



Sunrise Members Vote: 60% Say NO to West Wing, 5% Say YES The West Wing - Why NOT

The management never asked for this vote, and I'm aware of no management plan to consult us on where to put our daycentre.

So we just did it anyway and I agreed to convey our views to the management.

Here's the email I sent:

Dear All,

I hope I'm talking to the people who will decide the location of the new mental health day service, if I've missed anyone out please forward this to them. I know you have a difficult decision to make and in the spirit of participation, Service Principles (e), I've taken a vote at a Sunrise Members Meeting and collected some ideas on the subject which I hope will assist you in your task.

The West Wing – Why NOT

1. **An Insecure Future:** It is under threat of demolition to make way for Sloughs New Football Stadium, housing, a hotel, a conference centre and a home for Slough Boxing Club. Planning permission will be decided May 2009 then, if approved, work will begin in October 2009 so the new service (commencing April 2009) could last less than 6 months before having to move all over again. A shaky start for the new service, living in the shadow of the wrecking ball will be injurious to mental health and we will suffer much anxiety over the future.



Where Slough Council can sell land and make money it tends to do so. One of the suggested venues for drop-in, The Family Centre, is to be sold off.

2. **Bread and Coke:** It makes a joke of the Consultation Survey where 65.3% of us wanted 'To have a meal as part of the activity' if we are moved from a venue with reasonably priced food and drink to one with pub priced drink and snacks - £1.20 for a small glass of Coke.

3. **A Dark Satanic Mill:** Built from the blackest bricks I've ever seen, The West Wing has the look of a run down industrial building and is rather depressing, the rooms available are rather small and are not an improvement on SADSAD with its beautiful natural surroundings and sense of peace and relaxation (which is what we

need to stay well). There is no point in change unless it's change for the better.

4. **Sport:** Free and accessible sporting facilities at SADSAD: Snooker, Pool, Bowls, Petanque, Rounders, Table Tennis, Archery would all be lost if we moved to West Wing. Bear in mind that sport has more possibilities for social inclusion than anything else. Talk to a stranger at the bar and he may view you with suspicion, talk to him while you're playing pool with him and he'll be more relaxed. In the survey 56.9% of us wanted sporting facilities.

5. **What is Social Inclusion?** If you introduce people as being mentally ill without their permission this is a breach of confidentiality punishable by disciplinary proceedings. If you

The West Wing - Why NOT

(continued from page 1)

don't and no one knows who they are, how does this improve relations between the mentally ill and the public? Many of the public are not ready to include us and many of us are not ready to meet the public, any attempt to force social inclusion will cause stress and anxiety on both sides.

6. Security: We have enjoyed excellent security at SADSAD and to the best of my knowledge there have been no fights or wrecking frenzies. People who have been banned from New Horizons or SADSAD for violence and carrying weapons would be perfectly free to hang around the public areas of West Wing and harass us. It is a common practice for kids to hang around the mentally ill to watch and harass us for fun: we have had to 'run the gauntlet' of local kids to get to New Horizons, I have seen gangs of kids hanging round halfway-houses waiting to 'watch the loonies', people in corner bungalows have suffered harassment as they are known to be old, disabled or 'mental'. They knock on your door and if you're not old and don't have a limp they know who you are and give you hell. These charming young people would also be free to hang around the West Wings public areas.

7. Is it Legal: Bracknell runs socially inclusive activities from a New Horizons mental health daycentre which itself is not socially inclusive. Reading runs it's activities from it's own

daycentre which it hires out to community groups which it chooses (as indeed does SADSAD). If you choose the West Wing you will not control who walks through those doors as it is a public building. The point is: There is no legal requirement to make a daycentre socially inclusive or Bracknell would be in trouble. Furthermore, if we suffer discrimination, harassment and or mental cruelty due to being exposed to the general public and consequently identified as mentally ill could this be considered 'breach of confidentiality through contributory negligence' and might not Berkshire NHS, Slough Council and the Service Provider face legal action for such negligence. If one of us gets into an argument with one of them and a fight starts you can bet your reputation it will get into the local papers - 'Bonkers Bureaucrats Let Loonies Loose In West Wing'. While the majority of us are no more dangerous than the average 'normal' person you only have to look at the history of New Horizons to know what can happen when one of us has a bad day. Just read the local papers to see what some 'normal' people are capable of. Anyone physically injured in a fight could also sue for negligence.

To give an example of the legal principal, if an animal home put dogs and cats together in one cage causing injury or death they would certainly be judged negligent.

8. Unpopular: The stress and anxiety caused by the move from New Horizons caused considerable pain and is not something we would wish to do again, especially when the West Wing cannot be described as an improvement. Stress and anxiety do not promote recovery and are actually detrimental to mental health (even for 'normal' folk).

At a vote taken at the July 30th members meeting the results were as follows:

55% to stay at SADSAD
5% to go back to New Horizons
5% to go to the West Wing
35% undecided

Can a service which preaches 'choice and self-determination' impose something so unpopular on us and expect to be taken seriously? A socially inclusive service hub (daycentre) makes social inclusion compulsory with the only remaining choice being not to come.

I've attached the original document in Word Format if you need printed copies and hope you make the right decision.

Remember:
"If it aint broke don't fix it".

Kind Regards,

Danny S
Customer Representative

**“Three Things Cannot be Long Hidden: The Sun, The Moon, and The Truth.”
Buddha.**

**We hold the Bitten Apple, The Power and the Tools
But all the Knowledge in the World it ain't no use for Fools.
From John The Forunner and 'The Eagles'**

Ward 10 Episode II

Return of The Forunner

I visited Ward 10 last week after hearing that two of my friends had been admitted there. One had witnessed a shooting, had been raped, and two months ago cut her wrist in desperation.

As reported, last month we had the ban on ex-patients, visiting their friends in Ward 10 overturned. So, guess what happened when I arrived? A staff nurse turned me away, stating that it was "against the law" and policy not to allow me upstairs. It took fifteen minutes to sort out, by phoning the Ward Manager, I was finally let in! It felt like an old East European Prison Camp. Obviously, no attempt was made to alert the staff, after all the assurances I had been given. The situation was exactly as I stated at the end of June, at the Lit Meeting, that ex-patients of Ward 10 were not being allowed to visit their friends and relatives. There is no legal basis for this discrimination. I felt ashamed that our fellow citizens are being treated as badly as prisoners. However I can confirm that after visiting and lunching with Trish Fairlie a nice lady we can now freely visit our friends. It appears that they have no one to talk to unless they ask, and how many are ready to ask. A key worker should approach each patient, in his or her care, at least once per

shift for a chat. I spoke to three people on the ward, who say they are left for days on end, with no member of staff offering them time for a chat. I know this to certainly be the case when I was there. It is a disgrace, that we, as a society are treating vulnerable people in this way. There should be everyday massages and good recovery foods and proper recovery nurses not like some of the rubbish who are currently employed, meaning, whilst I was on the ward, two of the people at least are not suitable to be working with the mentally unwell. Last week a friend of mine, staying on Ward 10, was so desperately worried about the harm that she would come to, if she was discharged, she attempted suicide, two months ago and is vulnerable to alcohol and drugs, and after begging not to be put back to her private hell of a flat, and threatening to kill herself on the railway bridge at Slough, I wrote to the Ward Manager and the Psychiatrist, asking that she be kept in. I haven't even received a reply or a phone call. I checked up on my friend the other day, to find her desperate and without the will to live.

Some mentally ill people are so disengaged with ordinary life, coupled with the fact that the people charged with looking after

them, do not hear, in many cases, their pleas for help. Why can't these people be inspired to help? Well it has to come from the top doesn't it! Then on the way down to Local Government Level. Whilst there are some good people with empathy, the old saying comes to mind, "Don't ask a man to try and change anything, if his salary depends on it staying the same." Oh! So true, readers, think: about it! If you are one of those people, it's not always our fault, we are all victims of our own circumstances.

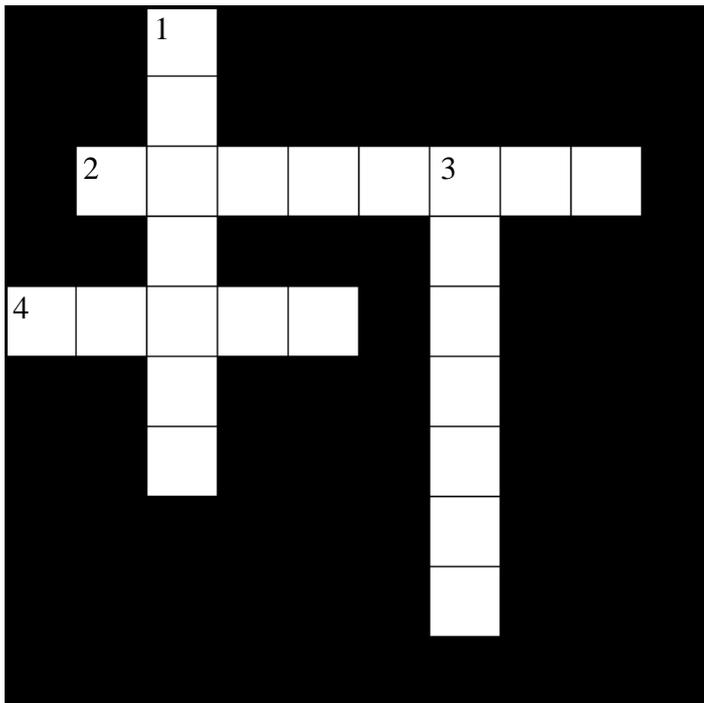
I am wondering whether a change in policy at Ward 10, whereby the staff are more "proactive", in asking each patient, every day, every shift, how they are feeling and spending at least half an hour with them. Sixteen patients in Ward 10 at the moment times half an hour equals eight hours, divided by four to five staff. It shouldn't be a big deal for the management to organise the staff to talk to the people they are supposed to be looking after. And I feel very strongly, as many people I currently talk to that this situation is to our shame. I hope that something can be learned from what I have said, and something be done to alleviate, what can only be described by any humane person, as mental abuse in our modern day society.

FASCINATING FACTS



4000 people are injured by teapots each year.
Japan is the largest exporter of frog's legs.
There are about 550 hairs in an eyebrow.
The most common non-contagious disease in the world is tooth decay.
Napoleon was terrified of cats.
The fastest growing nail is on the middle finger.
The letter N ends all Japanese words not ending in a vowel.
The doorbell was invented in 1831
The longest word in the English language is pneumonoultramicroscopicsilicovolcanoconiosis. It has 45 letters.
'Typewriter' is the longest word that can be typed using only the top row on a standard keyboard.

Quick Cross Word



Down

1. Cross (7)

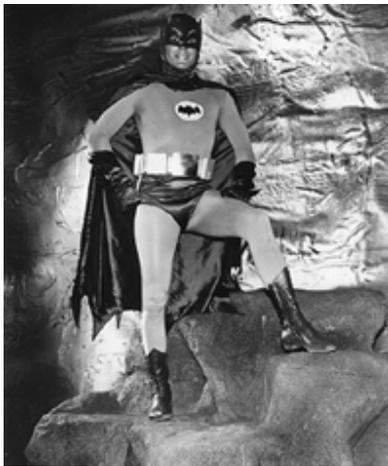
3. Cross (7)

Across

2. Cross (8)

4. Cross (5)

Batman Quotes



"In the end, veracity and rectitude always triumph."

"If you can't spend it, money's just a lot of worthless paper, isn't it?"

"It's obvious. Only a criminal would disguise himself as a licensed, bonded guard yet callously park in front of a fire hydrant!"

"Better three hours too soon than a minute too late."

"It is the duty of every good citizen of Gotham City to report meeting a man from Mars in a public park.' - Gotham City Penal Code, Section 32, Subsection 14."

Are You Getting It Every Month ?

You'd like it more often? Wouldn't we all... But for now SMH News comes out every month. You can pick up a copy at Sunrise Club, New Horizons, or Langley drop-in. The Man With No Fax Number will give you one if you can find him.

If you want to be really sure you can email subscriptions@sloughmental.co.uk and we'll will send you the email version every month. Read the latest issue and any previous issues at www.sloughmental.com.

Have you got a story, a poem, an interesting photo, something I haven't thought of ? Email it to editor@sloughmental.co.uk and see your name in print maybe (unless you wish to remain anonymous). .

