

Dear Fiona

You may remember that I forwarded letters to you on behalf of JC. I'd now like to give some reasons why I see the closure of one of these Centres detrimental to the care of the elderly/disabled. As I'm not sure who to send these thoughts to, can I please ask you to pass this email on for me?

During the last few months I have undertaken a few hours per week to support a neighbour who is disabled, and have seen at firsthand what a fulltime job her husband has caring for her. He is in his **seventies** and gives unstintingly of his time and devotion. I have also seen what a lifesaver the Day Centre is, not only for the User, who is able to get out of the house, meet people and undertake activities at the Centre, but equally for the Carer, who is able to recharge batteries. I feel certain that this break makes the Carer able to carry on his support with love and good humour, and is keeping the couples relationship secure.

I understand that existing Users will still have access to whichever Centre remains open, albeit in more cramped conditions, but am concerned that there will not be the facilities for elderly residents of Kingston that may need this service in the future. I think it likely that the long term effect of closure of one Centre could be that Carers will find it harder to give the 24 hour care needed, and the disabled will have to be provided with residential nursing care.

I spoke to Councillor Ian Reid on Thursday of last week (the day after the budget was agreed) and he made it clear that no decision had yet been taken that one of the Centres would close, and that it all depended on the consultation that was taking place. I hope that whoever does make the final decision looks further ahead than the 2007/2008 budget and takes into account the cost to the ratepayers closure could have in the future..

Yours Sincerely

KM