

**RESPONSE to Social Services and Well-Being (Wales) Bill
from
Save Park Avenue Day Centre group, Aberystwyth**

Save Park Avenue Day Centre (SPADC) group is a single issue pressure group set up to fight the closure and demolition of a 30 year old, purpose built Day Centre in Aberystwyth providing services for older and older disabled people, in order to make way for a Tesco store and multi-storey car park.

Our response is short and confined to the issue of Day Care Centres for older people and older disabled people.

We are concerned that centres providing day care for older people are not underpinned by a statutory requirement for their consistent provision across Wales, in line with the demographic profile of each area. This makes them vulnerable to closure, or to severe restriction of access and provision, in a time of budgetary austerity.

The benefits of day care centres for older, and older disabled people, are several and can significantly add to the well-being of those who use them and to that of their carers. By providing care throughout the day and a variety of services under one roof, they can help to prolong independent living and delay the need for full-time residential care. By giving users an opportunity to meet and socialise with others, they can reduce social isolation and increase social integration. By giving carers respite for part of the day and the opportunity to work, socialise and pursue their own interests, day care centres help prolong their ability to provide long-term care.

We feel that the issue we have confronted in Aberystwyth illustrates one of the major weaknesses of this Bill. If local authorities are simply required to meet needs without specifying in any concrete way what provision might be required to meet these needs, then individual choice is likely to be limited to the priorities set by those authorities. These priorities will not necessarily take the needs and choices of the most vulnerable into account. This has certainly been our experience in Aberystwyth.

We are, therefore, asking for consideration to be given to making the provision of standardised, regulated Day Care Centres for older and older disabled people, in

accordance with the demographic profile of each area, a statutory requirement across Wales. We do not think that the Bill will lead to a wide enough range of adequate, affordable choices for older people without this.

NB We have launched an e-petition this month asking for the provision of Day care centres to be made statutory across Wales and this has been accepted by the Petitions Committee.