



## Country Under New Management - What's New ?

So Gordon is gone and Dave and Nick are in. But what does this mean to us ? Well I've looked at through the whole manifesto and all I found was everyone on incapacity (including us) will be reassessed. So some of us may end up on the dole instead. Depending on how far the goalposts are moved we may suffer more stress and hardship on less money as we chase a handful of jobs from bosses who'd rather not employ us.

You might not take kindly to what the Lib - Con alliance have planned for you. But sadly the Labour party had very similar plans. Tweedle-Dee and Tweedle-Dum... Was it a coincidence they launched a new 'Alice in Wonderland' film this year?



## Warning: May Contain Nuts

It was the first Wednesday of the writers group run by Company Paradiso at the Sunrise Club. We were sat round a table discussing what to do with the stuff that might be written. There was already a plan to do a book and I casually mentioned that comedy was one of the few professions where mental health issues were not considered a disadvantage. Naveed suggested 'May Contain Nuts' as a title, then I suggested 'Warning: May Contain Nuts'... Though some manufacturer of convenience food may also deserve some credit. Little did we know that Jon Potter and Company Paradiso would turn it into a 3 hour extravaganza where we would share the stage with the likes of John Hegley and Amy's Ghost. There were some great acts, some of whom had never

performed before. I've been to Comedy Clubs before and this was one of the best.

There was something about being on stage and making people laugh, cheer and applaud that really put the zap on my head. I've been on no medication, prescription or otherwise, that gave me quite the same buzz. I try to spread a little happiness as I go by and if I can make people laugh then it's mission accomplished. One day I may be heckled, but I'm a mentalist, I've been heckled all my life.

There is much truth to the saying 'Laughter is The Best Medicine' and it would be great to continue with the writing & performance activities initiated by Company Paradiso. The writing group was popular and those who were

involved in May Contain Nuts mostly agreed that although they had felt nervous at first they'd enjoyed the experience.

The Reading Resource runs an 'Open Mike' event which Sunrise members have performed at and I believe we may be able to run a similar event in Slough. Besides those with comic and poetic talents there are quite a few singers amongst us so a 'Performing Arts' group involving poetry, karaoke, music & comedy might well be successful. A Sunrise got Talent event was held some time ago and was, I'm told, well supported by the members. The first three of us 'May Contain Nutters' or 'Jolly Jokers' from Slough have put our videos on YouTube and this will be an option for those who follow us.

## Warning: May Contain Nuts - Slough's 'May Contain Nutters'



Rumour has it that the masked mentalist known as Hatman is none other than Danny Savage, editor of the Slough Mental Health News. His act began with a delightful poem about hospital food and cannibalism, continuing with a short rant on user groups. Here he sings a protest song about a coffee shop with Mark Barnes, Cholsey guitar legend.



John The Forerunner, former employee of Apple Records, recalled some amusing anecdotes of sex and drugs and rock'n'roll and The Beatles, interspersed with some witty ad-libs on the current political situation and what a w\*\*ker David Cameron is. His act was interrupted by a phone call, apparently from Susan Boyle, asking him to buy her some coke.



Slough Town F.C. superfan Dave Programs recited possibly the Greatest poem ever written on the subject of Slough Town Football Club in the 2010 season.

...They lost four-nil!  
A very bitter pill!  
Oh you rebels!  
The 'nearly men' with no medals,  
Just dust and rain and pebbles!

## Ability Housing and Sunrise Club - The Story Continues

Ability have introduced some changes at Sunrise and continue to consult with members on the direction of the service and get things done. They've introduced a debating group on Tuesdays which apart from providing an interesting activity on rather a quiet day also provides the members with a more informal means of feedback than the Wednesday member's meeting.

There was some confusion when it was announced that changes were to be made to the Thursday service. One version was that Laura (Unit Manager) would work at the office all day. There would be no community coffee morning and appointments would have to be made to see Rosa (Assistant Manager) to do community activities.

A petition was presented from members opposing these changes and a number of members expressed their opposition at the members meeting.

Madeline of Ability Housing made the following explanation. As there was a small number of members attending the coffee morning she didn't consider it an effective use of 2 staff. Less than 10 members frequently attend the community activities and 1 staff member to 10 of us is considered enough. She further explained that a lot of paperwork needed to be done regarding the transfer from Mind, our support plans etc. Hence the need for Laura to be in the office.

It was agreed that the Thursday community activities would continue to run and that if 2 staff members were required for some reason Laura could be released from office duties. Madeline also confirmed that trips such as the forthcoming trip to the Imperial War Museum will be unaffected by these changes.

Ability have said they will consider the views expressed at the meeting and will come back to us when they've reconsidered

their plans, in the meantime Thursday service will continue as normal. This shows a degree of flexibility and sensitivity to our views which are an improvement on the 'My Way or The Highway' attitude of past managements.

Staff now chat with members and ask them how they're feeling as has been suggested in the past. The atmosphere at Sunrise has considerably improved.

Abolition or reduction of community activities on Thursday's would be opposed not only by ourselves but by Slough Borough Council. Hopefully then, this won't happen.

That's not to say there should never be changes: if only a few people turn up on Thursdays then maybe we need something more interesting than drinking coffee.

I'd quite like to take a walk in the park, see the sun shimmering on the lake and watch the wildlife.

## Catch Up Cafe

I've finally caught up with the Catch Up Café. Run by Inspirations this event allows you to chat with representatives from various professional bodies involved in the mental health system. I had some interesting conversations with Catherine Joiner, Slough's Direct Payments Expert and Madeline and Kate of Ability Housing. Drinks and snacks were available for 20p. The event is held in St Andrews Church Hall, The Grove - not far from Slough High Street.

## Fascinating Facts

A violin contains about 70 separate pieces of wood!

If you counted 24 hours a day, it would take 31,688 years to reach one trillion!

Porcupines float in water!

A sloth moves so slowly that green algae can grow undisturbed on its fur!

## The Mentalist Dictionary

### **Mentalism:**

The cause that seeks to improve the lives of those with mental health issues.

### **Mentalist:**

1. One who has mental health issues. 2. One who supports the cause of mentalism.

### **Gold Mentalist:**

A mentalist who, in some way, stands out in a crowd of other mentalists. Especially one who has won an award for Mentalism.

### **Contramentalist:**

One who opposes the cause of mentalism.

### **Psychiatrists:**

Mentalists who talk to mentalists and prescribe medication. Whether they are mentalists under definition 1 or 2 of the word varies from one psychiatrist to another and is a matter of some debate.

## Word From The Hatman

Another month in Gotham City, I've been on stage twice, on the radio once and the hatmobile's failed its MOT.

Fighting contramentalist crime with poems that rhyme... some of the time... Those folks from Company Paradiso and BBC Radio Berkshire have sure made life more interesting.

Our voice has been heard by quite a few people and it seems some of them now think more kindly of us. Of course they did a fair bit of editing, they cut my first psychotic episode to 4 minutes. Wouldn't it be cool if we could edit our lives like that. I Thank the good people of Company Paradiso and BBC Radio Berkshire for giving us some positive publicity and the highly enjoyable experience that was 'Warning: May Contain Nuts.

So how's things for you? If the kingdom prospers and the people rejoice, where dwells evil?



Have you been treated unjustly by contramentalists, do you need some advice? Email to:

Hatman@sloughmental.co.uk

I'll try and right the wrongs or at least write a poem about it.

I realise that is a bold claim, not all the problems we mentalists face can be made to rhyme, but I'll do my best - I like a challenge.

## Fluffy Duckling Update



Here we see the fluffy ducklings who live in a well known Berkshire psychiatric unit tucking into their duck food with their mum. Under her watchful eye 9 of the original 12 ducklings have survived to this age and size. Soon, mum will lead them to the duck pond.

## NEXT OPEN FORUM

Thomas Grey Centre  
Friday June 25th, 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

## Have We Missed Something ?

Tell us about it. We are not all seeing, all knowing or omnipotent. We stopped doing all that stuff when we started taking the pills.

Become a reporter, send in your report. Superman was a reporter and he could do cool stuff. Warning: do not attempt to fly without an airplane.

## TOG YNA

SWEN

SWEIV

SMEOP

SOTOHP

SELZZUP

ESEEG

?

ANYTHING ELSE  
ON YOUR MIND

SEND IT TO

editor@sloughmental.co.uk

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

## Cool Number Plate Of The Month



Spotted this one at the Taplow car boot sale, as custom number plates go this is pretty neat, so 'Hiya' to you whoever you are.

## New Video Section For Our Website

Our website will be updated in the next few days to show videos of the 'Warning: May Contain Nuts Event' maybe some videos from Reading 'Open Mike' and other future events. The acts mentioned on page 2 will be available directly on sloughmental.co.uk in early June but may already be viewed on YouTube by searching for sloughmental.

Future plans include a searchable poetry section and some form of picture gallery, transforming the website from the site of the paper into a multimedia showcase for creative mentalist arts.

Well that's the theory anyway, but we have the technology - should be fun.

**S**lough  
**A**nd  
**M**unicipal  
**U**nion for the  
**R**epresentation and  
**A**dvancement of  
**I**nteresting...thinkers

Anyone Want to Start a Mentalist Movement to Protect Our Interests in the Uncertain times to come?

Last time Sunrise elected representatives Seven came, Two were chosen.

The Seven Samurai has a nice ring to it, a bit more catchy than the Two Samurai.

## Last Month's Cryptic Gooseword Solution...



A Beseeching Frog Got  
Hints?  
(anagram)

Answer:

Steinbacher Fighting  
Goose!

## This Month's Cryptic Gooseword



Hog sees on ice? (7,5)  
(anagram)