



## Wales Office | Swyddfa Cymru

Discovery House  
Scott Harbour  
Cardiff CF10 4PJ

Tŷ Discovery  
Harbwr Scott  
Caerdydd CF10 4PJ

Email/Ebost: [wales.office@walesoffice.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:wales.office@walesoffice.gsi.gov.uk)  
Phone/Ffôn: 020 7270 0538

Mark Drakeford AM  
Chair  
Health and Social Care Committee  
National Assembly for Wales

[HSCCommittee@wales.gov.uk](mailto:HSCCommittee@wales.gov.uk)

Ref: 40SOS 12

19 April 2012

Dear Mark

Thank you for your letter of 12 March.

I am grateful to you for keeping me informed about the work your Committee is undertaking into residential care for older people.

I have read with interest the written evidence submitted by the Older People's Commissioner for Wales, as well as the transcript of proceedings of 23 February when the Commissioner appeared in front of the Committee.

I have had a very positive working relationship with the outgoing Commissioner who has provided me with invaluable advice on the views of older people in Wales about the issues affecting them. I am pleased the Committee had the opportunity to hear first hand from Mrs Marks and appreciate the role the Committee is also playing in raising the profile of key issues around residential care for older people in Wales.

Turning to your view on the possibility of a Convention on the rights of older people, the Government is not convinced of the need for a specific UN Convention on the Rights of Older People. There are existing mechanisms aimed at ensuring older people's rights, including the Universal Declaration for Human Rights, the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the Convention on Social and Political Rights, and the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing (MIPAA). We believe that these existing instruments contain all the basic



## Wales Office | Swyddfa Cymru

requirements to ensure the rights of older people and our priority is to ensure that they are enforced and respected.

It is worth noting that those pressing for a Convention do not take in to account the different definitions and requirements of ageing societies around the world and many of the concerns raised are regional rather than global issues. It is a relatively small number of countries who are in favour of a Convention – the majority of the UN Member States believe that a new instrument would only duplicate efforts. Alternatively, a coordinated approach across all Member States to enforce MIPAA would offer stronger support.

I look forward to the Committee's Report on its Inquiry in due course. I would be grateful if you could ensure I am provided with a copy of the final report once available.

*Ys sicely*

**Rt Hon/Y Gwir Anrh. Cheryl Gillan MP/AS**  
**Secretary of State for Wales**  
**Ysgrifennydd Gwladol Cymru**