

HORIZON NHS TRUST  
For people with learning disabilities

# NEW HORIZONS *Staff Newsletter*

September 1995

No.2/95

## News from around the Trust

### Opening of The Courtyard

"The Courtyard", New Services Division, Harperbury was officially opened on Thursday 7 September when a commemorative tree was planted by Ken Lewis, Tom Freeman and Lorna Wallis (Acting General Manager). An "open day" was organised to promote the wide range of services provided and to exhibit examples of service user's work.

Les Trewin, Therapy & Day Activity Services Manager said the event was a great success. "All the staff and residents involved worked very hard to ensure the event went without a hiccup. A big thank you goes to Oaklands Horticultural Campus, Rochfords and Aylett's Nurseries who generously donated a number of bedding and shrubbery plants as well as supplying the trees".

### The main aims of The Courtyard

"The Courtyard" Activity Services is an integral part of the New Services Division Assessment and Treatment Service, providing for clients with learning disabilities who also have mental health needs.

The service participates fully in all stages of a client's stay within New Services - from admission to resettlement - as part of a multi-disciplinary approach to client care. "The Courtyard" Activity Service offers a wide range of activity packages using on site and wider community based resources to meet clients' needs relevant to their personal development and individual care plans.

The team offers service users a wide range of vocational, social, educational and recreational opportunities both on and off site. Some of these include:

- catering • computer skills
- men's groups • work skills
- multi-cultural cooking
- carpentry • horticulture
- community living skills
- cycling • women's groups
- plumbing

These packages operate throughout the year - including weekends and Bank Holidays - and have been developed to meet needs commonly experienced and articulated by our clients. They are in a constant process of extension and adaptation and provide a dynamic framework within which we can develop

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strengths within a supportive and creative environment.

Most activities are offered on a small or large group basis but, where necessary, we take the service to residential units to meet the needs of clients who are temporarily unable to access "The Courtyard" premises or off site services.

In order to facilitate those needs which cannot be met directly by "The Courtyard" Activity Service, links have been established with appropriate specialist services on and off the main site. Common premises are shared with the teaching staff of Oakland's College, with whom close working offers complementary and balanced programmes for New Services clients.

### *Leavesden - The Final Months*

**L**eavesden is fast approaching closure. The resettlement of residents to the community remains the prime task and this is evidenced everywhere on the Leavesden site. You will see workers from the new community home, alongside Leavesden staff, talking to one or two residents about their new homes. Everywhere you will hear comments such as "I am going next week" or "I have not got long now". There is a sense of excitement and, at the same time, apprehension in wards and departments.

There has been a lot of support from residents, and their families, who have moved out over the year. The best example of this was the closure party for "Friendly Leaves". Many parents and friends came, even though it was five or six years since they had experienced the change from Leavesden to community. Without exception, they complimented the way resettlement had taken place and how much more advantageous community living is despite the high standards of care provided in Leavesden. They also thought the "Friendly Leaves" had been invaluable over the years and want to see similar clubs established in the community for people with disabilities. As 31 October approaches, there will continue to be sad farewells and parties to mark the closure of wards and departments. Despite the reduced size, the level of activity and monitoring of the quality of care is being maintained. Most importantly the resettlement principles are being applied to all moves to ensure that everyone moves to a "better way of life".

### *Farewell to "Friendly Leaves" Clubhouse Leavesden*

**T**he 9th July marked the closure of "Friendly Leaves", the residents' Clubhouse at Leavesden. The building was opened in 1974 by Lady Bowes-Lyon, a cousin of Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother. Mrs Sainer, together with her late husband Henry, were instrumental in the establishment of the Clubhouse following their son Derek's admission to Leavesden in 1968.

In her speech, to mark the Club's closure, Mrs Sainer recalled the reality of life then: "Visiting was limited to two afternoons a week, Thursdays and Sundays from 2-5pm, and the meeting place was the

*Recreation Hall which contained a few rows of seats, on one side a table for an Assistant Matron and on the opposite side a table for an Assistant Chief Male Nurse who would arrange for one's child to be brought to the Hall. There was not the slightest bit of comfort in that setting and, with the approval of the then Physician Superintendent Dr Shepherd, Henry and I donated six sturdy round white-topped folding metal tables to enable families to sit in little groups with somewhere to spread the picnics and goodies brought for their relatives."*

In 1970 Henry Sainer was elected Chairman of the

Leavesden Friends Committee and promoted the idea of a Clubhouse specially for the residents with facilities similar to those of the Staff Club - an idea getting the enthusiastic support of the rest of the Committee. Plans were drawn and submitted to the Regional Planning Authority who took almost two years to decide. They refused the chosen site and allocated instead some disused tennis courts on the Annexe Site for the clubhouse. Finally, the new premises were opened in 1974.

*"At the time the Club, under John Robbins' management, was only open on Thursday and*



*Sunday afternoons staffed by ladies of the WVS who manned the counter and provided tea, coffee, cold drinks and snacks in the Restaurant Section, while others could relax in the comfortable lounge in family groups or watch TV.*

*The effect of the provision of the patients' Clubhouse amazed the Hospital Management who had totally under-estimated the popularity of this special building which residents could call their own. The residents' appearance changed dramatically, they took care of their looks and appearance and outfits, because they could meet the opposite sex and enjoy get-togethers, film shows, discos and other entertainment away from ward regimentation. Nursing Staff were recruited to run the Clubhouse, with Sister Flaherty prominent amongst them, and the building was open every day of the week. In the mornings it accommodated play groups for residents who had no other opportunity to leave their wards, while afternoons and evenings were for everyone who was able to come. In fact the demand was so overwhelming that after two years the "Friends" were asked to build an extension to provide space for indoor games as well as dances and an outdoor terrace for use in fine weather".*

Then in 1984 the threat of hospital closure appeared and by 1990 the Annexe site had to be vacated. The Friends were promised by the Regional Health Authority that equal facilities

and the necessary funds would be provided on the main hospital site. Meanwhile after 17 years as Chairman, Henry Sainer resigned at the AGM in 1987 but continued as Vice-Chairman until his sudden death in December 1988. However the "Friends" and Mrs Sainer carried on with the good work and the changes to the running of the Clubhouse.

By 1990 the new purpose built Pavilion for Day Services had been erected and the former Male OT building, opened in 1976, had become vacant. Following the suggestion by Mrs Sainer to move the Club House, the Hospital Manager made a

very good job of creating the new "Friendly Leaves" which was opened in March 1992 by Mr Bob Holness, the Friends' Vice President, who, together with Mrs Holness, had for many years given Leavesden valuable support and encouragement. In summing up, Mrs Sainer said: *"Once again the Clubhouse became a popular venue, but will be closed at the end of this month - and so I say "goodbye" with the satisfaction that for 21 years the "Friendly Leaves" played a positive role in stimulating and cheering the lives of Leavesden residents. I do hope they will find equal facilities elsewhere."*

### ***Nightingale Close Development Cell Barnes***

**T**wenty residents of Cell Barnes and Leavesden, their relatives and those who work with them, are looking forward to the opening of a four house development in the south-west corner of the Cell Barnes site.

The homes will be developed by Macintyre Housing Association and managed by Macintyre Care. They are designed to provide modern, spacious and comfortable living. Each house will have its own enclosed garden and be home to four or six people from Cell Barnes or Leavesden.

On Monday 4 September work will start on site of this new development of four large detached houses. The site is on one-and-a-half acres adjacent to the staff residence and with its own access from Nightingale Lane. The builders will start with "enabling" works which will include re-routing water and electricity services to the staff residence. The nurses home annex will be demolished and some trees and bushes will be removed. Building work should be completed in about six months time with the planned move of residents taking place in May 1996.



## ***V.E. Day Celebrations Cell Barnes***

**O**n 4 May 1995 the Courtyard Complex held a V E Day street party to celebrate fifty years of peace.

Fortunately the weather was excellent so the decorations in the Courtyard looked wonderful with balloons and bunting, although it was a bit too warm for some staff members who dressed up in wartime uniforms. Inside was a display of wartime memorabilia about which the staff reminisced with some of the clients. Later in the day a medley of wartime songs was played on the piano accompanied by a sing-along including old-time favourites such as "We'll Meet Again". It was followed by a prayer and two minutes silence. During the festivities everyone enjoyed a lovely buffet which included a glorious celebration cake.

## ***NEWS FROM THE TRUST BOARD***

### ***Leavesden Closure***

The Board received a progress report and noted that contingency plans were now being finalised and progress well maintained. In particular, the hand-over of the new buildings for the Eric Shepherd Unit and Brent House / Sunny-side were on target.

### ***Public Access to Board Meetings***

The Board discussed how to become as open as possible in its work. While it was not felt it would be appropriate to have public attendance at meetings, the Board approved a plan to meet with residents, relatives and other interested parties on Hospital sites. The first of these meetings will be in December at Cell Barnes. The effectiveness of these arrangements will be kept under review.

### ***Non-Executive Director Appointments***

Mrs Sue Montague has been reappointed to the Board for a further term and a Mr Mike Newman appointed to replace Mr Jim Gardner in November 1995. An induction programme

for Mr Newman is currently being arranged.

### ***Mental Health Act Commissioners Visit***

It was reported that the report on the recent visit of the Mental Health Act Commissioners had been very positive. A detailed response is being made to the Commissioners' letter.

### ***Local Pay***

The Leavesden closure payment to reward staff who remained at Leavesden until its closure was approved.

### ***1994/95 Draft Accounts***

The final accounts for the year ended 31 March 1995 have been completed and show that the Trust achieved all its financial targets. There had however been a change in the accounting procedures requiring the Trust to show the full costs of anticipated redundancies and early retirement. As this represented a very large sum for the Trust, the Chairman is writing on behalf of the Board to the NHS Executive

to resolve this problem. The 1994/95 Accounts were signed on 14 September 1995.

### ***Income and Expenditure - three months to June '95***

The Finance Director reported a good initial quarter with income and expenditure in line with expectations. The major cost reductions arising from the closure of Leavesden have yet to work into the accounts.

### ***Annual Report***

The draft of the 1994/95 Annual Report was approved and will now be sent for printing. The Board expressed their thanks to all those involved in this work.

### ***Miss Jane Hine***

The Board noted that Jane Hine would be leaving the Trust in September to take up a full-time course of study at the University of Portsmouth. The Board wished Miss Hine well in this and her future career.

## ***NVQ Update***

**A record number of staff recently received their NVQ certificates at ceremonies held by both Horizon and the University of Hertfordshire on 12 July 1995.** Certificates were presented by Ken Lewis, Chairman to the thirty one successful candidates who achieved NVQs in care during the past year including awards for assessors, verifiers, occupational therapy and physiotherapy. This was the highest number of any NHS Trust in Hertfordshire and is indicative of the success of the Trust's scheme. Les Timberlake achieved his own NVQ in Engineering Maintenance. ***Congratulations to you all!***



## Human Resource Issues *Sympathetic Friends*

**Eighteen people (six more than originally planned) have now put their name forward to commence training as a Sympathetic Friend.** The names of volunteers who complete the course satisfactorily and decide they still wish to carry out the role will be announced at the end of September.

The Sympathetic Friends main role is to act as an advocate to someone facing harassment, discrimination or victimisation in the work place.



**Horizon NHS Trust formally submitted to the TEC appointed assessor its portfolio of evidence in support of Investors in People in July.** We had hoped that this would be followed by the assessment interviews to gauge the success of our training and development initiative. The assessors advice was that recently introduced systems aimed at evaluating the benefit of training to the Trust had not been in place for long enough. It was agreed that more time would need to be allowed for the new evaluation systems to become established and assessment has been deferred until later in the year. (When a

revised date is known details will be published.)

In the mean time all staff are reminded and encouraged to insist that they are annually agreeing with their manager a Personal Development Plan (PDP) to establish their training needs in support of the Trust's goals.

## *1995/6 Pay Awards*

**In the week that Health Service Trade Unions announce the results of their ballot for industrial action in support of this year's pay claim all Horizon staff have been made a pay offer.** The offer will not be imposed and individuals must decide whether or not to accept.

All staff covered by Pay Review Body and other Whitley Council Groups (except Doctors and Dentists and SMP staff) are offered in 1995/6 a 3% increase on basis pay and London Weighting effective from 1 April 1995. Leads and Allowances are not increased.

The Trust Board considers this to be a fair offer, especially because it has not been possible to negotiate an agreement with local staff. The national debate has done little to promote the interests of Horizon staff and it remains the hope that in 1996/7 we can use our local pay arrangements to reach a settlement.

## *A day in the life of .....*

**In the last two issues of "New Horizons" we looked at the role of Management Accounts and the Trust Business Development Manager.** In this edition, we are going to look at the ICIS Project Support Officer, Adrian Tammaro, who joined the Information Technology Department, based at Trust Headquarters, in June 1993, having worked as a Nursing Assistant at Harperbury since 1991.

Adrian talked about his role as ICIS (Integrated Client Information System) Project Support Officer and what exactly was entailed: *"My job has several functions. Firstly, I act as ICIS Project Support Officer. This involves providing support to the ICIS Project Team and a lot of my work entails administration, maintaining the project library and setting up ICIS project meetings and presentations. Secondly, I maintain the client administration data base and produce monthly reports for contract monitoring which is sent regularly to our purchasers. Every month I also send updated reports on client information to Financial Accounts, New Services and the Pharmacy to enable them to keep up to date with current facts, particularly when in contact with our Purchasers."*

At the moment Adrian is attending Luton University and will be commencing his second and final year of studies in September to gain his post-graduate Certificate in Education. Arising from these studies, Adrian



was given the opportunity to organise Trust-wide computer training in the use of the Superpaint software package on the Apple Macintosh computers. "In order to deliver a good training package, a lot of work had to be undertaken. The lessons were greatly received and overbooked but there is an expectancy that more will be organised in the future."

A very important aspect of Adrian's work has been to provide training in the use of the ICIS system to all staff in the General Office, Pharmacy and Resettlement. Adrian explained the purpose of the training: "The idea of the training is to give the users a basic knowledge in the use of their computer, how to use the computer network and, most importantly, how to use the facilities provided by ICIS which are relevant to their day-to-day work. I assisted in preparing the user manuals to facilitate the training programme."

One of Adrian's tasks at the moment is to assist users throughout the Trust on hardware and software queries/problems via the newly established "Helpdesk". Adrian said: "Because this service is across the three sites, I am able to go out and meet people, which I enjoy, as well as the challenge of solving unusual computer problems".

Looking to the future Adrian concluded: "Three modules of the ICIS system have now been completed and these are at the test stage at Cell Barnes & Harperbury in the Pharmacy, Resettlement and General Office. I believe the ICIS system will create a rewarding challenge for staff because it teaches new skills and, most importantly, provides the right information to enable staff to deliver good quality care for our service users".

## Horizon's External Links

### Norwegian Visitors

On 31 August 1995 Horizon played host to a group of Norwegian students undertaking a three year nursing/social work course at Oslo and Akershus College of Welfare Nursing. On

completion of the course, the qualified students will work with children, adolescents and adults with learning disabilities.

The day's programme of events included an introduction to Horizon NHS Trust and long-stay hospitals as well as visits to a range of services provided - Assessment & Treatment, Day Services, Challenging Behaviour and Special needs.

At the conclusion of the visit the students expressed their thanks for an interesting day.

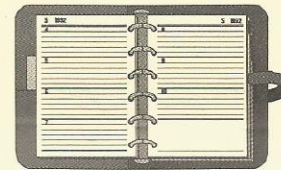
### "CARE" (Croatia Assistance & Relief Expedition)

Horizon were recently approached by an organisation called CARE (Croatia Assistance & Relief Expedition) to donate much needed supplies for the benefit of the clients living in a mental institution in Stancic, which is in Western Slavonia.

Unfortunately, when the convoy arrived in Croatia, there was an

outbreak of hostilities in the Zagreb region and it was felt prudent not to try to reach Stancic.

However, the supplies were taken to Lopacha Mental Institution, which is situated in the hills overlooking Rijeka. Lopacha is a much smaller institution than Stancic but the supplies were very much appreciated. Richard Bullen, the Chairman of CARE, has promised to send us some photographs taken during the delivery to Lopacha.

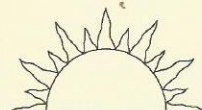


**DIARY  
DATES**

### Annual Public Meeting - Advance Notice

The Trust will be holding its Third Annual Public Meeting on Thursday 28 September 1995 in De Salis Hall, Harperbury, commencing at 7.30pm.

We look forward to welcoming you, presenting the Trust's Annual Report for 1994/5 and hearing your views.



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