



Our Lives, Our Choices

The Campaign for the Right to Independent Living

Support Lord Ashley's Disabled Persons (Independent Living) Bill

ABOUT THE CAMPAIGN

Our Lives, Our Choices is the national campaign for right to independent living. We seek radical reform of health and social care so that: -

- ✓ Disabled people of all ages and backgrounds can take control of their own lives, live with dignity, and participate fully in society as equal citizens;
- ✓ Families and friends of disabled people are not forced into poverty and lack of opportunities by the inadequacies of the current system;
- ✓ All of us can enjoy security now and in the future without worrying that our independence will be lost.

When we experience disability, illness, or old age we should all be able to rely a level of state support that allows us to maintain our independence.

The current system simply cannot deliver. The result is dependency, poverty, and exclusion.

Things could be very different. Lord Ashley's Independent Living Bill would create a system that is fit for the future – one we can all rely on. We are campaigning for the Bill to be enacted within the lifetime of this Parliament and for Government to invest in all our futures.

THE NEED FOR ACTION IS URGENT! JOIN US TODAY!

POINTS TO USE IN SUPPORT OF THE CAMPAIGN

The current system is broken:

- ▶ At present we cannot rely on the support of the state when through disability, old age, or illness we need to maintain our independence. Eligibility for social care has become so restricted that only those in the most difficult of circumstances receive any support.
- ▶ The individual has to pay for what little support there is, even people in receipt of state benefits.
- ▶ The reality today is many disabled and older people are being forced to live on the edge of society, unable to choose when to get dressed or to have a bath.
- ▶ Families are struggling to stay together under the pressure of providing support the state cannot be bothered to help with.
- ▶ What care there is often falls far short of basic standards of decency
- ▶ People's lives are being wasted because they are unable to reach their full potential to participate in society.
- ▶ Because there are no basic access standards, houses, even new built, are very costly to adapt to the needs of disabled people.
- ▶ Social care workers are disillusioned and fed up with the bureaucracy, penny pinching and having to say no to requests for assistance.
- ▶ The current system is inefficient and wasteful of resources

Our Lives! Our Choices! Is campaigning for a future that will: -

- ✓ Give us support we can rely on from the state so that through disability, old age, or illness we can keep our independence and contribute to society in whatever way we can.
- ✓ The support we receive is support that we choose and control based on our lifestyle, interests and aspirations – support that will let us live the lives we want to live.
- ✓ Ensure no one is forced to provide levels of unpaid care that limit their opportunities in life.
- ✓ We will all know what level of support we are entitled to, wherever we live.
- ✓ Treat people who are receiving support with dignity and respect.
- ✓ Give fair pay and a decent career path to those who give support.
- ✓ Ensure that houses are built to a standard that can easily be adapted to meet all stages in life.
- ✓ Give people what they say they want from our system of health and social care.

Lord Ashley's Bill

Our proposals are set out in Lord Ashley's Bill currently before Parliament. It is winning broad support.

Investment will be needed to make these changes happen but with that will come huge savings for the Exchequer in terms of reduced benefits bills, higher rates of employment, better health outcomes, and a housing stock that is much cheaper to adapt to the needs of disabled people.

Everyone is affected by this Bill. If this does not affect you now, it will do one day. We all need support at some point in our lives – or our partner, or our mum, or our children, or our friends.

WHAT CAN YOU DO TO SUPPORT THE CAMPAIGN?

- ▶ Join the campaign. Membership is free and membership forms are available from policy@ncil.org.uk
- ▶ Support the official launch of the campaign in London on 18th June 2007
- ▶ Support the mass lobby of Parliament on the 17th October 2007
- ▶ Lobby Members of Parliament to sign the Early Day Motion number 334 supporting the Independent Living Bill
- ▶ Join and support the national steering committee for the campaign
- ▶ Raise the campaign in meetings and any public events you may be holding
- ▶ Use the campaign postcard to involve individuals in the campaign
- ▶ Get your local community group, voluntary organisation, disabled people's group, carers' group, trade union branch involved in the campaign
- ▶ Lobby local councillors to pass a motion to support the Bill
- ▶ Identify funding and resources that could be used to support the work of the campaign

INFORMATION AND FURTHER DETAILS

Available from:

National Centre for Independent Living

4th Floor Hampton House,
20 Allbert Embankment
LONDON SE1 7TJ
020 7587 1663
policy@ncil.org.uk



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