



5 day Drop-In Service Safe Says Gerry Crawford

Here's a story from the horses mouth. Following rumours that Sunrise Club might be shut down a member spoke to Gerry Crawford on her mobile and got an answer from him. He said there were no plans to close Sunrise Club or New Horizons in the near future although the 5 day drop-in service might be moved to a better venue after members complaints about some aspects of the SADSAD service.

Later that day at the monthly SMHUG meeting Mike Paxton asked Gerry Crawford to confirm what was said in that phone call. Gerry came down to the meeting, repeated his assurance that the 5 day drop-in service and New Horizons were safe (subject to continued funding) and I was there when he said it.

He also invited us to 'talk to the horse' if we had any questions about the service. I recently asked him some questions about direct payments and he was very helpful.



You may recognise this horse as he is in fact 'Red Rum'. I don't currently have a photo of Gerry Crawford so I've put this picture of 'Red' on the front page as he's a fine looking horse, makes the front page more interesting and ties in with Gerry's offer to answer our questions 'From the horse's Mouth.'

Publications Ban Abolished

Shortly after the printing of it's first issue, S M H News was banned from Sunrise Club by unwritten declaration along with all other 'user-run' publications. It is undeniable that our unit manager was involved (claiming she was acting under orders from Slough Council and East Berkshire Mind) but the lack of written notice of this ban or any written evidence of such orders being given leads me to believe she acted alone.

In response to this attack on press freedom a campaign was launched and with a little help from my friends the ban was overturned and shown to be 'Not Worth The Paper It Wasn't Written On'.

I was told that 'Moonlight' and 2 other publications at Sunrise Club were also banned along with my own. Well folks, consider yourselves un-banned.

*When freedom is outlawed
Only outlaws shall be free.*

Fluffy Kitten of The Month



Hurrah for Fluffy Kittens!

Turn to our new look Page 4 for Sport and Great Tits

Direct Payments To Choose Your Own Day Services - A Mystery Solved

Some of you may remember that a question was asked at the Sunrise Club consultation: 'If we gave you cash to spend on your own day services what would you spend it on?' On page 3, question 4 of the CMHT consultation form we are again asked if we would like 'Direct payments (cash) to choose your own day activities'. I have emailed Susanna Yeoman and Gerry Crawford on this subject and have also found some information on the internet about direct payments. The question appears on the survey to see how much demand there is for such a service. The question caused some alarm when it

was first raised as people thought it meant day services would be closed and we'd be palmed off with a few quid.

The direct payments scheme is a voluntary one so no one will be forced to join it. It's fairly complicated involving keeping of business type income & expenditure records and choosing & paying the people who look after you.

The Direct Payments guide is a 19 page document and far too big to print here but if you'd like to look it up on the internet the address is given below.

http://www.socialinclusion.org.uk/publications/Direct_Payments_SU_Guide.pdf

The Langley Drop-In Experience by 'The Man With No Fax Number'



I'd heard good reports of the Langley drop-in from people who'd been there before, so I thought I'd go see what it was like.

Set in the roomy church hall of the Langley Free Church near where Trelawney Avenue meets Spencer Road this is the longest running mental health drop-in in all Slough. It's on the No 5 bus route and car parking is available.

I was met by Lynette Shelley, the manager, she was very friendly and introduced me to some of the other customers.

There is a ping-pong table with a number of enthusiastic players so you'll probably get a game if you want one.

There was a game of bingo with one of the customers as bingo caller and he came up with bingo calls you'll never hear at your local bingo hall, very entertaining.

Then it was lunchtime, I must say this was like no other drop-in I've ever been to. Lynette cooked the dinner assisted by a couple of customers who chopped vegetables etc. Then when dinner was ready several other customers acted as waiters and brought the food to the table. It was a fast, efficient service and these were not pressed men but volunteers. Nobody was nagged into doing things, they seemed to do it out of

love, respect and fellowship to their manager and their friends.

I found the entire experience very welcoming, friendly and unlike anything I've experienced for a long time.

Coming back to the food I was served a bowl of Chilli con Carne, a couple of slices of French bread, a couple of soft drinks and a piece of strawberry cheesecake - all for £2.00. The food was delicious, Lynette's a very good cook and runs a great drop-in.

If anyone is thinking of running a drop-in in a church hall or anywhere else for that matter they should pay a visit to Langley drop-in. There is much to be learnt here.

Langley Drop-in is open every Friday from 10 am - 1.45 pm. If you want dinner you should book it by 10.30 am.

Sunrise Club - Days Out

Southall Sikh Temple



A large impressive building, too big to photograph from the other side of the street. The photo shows the altar which is in fact a bed where the Sikh Holy Book is kept. As you can see the temple has some lovely stained glass windows.

It is a Sikh tradition that visitors to the temple are offered free food and drink we had vegetable curry, tea, water and bananas.

As the Sikh religion holds all its worshippers equal there are no pews and everyone sits on the floor.

The Science Museum



I've not been to the Science Museum since I was a lad and you'd think that after all the changes that have happened in the world of Science this place would be a breathtaking experience by now.

The old stuff is still there, but there seems to be little new and what there is isn't breathtaking. There's an Imax cinema and a simulator thingy but you have to pay extra for these.

I thought the astronaut looked pretty cool though and there were a few space rockets that weren't there last time.

Stoke Poges Memorial Gardens



Just a few minutes walk from Sunrise Club this place of rest is as beautiful as any public park. It has maze like hedges, ponds with fountains and fishes (Koi Carp I think), a lake, caverns, some beautiful flowers and shrubbery, and a wonderful sense of peace.

As it's so close to Sunrise a trip to the Memorial Gardens is now a regular weekly event on the timetable.

I've been there several times myself and still haven't seen it all.

L - Artist, Poet, Communicator

Those of us who have attended the New Horizons 'Writers Group' will know L as the founder of this group. Those of us who've heard her poems may not be surprised to hear she won 1st prize in the Mental Health Day Poetry Competition.

However she has boldly gone where none have gone before and has also won 1st prize in the Art Competition. When she found out she'd won both she was 'flabbergasted'. Her drawing of a nomad is based on someone she met on her travels in Dubai.

You might think winning best poem and best artwork was achievement enough but to complete the hat trick she rang up Gerry Crawford and got an assurance that the 5-day drop-in service was safe, where many had failed. She did this by calling New Horizons and asking for Gerry's secretary, going on hold 'til she got to talk to her, and when Gerry was in a meeting arranging to talk to him the next day. She expressed the concerns we have all felt about the possible closure of Sunrise and the distress it was causing and got a straight answer from Gerry that this wasn't going to happen. There are those who talk about helping us, there are those who write about helping us, but L is different - she actually did something about it. In the words of Life of Brian: 'We need doers' and in the words of Ali G: 'Respec!'.

'Well done L' say I.

Here's her poem:

And her drawing:

A Piece of Furniture

Of all the things I'd like to be, I'd like to be a bed,
Where all the tired people, lay down their sleepy head,
I'd like a bouncy mattress and a golden eiderdown,
Where somebody could throw their nightdress and their dressing gown.

There are many headboards I would like to own,
Embroidered in pretty silks and carefully hand sewn,
Softly padded velvet in violet, pink and blue,
Natty, silky cedar all shiny and brand new.

I'd like to be the haven for slumbering off the woes,
I'd like to think I was the bed that everybody chose,
A water bed, a feather bed or a Sprung bed too,
I would hold them all up the best that I could do.

I'd love to house the children all snugly and warm,
And keep them safe as houses, dreaming until dawn,
I'd like soft puffy pillows for little sucker thumbs,
And soft fluffy little sheets for tiny upturned bums.

I'd like to keep the mums and dads, making love all night
Wrapped up in each others arms, tucked in nice and tight,
Of all the things I'd like to be, I'd like to be a bed,
Or maybe the person in it, zonked out asleep instead.



The Nomad

Fascinating Facts

Dentists recommend that a toothbrush be kept at least 6 ft away from a toilet to avoid airborne particles from the flush.

It is physically impossible to lick your elbow.

A duck's quack doesn't echo and nobody knows why.

The King of Hearts is the only king without a moustache.

There are no right handed polar bears.

Plane crashes kill less people annually than donkeys.

Most people who read this column will attempt to lick their elbow.

Sunrise Club Pool Tournament 2007



8 out of 16 players survived to the 2nd round. Here J plays R. J won and went through to the semi finals where she lost to T.



In another semi final match we see P playing D with P at the table. P went on to win the match and went through to the final.



Here we see D in the same semi final where, having entertained the crowd with some lightning play in the earlier rounds, he lost to P.

And so the stage was set, T and P went through to the final.



Referee M, dressed all in black with white gloves, set up the balls.

Play went back and forth 'til only the black was left. T missed a fairly easy black to the middle pocket.



It was P's turn to take on the black

P missed, T returned to the table, commented in his Whispering Ted Lowe voice 'Surely now he must clinch the frame'



And whacked the black in the corner pocket to win the tournament.

Wildlife Special - Great Tits



The Great Tit is a widespread and common species throughout Europe and Asia in any sort of woodland. It is resident, and most Great Tits do not migrate. Great Tits are easy to recognize, large in size at 14 cm, with a broad black line (broader in the male) down its otherwise yellow front. The neck and head are black with white cheeks and ear coverts. Upper parts are olive. It has a white wingbar and outer tail feathers. In young birds the black is replaced by brown, and the white by yellow.

I saw this fine pair of tits from my window in Langley, from a distance they look a lot like blue tits but when you get close up they're much more greaterer. They have bigger beaks, custard coloured bellies, black and white heads, and a black stripe down the middle of the chest.

There are many kinds of tit in the UK, have you seen any ?
Send photos to editor@sloughmental.co.uk.

