

The Care of Children in Jersey Review Panel scrutiny review: response from the Jersey Citizens Panel

Background

The Citizen's Panel was set up following the Independent Care Inquiry recommendation that there should be *'some form of tangible public acknowledgement of those that have been ill served by the care system over many decades'*. In response, The States of Jersey commissioned a Citizens Panel in 2018 with the aim of reaching a recommendation for a memorial or legacy for all of us who were failed by Jersey's care system.

Our panel has had two stages. The first stage focussed on developing the recommendations and the second on implementation.

The first stage was based on the model of the Citizens Jury. The bringing together of a diverse group of people to deliberate together in order to reach consensus.

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. Members were recruited using a number of methods including through members of the Jersey Care Leavers Association, through Alan Collins, through TV, radio and newspaper as well as through 500 letters randomly delivered to addresses across the island.

Efforts were made to ensure that the group was a good mix with both males and females and a wide range of age groups.

Developing the recommendations was a complex and important process and as a group, we have been on a significant journey together. In stage 1, we met as a group of 14 people for 6 sessions held over 4 weekends. In this time, we developed the recommendations set out in our report.

We are a diverse group, many of us survivors of Jersey's care system and each with our own experiences and story to tell. However, what brought us together and has united us in our mission is a commitment to ensure that Jersey never forgets and learns from the survivors of Jersey's care system. We have worked hard as a group, completing a range of activities and having long discussions, which have led to the recommendations in our report.

- We have shared our thoughts about a range of other memorials and legacy projects both on Jersey and from countries across the world
- We have carefully considered what impact we want our legacy project to have and on who
- We have heard via video link from a range of professionals from the UK and Australia all of whom had experience and expertise relevant to this project. As well as hearing their experiences, we also had an opportunity to ask them questions, which helped enormously with our deliberations and discussion.
- We also spent time considering the future of the building Haut de la Garenne

- We have spent a lot of time thinking about what should be the core criteria for our legacy project. Lengthy discussion and debate have resulted in the agreed set of core criteria and the development of the four elements we consider essential to the legacy project.

Our recommendations

The group agreed unanimously that in order to meet the Inquiry's recommendation a number of different **permanent projects** should be put in place.

The Citizen's Panel is clear that in order to move forward we must also look back.

Our legacy project therefore consists of a number of elements that together look both back and look forward. We also developed a set of core criteria that must be met. These are set out within our [report](#)

The four elements of our legacy project are:

1. A **memorial** that is a suitable acknowledgment of what happened in the past and ensures we never forget.
2. An annual **Jersey Children's Day** to provide the opportunity to both remember the survivors and victims and also puts the focus on children and young people living in the Island now
3. **Support services for survivors and their families.** This includes:
 - a) Providing opportunities for survivors and their families to come together to support each other
 - b) Mental health service provision for survivors and their families who continue to be affected by the trauma of their pasts
 - c) The provision of an independent advocacy service that provides support for survivors and their families in any ongoing dealings they might have with Government Departments
4. An **emblem** that becomes the symbol of the legacy project and is consistently used across all the elements

The group agreed unanimously that Haut de la Garenne should not be demolished. It wasn't the building that harmed children it was the people inside. The building has a long history dating back to the 19th century. The building should now be a positive place for the whole community.

Something good can come from something bad

Progress

On June 9/10th 2018, The Citizens Panel wrote its final recommendations. On July 4th 2018, the Council of Ministers agreed in principle to all four of the panel's recommendations.

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. Over a year after the recommendations were written there is still no confirmation of a site for the memorial and no improvements to the help and support for victims/survivors and their families. Overall we feel too much responsibility has been placed on panel members to deliver the recommendations and push for change.

Government officers have been talking with us about the idea of us as the citizens panel doing fundraising – this is not our responsibility.

Throughout this process, we have worked with a number of Government Officers and have appreciated the support they have given (a small number of them have been exceptional). However, we also have a number of major worries and concerns. The following grid summarises what we believe the progress has been to date based on some of the questions you asked us in your letter.

	Success in implementing the recommendations	What could have been done better and what has not been done?	Suggestions for what needs to be done to assist with the recommendations being implemented
Recommendation 1: Memorial	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Secured funding for the memorial b) design brief completed with input of Citizens Panel and expert in public art commissioning. c) Council of Ministers (Nov 2018) supported the location of the monument 	There have been constant obstacles to agreeing a site for the memorial	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) priority should be given at a senior level to confirming the site for the memorial as soon as possible. b) commit resources and take action.
Recommendation 2: Jersey Children's Day.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) establishment of a Children's Day steering group with representatives from CYPES, Children's Commissioner and voluntary and community sector. b) secured sum of money for the first Children's Day. c) In principle agreement from CYPES Director General for recurrent funding for Children's Day for £50,000 pa for the period of this government plan. 	a) The young people and children's competition to design an emblem was launched in the summer of 2019. We believe CYPES and others failed to ensure that this was comprehensively promoted to all young people. We are very concerned that if this lack of commitment carries forward into the way that Childrens Day is	a) senior politicians to support and promote the Jersey Children's Day and encourage participation by all

	<p>d)Curriculum Council agreement that state provided schools will recognise Children’s Day.</p> <p>e) Children’s Minister announcement of Childrens Day in States Assembly.</p>	<p>promoted in the future it will be a failure. We need to ensure that these barriers are overcome.</p> <p>b) A tender was released for one or more voluntary/community organisations to run Children’s Day activities this year. However, no organisations applied to do the work. This might be because there wasn’t enough notice or that the budget was too small.</p>	
Recommendation 3: help and support for victims/survivors and their families			
<p>3a) opportunities for survivors and their families to come together to support each other in a variety of settings</p>		<p>Recommendation not achieved</p>	<p>a)government to identify a person or department who can work with the Citizens Panel and commit resources to take action and make this recommendation a reality.</p> <p>b)commit resources to investigate (with the Citizens Panel) and design a model for how this recommendation can be achieved.</p>
<p>3b) Mental health service provision for survivors and their families who continue to be affected by the trauma of their pasts</p>	<p>a)Health and community services have plans for a trauma informed pathway and this is part of the Government Plan</p> <p>b) some support mechanisms for Panel members are now in place but it took 11 months to get them in place!</p>	<p>Recommendation not achieved.</p> <p>a) The trauma pathway plans are still all only on paper.</p> <p>c) the impact of trauma is not understood within broader services and there is a lack of flexibility in service provision.</p> <p>d) waiting lists for trauma services are too high.</p> <p>e) not all panel members are yet supported.</p> <p>f) lack of regular feedback regarding progress</p>	<p>a) priority should be given at a senior level and resources committed to make sure this recommendation becomes a reality.</p>

3c) The provision of an independent advocacy service that provides support for survivors and their families in any ongoing dealings they might have with Government Departments	The Citizens Panel has a positive connection and shared mission with Jersey Cares regarding the need for advocacy provision.	Recommendation not achieved a) We believe an advocacy service for young people is about to start through the work of Jersey Cares, however there are no confirmed or resourced plans for a service for adults.	a) priority should be given at a senior level and resources committed to make sure an advocacy service for adults is established as soon as possible.
Recommendation 4: emblem	a) a winner of the Emblem competition has been chosen. b) free help from private graphic designer for support (Mailmate) with the design has been secured b) video clips made with panel members promoting the emblem competition released		
Haut de La Garenne	COM agreed with the Citizens Panel recommendation on the future of Haut de la Garenne	Recommendation achieved (if Haut de la Garenne is not demolished).	Citizens Panel to be kept informed of developments.

We would like to meet with the panel to talk through this in more depth.