

FBGA News Letter 14th January 2013

**The Scottish Human Rights Commission
appoints Monica McWilliams as Independent Chair for the Interaction**

Monica McWilliams is Professor of Women's Studies, based in the Transitional Justice Institute at the University of Ulster. Monica was the Chief Commissioner of the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission from 2005-2011 and responsible for delivering the advice on a Bill of Rights for Northern Ireland. She was the co-founder of the Northern Ireland Women's Coalition political party and was elected to a seat at the Multi-Party Peace Negotiations, which led to the Belfast (Good Friday) Peace Agreement in 1998. She served as a member of the Northern Ireland Legislative Assembly from 1998-2003 and the Northern Ireland Forum for Dialogue and Understanding from 1996-1998. Her published work focuses on domestic violence, human security and the role of women in peace processes. She was the Distinguished Lecturer at the 2010 Women Peacemakers Conference at the University of San Diego's Institute for Peace and Justice.

The SHRC and CELCIS have a questionnaire concerning the up and coming InterAction which they would like your view on you can access this on FBGA website or go direct to Interaction website www.shrcinteraction.org **If you need CELCIS to send you a printed version of the form please contact the information line on 0141 444 8551.**

Please complete the questionnaire and return as soon as possible by completing the form electronically and emailing to shrcinteraction@strath.ac.uk or by printing and posting to SHRC InterAction, CELCIS, University of Strathclyde, Level 3, Lord Hope Building, 141 St James Road, Glasgow G4 0LT. Please send your responses by 31 January 2013.

CELCIS and SHRC Interaction Review Group

FBGA have been involved in a number of preparatory meetings as members of the Interaction Review group along with other organisations. These meetings have been constructive and productive, allowing FBGA to raise issues in a constructive and enabling environment. The 1st Interaction is scheduled to take place at the end of February 2013. We welcome the appointment of Monica McWilliams as the Independent Chair. FBGA will in due course post further updates on the FBGA website as issues progress or otherwise.

Care Leavers Voice Group

FBGA along with others around the UK and Channel Islands have set up a group in the UK Parliament to give a genuine voice to marginalised former residents of care institutions and also to challenge current perceptions and policies that have had a direct impact on the wellbeing of these vulnerable individuals and current residents. The group also proposes to engage with others going forward in addressing current and past issues regarding the social care system.

This Care Leaver Voice group is Chaired by John Hemming MP. John Hemming (Birmingham, Yardley) (LD) a long time supporter of victim survivor's issues: has worked with a number of care leavers including Jersey, North Wales and FBGA in the past. The MP stated the following in the UK Parliament recently:

"People tend to think of care leavers as those in their teens or 20s, but I am talking about professional people in their 40s and 50s. Having perhaps the best perspective of what it is like to be a child in care, and having gone on to have a professional career and the confidence to speak out, they feel that their voice is not being heard".

The Care Leavers Voice group intends to raise issues in the coming months and recently imputed into the families and justice bill in conjunction with John Hemming MP.

National Confidential Forum Reference Group

A number of meetings have taken place with a number of organisations and the Scottish Government represented by the Survivor Scotland team. Again these have been positive and constructive allowing FBGA to raise issues affecting Quarriers and Scottish victim-survivors.

The National Confidential Forum consultation has now closed and the Scottish Government has now published those responses that individuals and organisations wished published. All the responses can be found on the FBGA website and also on the Scottish Government website by following this link, by pasting this into your browser.

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2012/12/8644>

FBGA have kindly requested that the Survivor Scotland team consult FBGA prior to any additions being made to National Confidential Forum on anything that was not included in the recent NCF consultation such as restorative justice which was added to TTBH without or prior knowledge or input. We wish to avoid any surprises or confusion and further harm or distress for Quarriers victim-survivors going forward in the processes.

SACRO

FBGA have responded to the SACRO restorative justice consultation. We do not believe that this Restorative Justice model in its current format is an appropriate model for Scottish victim-survivors. The pilot demonstrated that victim-survivors have little confidence that RJ will actually meet the reasonable needs and expectations of victim-survivors by providing equitable resolutions and remedies that meets the expectations of a majority of victim survivors in Scotland. A number of Quarriers former residents, who were participants. who took part in the TTBH- SACRO, RJ Pilot., reported further harm and distress caused by the SACRO RJ process

Prison Service

FBGA are in discussions with the Prison service in England with regards a project, as many as 40 to 50% of former residents of the care system end up in the criminal justice system. FBGA also wish to highlight the work concerning the Interaction and the National Confidential Forum during these discussions

BBC Organisation and BBC Trust

A member of FBGA has had documents circulated to the Culture Media and Sports select committee in the UK Parliament with the help and support of John Hemming MP regarding recent issues pertaining to historical abuse issues highlighted in programming and how the BBC deals with historical victim-survivors pertaining to its culture and practices. Correspondence has also been submitted to the BBC, Dame Janet Smith review regarding the BBC organisation culture and practices pertaining to victim-survivors..

FBGA

FBGA have held a number of meetings with former residents from Quarriers and other residents of past Scottish residential institutions and to gain your views and opinions regarding ALL the proposed proposals such as National Confidential Forum, SHRC Interaction and SACRO consultation. We will continue to represent your interests and other victim-survivors as best we can in all the processes.

Please continue to send all your contributions to Jennie Bristow, secretary @ fbga1@aol.com and we would like to thank everyone who has contributed to all the recent consultations.

We would like to wish everyone a Happy New Year