

Slough Mental Health News



World Mental Health Day Special Issue

Oct 2007

BANNED!

BY SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL AND EAST BERKSHIRE MIND

In our first issue we published minutes of the July 2007 Local Implementation Team Meeting at the town hall which clearly showed a desire within the Slough Mental Health Establishment to censor or otherwise interfere with Press Freedom.

The Minutes were as follows:

'An issue was brought up regarding the Sunrise News and recent articles submitted by service users in relation to their belief that the trust is trying to restrict free speech. J. Smith to speak to

F. Toner and G. Crawford about this matter. FT is concerned about the growing body of ill feeling amongst service users and would like to find a balance between censorship and good editorial skills...'

A few days before World Mental Health day the Unit Manager of the Sunrise Club drop-in announced that all 'User-run' publications would be banned from being distributed at Sunrise Club. When questioned as to who gave the orders her

answer was Slough Borough Council and East Berkshire Mind.

We were banned for speaking up for free speech and the free press and for asking some embarrassing questions.

The actions of these 2 bodies in banning all publications except MIND controlled ones from Sunrise Club has done nothing but prove we told the truth.

To be banned for telling the truth is a badge of honour. For mental health professionals to deny free expression to the mentally ill is a badge of shame.

Dangerous Kitchen Practices at MIND Controlled drop-in

At the Sunrise Club drop-in centre they have no cook, no supply of hot food and inadequate cooking facilities. MIND lets them struggle with worse kitchen facilities than they have in their own homes to cook their own and other peoples dinners for no financial reward.

This do-it-yourself cooking scheme was an experiment in 'user involvement' and I believe it is an experiment that has failed. While there are sufficient volunteers for a couple of days a week there are now not enough to man the kitchen full-time.

Society as a whole believes in a fair days work for a fair days pay, in this respect we are not that different from the 'normal folk'. Those of us who were paid a wage for working in the kitchen at New Horizons had a far greater sense of self-esteem than those who now work for a free lunch. In Victorian times we had 'The Workhouse' where the poor used to work for a bowl of gruel... Is this what they call a return to traditional values? Those who had worked in the kitchens before their wages were abolished feel their work has been devalued and I must agree with them that this has been a Great Step

Backwards. I would like to know who the hell thought up all these wonderful work for nothing plans. They didn't ask us if we wanted to run things this way. How can such schemes be described as 'user-led' when they get introduced without even consulting us?

I do not know of any other type of daycentre or Health Establishment where this 'cook your own or bring a sandwich' scheme has been imposed. Old people wouldn't put up with it, physically disabled people wouldn't put up with it, so why should we? When we are depressed we are probably the least able or likely section of society to take the controls of a dodgy electric cooker and rustle up dinner for 10.

I have been told that the paid work scheme at New Horizons was abolished because too many hours were worked and the budget was exceeded. It is the fault of those who administered this scheme that this happened and yet it is we who were punished despite having done nothing wrong. I'm not sure who was in charge when the mistakes were made, could have been MIND, could have been Step Forward. One thing I'm sure of - It wasn't us!

Apparently there isn't even a food budget any more. We may have agreed to a try a change of venue but we never agreed to all the changes to the service that came with it.

There are of course Health and Safety issues:

Nobody who has cooked in the kitchen was even asked if they had a hygiene certificate (required by law).

Some of us are on medication which can make us drowsy and more prone to accidents.

The health and safety limit of 2 people in the kitchen at any one time is often exceeded.

Also there is the question of insurance cover if serious injuries were to occur while mentally ill people on medication were handling boiling liquids and sharp knives.

Lets stop the experiment now, us guinea pigs and lab rats have suffered enough. We never asked for it, it doesn't work, it's made kitchen a four letter word around here and it's discriminatory because we are the only group it's been imposed on.

We don't ask for much:
Food, Peace and a decent place to go.

**Is this any way to run a health service? Send your views to Frank.Toner@slough.gov.uk & Julia.Smith@ebmind.org
FOR YOUR FREE COPY OF SLOUGH MENTAL HEALTH NEWS EVERY MONTH EMAIL
SMHNEWS@BLUEBOTTLE.COM**

John The Forunner Speaks

I was sitting home alone in LA watching old cup kite on the 7 o'clock news. I had an email to say this publication is banned from being distributed at the Slough MIND drop-in. I am John the Forunner and I'm put on the planet to fight for the underprivileged of this world. Before I start. The central issue here is a comparison with Nazi Germany, Communist Russia and the South American Junta. My father volunteered for the army the day war broke out in 1939 and fought for freedom of speech, his friend got his throat cut, so whoever is responsible, or part of this silly attempt to censor the thoughts of the mentally ill should stop and think about those who have been there before, to fight for freedom, if you ban something, people want it even more. The strong have got to stand up for the weak even though the strong are sometimes weak.

I want the people who have had any part in this attack on vulnerable people's free speech to look to their conscience not their wallets and of course realise that this action is an affront to all the mentally ill in Slough and the whole country.

As the sun fell over the mountain, it again confirmed what all the politically correct puppets, keep pumping out, their distractive venom from the central government, to the mad churches through down to the local government, to the departments of the insane mouthing through their lower underlings, doing nothing really to help the pioneers of mental life. These people in authority, for the moment, of our mental health are worried about anyone being more articulate than an animal and the truth is that the mentally ill aren't usually critical of their keepers in their own newsletter.

Basically members, if I say no more in this issue Messrs Jim & Joe whoever they are, think we are mental and stupid and not able to stand up for ourselves. During the past three months, the truth is emerging and its not convenient.

In ward 10, where you are put if you have a mental breakdown in Wexham Park Hospital conditions are worse than that of prison. This is confirmed by an independent commentator who regularly visits prisons.

There is no problem with senior citizens

having a centre in Slough or people with learning difficulties but a proper daycentre can't be organised it seems, out of government funds for the mentally ill.

The humble shall hear of it and be glad! Oh magnify the Lord with me and let us exalt his name together. I, John the Forunner, will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go. If you're a Slough citizen and you are wondering what this is all about, it's putting another view of what it's really like to have mental illness in Slough. The Forunner also reaches out in sympathy to the whole world. We don't know all the facts as no one really does, because the truth is very often shrouded with the politically correct, out of control, arms length manoeuvring from top management in their ivory towers and nice lives, getting their troops and people on the front line to do all their dirty work and stepping back when something goes wrong and claiming 'It's not my fault', putting up smoke screens, flowering up things to make themselves look good. Afraid to let the issue of the real heartbreaking suffering, of their mentally ill subjects, out into the open, glossing over the cuts and cover ups and the motives of those who perpetuate them with their faceless bureaucratic doublespeak.

Readers, a lovely new centre was opened for us mentally ill at New Horizons in 2003 with crisis beds for those were on the brink and modern clean professional facilities. It was opened by Prince Edward and the Countess of Wessex with the Lord Mayor and his men and the mental health supremos. Hot meals were provided every day, therapies, classes and readers again, if you wonder what we are going on about, this has all been snatched away, the opportunity was seen to close new horizons, then seized up with lightening speed and we were transferred to a drinking club on the outskirts of Slough on the say so of a quick vote of a fraction of the people that would be eligible to come to New Horizons.

World Mental Health week is one big spin, one big show, if our publication or any other publication is banned or any other subject for that matter.

I used to be paranoid thinking they are watching me, now I know they are. We've been told we want to hear your

views, we want to empower you. Now we've seen what you are doing, we want to ban you.

There are some very good people working in mental health some are now leaving in frustration, some are now comfortable on their fat salaries, some are tapping on their computers all day, some want a quiet life, don't want any awkward questions, around their comfortable lives where nothing really changes, because the people who are so-called looking after us, don't want it to change.

Everything in all our lives is restricted by money, shine on all the warmakers, shine on the rolling stones. If you have an issue with what I've written, if you see an inaccuracy, forgive me, I am afflicted. If I am not correct make a list, point by point and I will meet with you I am only interested in the happiness and salvation of the suffering.

Dear censorship, please don't put a price on my soul I know you have suffered much but in this you are not so unique, each of us has his own special gift and if dear censor, you don't underestimate me, I won't underestimate you.

Today I made an appearance downtown there are no truths, there are no lies, just data to be manipulated. I can give you any answer you want. I'm right because I say I'm right.

We all fall short of the glory of God.

Blessed are the mentally ill, for they will be protected. The Forunner will speak up for them, he is not afraid.

Shine on Reverend Pearson
Shine on Dickens & Rembrandt & Beethoven
Shine on all the churches, they all love less and less
Shine on Slough Council
Shine on All the dying soldiers
Shine on Mass Destruction in some God's name
Shine on The Slough Compact
Shine on Gordon Brown
Shine on President Kennedy
Shine on The Pioneers, those seekers of mental health, craving simplicity, they travelled inward, past themselves, may their stars shine.
Shine on Lousy Leadership

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BANNED PUBLICATION