

Sunrise - The Fightback Begins



On Monday the first of September members of Sunrise Club, a mental health day centre with an uncertain future, protested outside Slough Town Hall.

I was not with them on that day and it makes me sad. Suffering from a throat infection and incapable of shouting slogans, I drank a large honey and lemon with quite a lot of whisky in it. The whisky interacted badly with my medication and made me a severely drowsy road hazard for the next few days.

That said, they managed very well without me, the story got fair coverage in 2 local papers and Tory Councillor Diana Coad is backing the campaign. Good work people, damn good work.

There may be more councillors to approach, some of whom have supported Mental Health causes

in the past. As to protests and demonstrations there is much to be learned from history, the French Farmers for instance, I'd hate to piss those guys off.

For some time there has been a 'Steering Committee' reviewing the future of day services (and the future of Sunrise), there are now going to be 2 new elected members from Sunrise plus 2 new non day service members and the 2 original ones. There will now be 6 of us on the committee. Clause 2.2 Line 5 of the Service Specification acknowledges the need for a drop-in service, we need to make sure that stays in.

When the committee met last it had written a specification which recognised the need for a safe place like Sunrise. Now the committee meets again to rewrite the specification to take personalisation into account.

This is what I call a tall order, it depends on what an unknown number of the 800 or so people on CMHT books decide to do with various amounts of money paid to them.

The budget for day services of £170,000 (already cut by £20,000 since last year) is probably just enough to run what we've got. Any loss of income will mean less days of service, shorter hours, or the complete closure of Sunrise.

One of the protesters told me about the decline of mental health services over the years:

From the Corner House with 11 staff and a minibus, to New Horizons with 5 staff, hot meals and no minibus, to Sunrise Club with 2 full time staff 2 or 3 agency staff, no hot meals, no minibus. And now we face more cuts -

Happy Mental Health Day !

Who Chose Choice ?

An officer of Slough Council recently announced that direct payments in Slough had been adopted by 7% and declared this a success because it was higher than the national average of 5%.

What does this mean? It means that 93% of us in Slough and 95% nationally don't want personalisation or direct payments.

The tiny minority who do want it should continue to have that right under the existing voluntary direct payments system. It flies in the face of democracy however that the vast majority of us who don't want personalisation should be forced to do so.

There is wisdom in the saying: 'If it ain't broke don't fix it.'

Personalisation can potentially break the service into as many pieces as there are of us.

The original budget for day services was based on a service for many people with economies of scale. As you can see (even when buying toilet rolls) the small package is always worse value than the big package. Personalisation does not take this into account so we won't all be able to afford the same package we have now.

The idea that government are somehow offering us choice here is made ludicrous by the fact that we never chose to have their choice and they will attempt to force us to make choices.

Life is complicated enough as it is without extra pain-in-the-ass choices to make. Lamborghini or Ferrari? Ok , I'll make that choice. But Big Mac Meal or Burger King? Oh does it matter?

(Based on 100 people the average personalisation payment is about £4.60 a day.)

Way of The Dog

As you wander down life's road... Consider way of Dog.

As you face life's problems ask yourself 'What would my dog do?'



Here then is the Way of the Dog:

When you face a problem that you cannot shag and cannot eat, piss on it and walk away.

(Based on an amusing car sticker I saw the other day.)

Confucius He Say

It was Confucius' birthday on September 28th so I thought let's do some Confucius:

One day, his students and he passed a grave where they saw a woman weeping at a gravestone. She told Confucius that her husband, her husband's father, and her son were killed by a tiger. When Confucius asked her why she didn't leave such a fated spot, she answered that in this place there was no oppressive government.

Confucius said, "Remember this, my child. An oppressive government is fiercer and more feared than a tiger."

Fascinating Fact:

Confucius sometimes used to sing his sayings and accompany himself on the zither.

Over 1000 Sign Save Sunrise Petition

Slough shoppers in their hundreds have signed the petition to keep the Sunrise Club mental health day centre open. Morale has been boosted by the support of over 1000 local people who signed the petition.

Driven to action by injustice, disgruntlement, and a council who promise us nothing but an uncertain future, they plan more demonstrations - all the way to Downing Street if they have to.

I have talked in the past about the bad image we 'mentalists' have and how our fear of identification stops us taking as much action as other groups. Sunrise members have shown the way forward, they have demonstrated fearlessly on the streets, have had their photos in the papers, have faced the public and won their support.

Here we have a positive image, of ordinary people fighting for their rights, something that the public can relate to. I've been in the mental health system for almost 20 years and this is one of the best organised resistance movements I've ever seen.



To the brave members of Sunrise Club we salute you. To Councillor Diana Coad we thank you for your support. To the local papers of Slough we thank you for your fair coverage of these events.

Mike Paxton on The Future of Sunrise

In the times when the greatest threat to the future of Sunrise was moving us to the West Wing, Mike had some plans to deal with the problem. He sent these plans to the management and he also told me about them.

He suggested that if the council could provide the approximately £15000 needed to pay the rent then we could form a cooperative and run the place ourselves.

He also suggested that if SADSAD could open in the daytime and we were to sign up as members then we would have our meeting place and SADSAD would have more members and more income.

He suggested how an attempt to close Sunrise could be resisted and I think he'd be proud to see the resistance has already begun.



Victory can be ours because we chose to fight. In battle one thing is certain: he who will not fight has already lost.

Fascinating Facts

'Stewardesses' is the longest word typed only with your left hand.

'Lollipop' is the longest word typed only with your right hand.

Many geese will attack yappy smaller dogs . . . they think they are foxes. Geese will train an unruly dog in days!

'Dreamt' is the only English word ending in the letters 'mt'.

Our eyes are the same size from birth but our ears and nose never stop growing.

No English word rhymes with month, orange, silver or purple.

Babies are born without kneecaps.

Only 4 English words end in 'dous':

Tremendous, horrendous, stupendous and hazardous.

Geese are not vegetarian and will eat slugs, snails, worms, mice, baby rats and hamsters if left with them.

There are two English words that have all five vowels in order: 'abstemious' and 'facetious'.

A cat has 32 muscles in each ear.

A 'jiffy' is an actual unit of time (1/100 of second).

A shark is the only fish that can blink with both eyes.

Not all geese are heterosexual: many form long-term, same-sex bonds.

A snail can sleep for 3 years.

February 1865 is the only month in recorded history with no full moon.

The winter of 1932 was so cold that Niagara Falls was frozen solid.

Geese have sharp serrated beak edges that are almost like teeth.

Personalisation Poem

If it ain't broke don't fix it,
In this they don't believe.
They want to make it personal,
Bamboozle and deceive.

Oh yes we'll make it personal,
And it will be so good.
You can have anything you want,
Just like you know you should.

How much then will you pay us?
It's got to be a joke!
Enough cash every single day
To buy a can of Coke!

Well Sunrise may be cut or shut
But some may get a deal.
Enough cash every single day
To buy a Big Mac Meal!

With nobody to see us fall
We'll hit depression deep.
With nowhere left to go
We'll end up on Ward 10 to sleep.

The NHS will pay the bill,
The Government will too.
And everyone will say
That was a ducked up thing to do!

Those psychobabbling duckwits
With half-baked schemes & rules,
They use us all as guinea pigs
They treat us all like dools.

One day when the truth is known
They'll put 'em on a bus,
They'll send 'em all to Ward 10
Cos they're crazier than us!

By Captain Speech-Impediment

Other News

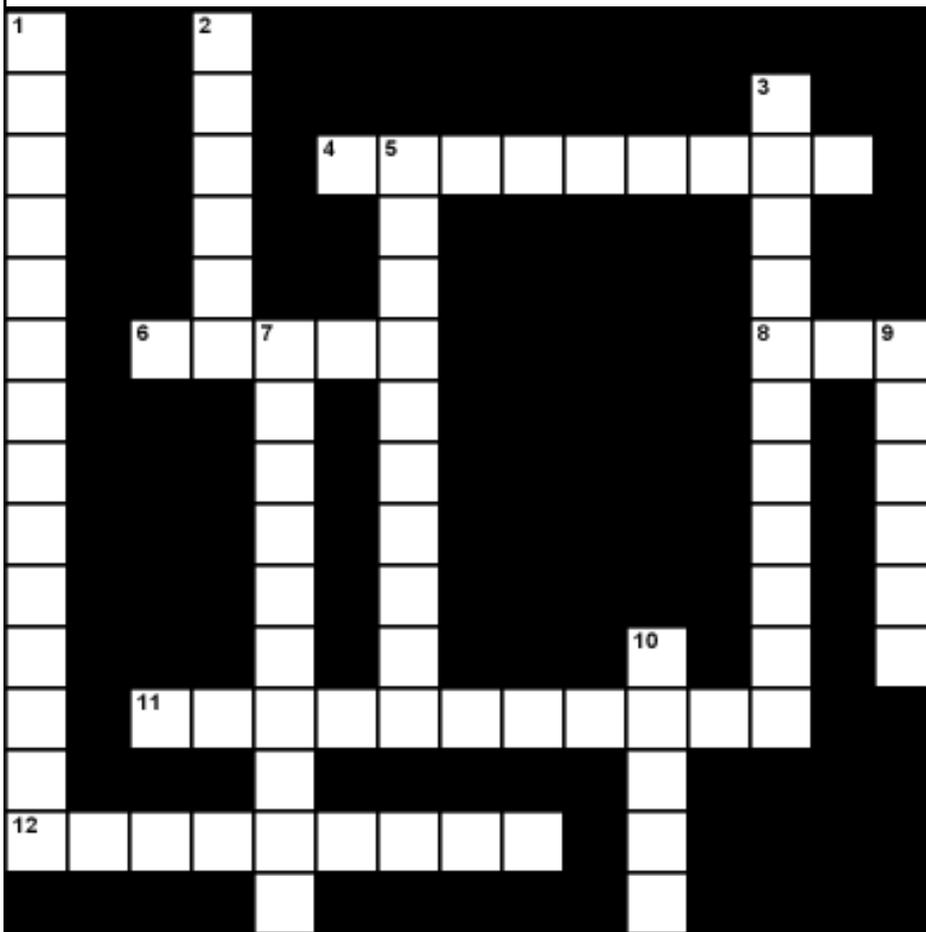
Drug Sniffer dogs will make regular patrols of Ward 10 after traces of cannabis were found. We're told the patients don't mind ... I guess it's nice to see man's best friend whatever job he's come to do.

Personalisation is not a trial but a pilot, the difference is if they don't get it right first time they keep on trying.

Speaking at the Open Forum, Susanna Yeoman made the following statement:

'Everyone will be assessed for a personalisation budget regardless of whether they have care managers or not.'

Cartoon Character Crossword



Across

- 4 12 across chases this little yellow fellow (6,3).
 6 8 across chases this mouse (5).
 8 Cat who chases 6 across (3).
 11 Secret agent mouse with eye patch (6,5).
 12 Cat who chases 4 Across (9).

Down

- 1 Fastest mouse in all Mexico (6,8).
 2 Wife of 9 down (6).
 3 Flying Superhero mouse (6,5).
 5 Cunning character who tries to catch 7 down (4,6).
 7 Fast moving bird (5 across chases him) (10).
 9 Probably the most famous cartoon mouse in the world (6).
 10 Dog who chases 8 across (5).

**GOT ANY
NEWS**

VIEWS

POEMS

PHOTOS

PUZZLES

GEESE

**ANYTHING ELSE
ON YOUR MIND**

SEND IT TO

editor@sloughmental.co.uk

**And we'll tell the world.
(Or some of it anyway)**

Mystery Goose



Have you seen this goose?

Can you identify it?

Answers to

geese@sloughmental.co.uk

NEXT OPEN FORUM

Thomas Grey Centre
Friday October 30th, 11am

All service users and carers are invited to attend a sub-group of the monthly LIT meeting. This is a chance to hear up-dates on mental health services and feedback to a member of the senior management team from New Horizons.

Refreshments Provided