendation 2: Government should publicly report on progress made on a) the nomination of a named lead responsible for Children's Day in each government department b) the formation of the cross departmental Children's Day steering group for 2022 and c) the meaningful involvement of children in future Children's Day planning at both the level of school and island wide.

Recommendation 3: as described in our original recommendation the curriculum must explain to our children in an age appropriate and sensitive way that our Government failed to protect its children in the past and the lessons it has learnt. This is part of Jersey's history and cannot be erased. We remain concerned that despite early conversations and commitments 3 years on from our original recommendations this has not been actioned.

3. Help and support for victims/survivors and their families.

This must include

3a) Opportunities for survivors and their families to come together to support each other in a variety of settings.

Progress on this vital recommendation was both slow and disappointing and we have had to dig deep to continue to push for change. We know that child abuse continues because of secrecy, it is this secrecy that has the power to destroy individuals, families and as we know too well, whole communities.

However, as we reflect on the end of our time as a panel we are also reminded of how empowering it is to be alongside fellow survivors – united in our understanding of the pain and damage caused by childhood abuse and the strength we can gain from each other.

We remain committed to our vision.

Where are we now?

In 2021 we have been particularly pleased with two significant developments: Firstly, the work of the Jersey Community Partnership who were commissioned by government to reach out to other survivors to hear their thoughts. We are grateful for the work of Rachel French, the CEO of JCP and Cheyenne O'Connor, the development worker for this project. We have heard some of the powerful words of the 70 survivors that they have reached. Their report will soon be launched. We eagerly await its findings. Secondly, we have joined forces with both the Survivors Trust and Survivors Voices in the UK, survivor led organisations that have been pushing for survivors rights for many years. We were privileged to spend a weekend with these organisations learning more about how a survivor led network could work. A network that, in the words of our recommendation provides '*opportunities for survivors and their families to come together to support each other in a variety of settings*'. This gave us faith and the energy to not give up. Jersey now has a link with the Survivors Trust and Survivors Voices and we feel part of the bigger, international movement. We feel reassured.

We have been excited to learn about the UK's network of peer support groups and welcome the government's commitment to explore how these could work in Jersey

Inspired by these two developments some of us have linked with other survivors to come together to plan a **public open meeting for survivors in Jersey**.

Recommendation 4: We ask government and other organisations across the island to support this important work, but to do so at a distance. So that this movement grows and develops as its own survivor-led organisation separate from government.

Recommendation 5: Government to take forward and fund the recommendations from the forthcoming JCP report

Recommendation 6: Government to fund an investigation, with Survivors Voices and the Survivors Trust into how survivor peer support groups in Jersey could operate and be supported.

3. Help and support for victims/survivors and their families.

This must include

3b) Mental health service provision for survivors and their families who continue to be affected by the trauma of their pasts.

Throughout the first stage of our process we shared many of our own experiences of seeking but failing to receive support from mental health services in our island. Changing this had to be a core part of our legacy – we owed it to ourselves, our families and to those we have lost because the pain was too much to bare.

We have met several times with people from mental health services. We heard of the difficulties and challenges, their ambitions and plans and we have waited.....

Where are we now?

With the new Government plan came an ambitious target 'A trauma informed island', new psychologist posts and a Jersey trauma network. We dare not raise our hopes but some promising progress has been reported.

New psychologist posts to offer 1:1 and group support. We recognise the recruitment challenges that continue to plague Jersey.

We are pleased about the new Community Navigators to help those of us whose only way of coping has been to hide away to be supported to reconnect with our own communities.

We know that discussions have started about ways of including survivors more in the plans. But **we are disappointed that the Jersey Trauma Network has no survivor members and the plan is to just have one. The starting point should have been people with trauma not to have someone added on afterwards.**

So, we remain sceptical of the plans and of the claims. For those of us who have been on this journey since 2007 it is hard to understand why the need for proper services for survivors of institutional abuse are still not in place fourteen years later.

For those of us still on waiting lists and with promises of treatment still to be delivered, or with experiences of professionals speaking to us in language that excludes us, it is hard to see the progress. We dearly hope you can prove us wrong and show us and everyone the evidence of real change.

Recommendation 7: Our original recommendation that 'mental health service provision for survivors and their families who continue to be affected by the trauma of their pasts' has not become a reality, government must act immediately to a) rectify this, b) place survivors at the centre of service design and c) report regularly, publicly and in an accessible way on progress.

3. Help and support for victims/survivors and their families.

This must include

3c) The provision of an independent service that provides support for survivors and their families in any ongoing dealings they might have with Government Departments (an advocacy service). This is an important acknowledgement of the difficulties survivors may continue to have in their relationships with professionals working for the states of Jersey.

We know the impact that institutional abuse has had on our ability to find our voices and have the confidence in our dealings with professionals. We understand first-hand the feelings of vulnerability and powerlessness. Through the work of the JCP we have also heard the experiences of others. Trust is low, fear is high and **the importance of independent advocacy for survivors is clear.**

Where are we now?

Early on in the process we met Carly Glover and heard about Jersey Cares (Carly is the Chief Executive Officer). We are so pleased to know that they now offer a service to all care leavers whatever their age.

We have personal experience of the Jersey Cares advocacy service and it is very positive. We felt supported, listened to and that they are there for us and help us get our message across. However, we are aware that funding for Jersey Cares to provide an independent advocacy service for adults is only guaranteed until the end of 2022

We need to make sure that any survivor that wants support by an independent advocacy service can access it.

Recommendation 8: Government must provide long term funding for independent advocacy for adults.

Finally, the Citizens Panel acknowledges the work of the Care Leavers Association. Without the work of Carrie Modral, Jill Garcia and others such as Voice for Children we would have no foundation on which to build.