

The Australian Government has awarded the Trust a grant of roughly £26,000 a year for a period of three years. There is every indication that this grant will be renewed. However, the greatest obstacle to meeting the needs of this group of British citizens, now living abroad, has been the failure of the British Government to offer anything more than a token gesture of financial support for a period of one year. This is doubly disappointing given the Government's poor track record in respect of this vulnerable group and the fact that a relatively modest grant could secure enormous benefits. The present Government's position and decisions seems incompatible with its emphasis on the value of family life, its proposals for a citizen's charter and its commitment to decent levels of social provision.

While our clients might be living on the other side of the world, their parents and brothers and sisters are often alive and well and living throughout the United Kingdom.

My reasons for bringing this issue to your attention are two fold. Firstly, to ensure that you are aware of the scale of the problems faced by former Child Migrants and the lack of positive action taken by the Government over the past three years.

Secondly, I shall be visiting Australia within the next few weeks and will be discussing the plight of former Child Migrants with television and newspaper journalists as well as politicians and government officials in Australia. I fully expect to be asked why the British Government has failed to match the commitment, interest and resources of the Australian Government with regard to these British citizens living in Australia. No doubt, some of the questions will be more probing and less politely phrased. Clearly, it would be helpful if I understood the reasons behind the Government's position.

I would find it helpful to discuss some of these complex, moral and legal issues with the appropriate Minister but efforts to achieve this over the last three years have been met with resistance.

I look forward to a response that is compassionate and humane, based on the principle's of basic Human Rights which have been so tragically disregarded in relation to this group of British subjects.

Yours sincerely,

Margaret Humphreys
Founder and Director.