

Summer 2008

Islington Borough User Group – iBUG – is a group of people who either use or have used mental health services and have come together to monitor the provision of these services in Islington. Our function is to give a professional voice to people in Islington who have mental health problems and who seek help with these from service providers whether in the statutory or voluntary sector.

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Summer Newsletter

**Chair's Report**

The iBUG position on the day service review. 20 July 2008

The directors of iBUG would like to make absolutely clear that we have never supported the proposed changes in the configuration of the Islington day centre provision. We have spoken and written many times in our opposition to these proposals.

However we are aware that the review has caused huge hurt and upset. Some service users think that iBUG has supported the review. Because of this, iBUG is having some time at this meeting to ask its members what they want the iBUG Directors to do now. We have produced a time line diagram to show the input that iBUG has on the day services review.

We have found it very difficult to fairly represent the views and best interests of all three day centres service users. It is important to understand how

small iBUG is and how limited its resources are. There is only one member of staff (working 21 hrs per week) and three Directors who regularly make happen all the things that iBUG do. The very essence of iBUG is that the three directors and all the volunteers who participate in iBUG activities are mental health service users who may have been sectioned and spent long times in hospital suffering severe mental health illness. This is in many respects the most important aspect of iBUG's significance. We are a user organisation led by service users who all have or have used mental health services.

This requires us to be very careful with the service user resource we use. We have to consider the health of all iBUG service users. This includes the directors health.

Therefore the iBUG directors wish for the support of all our members at this meeting today.

We therefore propose the following.

1. Consider the actions that iBUG have undertaken up to now. (Time line)
2. Asks all our members what to do now. (Discussion)
3. Understand that iBUG is small and may not have the resources to do everything.
4. Recognise that iBUG has always been run in a fair and open way and that the place to discuss criticism of iBUG and its directors is at iBUG meetings and nowhere else.

This is a very strange position we find ourselves in. It has been claimed that that Cllr John Gilbert announced that iBUG and Islington Mind supported the review. From iBUG's point of view this has never been the case but no-one listens to what we actually say. An iBUG director put their hand up and contradicted this councillor at the executive (Cont page 7)

In the Day Centres Review document I had read that Southwood Smith will be reduced to a 'satellite service' catering to twenty people a day. What on earth are the other 15-20 people a day who currently attend going to do?



Southwood Smith Day Centre

By Suzy Lee

Recently Peter Jones and I went to visit Southwood Smith Day Centre to talk about the work that iBUG does and to discuss how we could forge stronger links. When we arrived, there was a service user on reception and I was told that they can earn £2.50 an hour doing this.

We sat in on a lively and well attended community meeting, which occurs every six weeks. There were also an almost bewildering number of other groups, from art and computers to creative writing, music club, literacy and numeracy, drama, relaxation.....there are an impressive 17 groups on the timetable.

Maxine, the Manager, said 'we like to keep people busy' and there was certainly enough stimulation going on to fulfil this wish. One of the groups I was most intrigued by was a discussion group on Mondays to talk about the weekend. As a service user myself, I know how difficult weekends can be, especially if you are not feeling that well, and I thought this was a thought provoking and creative idea to address how we cope when many of our usual services shut down.

Service users can also help to prepare the two course

lunch, for £2.50 a session, paid at the end of the month. It is interesting to note that whilst most centres in Islington have some kind of scheme whereby service users can get involved in the work of the centres, pay and conditions vary considerably, and I am left wondering if this needs looking at on a borough wide basis. Do service users need a trade union?

When Southwood Smith started, it had an older service user base than some of the centres, (including some people who had been in long stay hospitals) but Maxine explained that now, they have a number of younger service users and their client base has changed. They still have a connection to two residential units, Cloudsley Road and Turle Road, but also have a lot of people who live independently in the community.

They have four staff and one cook who work with the 35-40 people who attend each day. I was surprised at how many people attend, as in the Day Centres Review document I had read that Southwood Smith will be reduced to a 'satellite service' catering to twenty people a day. What on earth are the other 15-20 people a day who currently attend going to do? When I put this question to Maxine, she had no answer to give me. 'We have

not been told what they will do' she said, adding that their service users were very worried about the changes. For those of you who do not know yet, the spacious upstairs of the building, currently used for groups, will be given to a local community mental health team and Southwood Smith will only have access to downstairs. Maxine explained that they use the upstairs for groups every day and she does not know how they will cope. It appears that no detail has yet been worked out which has led to a lot of anxiety amongst the service users and staff. Like every centre I have spoken to, it appears that Southwood Smith would rather have been left alone.

At the end of our visit, we expressed our concern that members of Southwood Smith are not currently participating in iBUG activities. It was agreed that from now on we would have at least one meeting a year there in order to encourage people to get involved.

The Primary Care Trust Board

By Suzy Lee

Diana and Adebisi have been going to the Primary Care Trust (PCT) board meetings for two years. They are observers, but allowed to ask questions. They sit at the back of the room with managers in the middle and the Chair and directors at the front, with name tags in front of them.

If the board need to discuss private business, they finish early and ask everybody else to leave. Diana says this does happen from time to time. The meetings are every two months on the second Thursday in the month. Adebisi always takes notes - she says it is

hard work keeping up with them as things get discussed very quickly - sometimes she wishes she could ask them to slow down!

Both Diana and Adebisi say that in the breaks, the directors are always polite and mingle - they feel part of the network and find that there is often interest in iBUG and what we do as an organisation. Adebisi said 'it makes me feel important to be part of it'. They are strict about break times and no mobile phones are allowed. There used to be refreshments but this got cut. The board discusses a wide range of issues that affect the PCT,

from reducing teenage pregnancies to their ratings (they got two stars last year and are now aiming for three) from smoking and cancer treatments to staff surveys to capital development schemes.

'Anyone can go to the PCT board meetings' says Diana, but clearly one needs to be able to grasp a wide range of issues.

If you are interested in attending this or any other meetings on behalf of iBUG, please speak to one of the directors at the Business meeting.

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Service User Profile- John

By Suzy Lee

In 1989 John was walking the streets when his brother found him and took him to hospital. He waited ages in A and E, then was admitted even though he did not think there was anything wrong with him. He thought the Waterlow Unit was 'horrible', but the staff made him feel welcome and he was put on close observation for 3 months. He was then slowly given leave—10 minutes, then thirty, then 45, until eventually he was allowed off the ward unsupervised.

These days, John feels

good - he does voluntary work at Peter Bedford and is a cover participant at the Peter Bedford shop -when the supervisor is away, he runs the shop. He also used to be in the Lambo band, but he left.

He got interested in service user involvement when he went on a Peter Bedford canteen trip to Liverpool and a friend told him about iBUG. He decided to come last year and has been active ever since then.

John enjoys the friendly atmosphere but does not yet feel confident to talk to people on the wards (Patients' Council), so he

has not yet had much practice. He feels he needs more time to get confident.

John loves going to Church - it makes him feel good. He has what he describes as a 'bad habit', though- he does smoke cigarettes!

John would like iBUG to improve his communication skills, 1-1 or group. John has also done interviews with Peter Bedford in the past and would like to do some more of this through iBUG.



When I first came into the mental health system, I was sectioned without being offered any community alternatives, put on high levels of medication, forcibly restrained and injected and then discharged with no other service than an outpatient appointment. I became a revolving door patient.

Black Women's Forum

By Suzy Lee

On 30 June I went to the launch of the new Black Women's Forum at Drayton Park. There was a good turn out and as usual, delicious food prepared by the wonderful Janet. Hari Sewell spoke about the need for some input in this area, and I also spoke. I talked about my experiences in various hospitals, and in Drayton Park. When I first began to think about mental health, race, and my own history, it was a shock to realise that I was one of those statistics - when I first came into the mental health system, I was sectioned without being offered any community alternatives, put on high levels of medication, forcibly restrained and

injected and then discharged with no other service than an outpatient appointment. I became a revolving door patient. It was not a pleasant experience, and it saddens me that this is still going on despite decades of research showing what a raw deal black people are getting.

I have high hopes of the Black Women's Forum, and also feel that this could benefit some of our Black men— as Shirley McNicholas pointed out, when you turn the spotlight on women's needs, men's needs become highlighted too.

All new members are welcome, so please put the dates below into your diaries.

4 August 2008 Only for

women from BME communities.

8 September 2008 Only for women from BME communities.

13 October 2008 In celebration of Black History - open to everyone.

10 November 2008 Only for women from BME communities.

8 December 2008 This day is Drayton Park Women's anniversary and this forum will be part of that celebration. All will be welcome to learn about the BME women's forum.

Please contact Georgia Carson on 0207 607 2777 for further details. All meetings are from 1pm-3pm.

18 Highbury Grove

By Suzy Lee

In 2006, Highbury Grove was caught short when Camden suddenly withdrew funding for one of its 2 crisis beds, leaving a £58,000 shortfall. As plans for Camden's Crisis service con-

tinue, Alex Ettienne, service manager, assumes withdrawal of the last bed's funding is likely. So they are restructuring to make the Islington service independent of Camden funding. This allows for full consulta-

tion and planning, with a series of service user consultation meetings ongoing at present. Anyone interested in attending should contact 18 Highbury Grove on 0207 288 1051/1044



The Lambo Day Centre

By Suzy Lee

I recently visited the Lambo day Centre, and spoke to the service users about the Day Centres Review at their community meeting. It was the day after the Council had made the decision to back the day centre review proposals, which meant that Ashley Road was going to move to the Lambo, which would no longer exist as a black only service. Lambo staff would become outreach workers contacting hard to reach clients from black and ethnic minority groups and encouraging them to use services.

Service users at the Lambo were not enthused by the proposals, however. 'This is the only service in the whole of North London that works with African and Caribbean people' said one service user, 'we are unique but they want to close us down.' I asked the question, 'what is special about this service?' The Lambo band was mentioned; they have a thriving band which plays at a variety of gigs and has also made CDs. Someone mentioned the Carers group - about 25 turn up regularly for their monthly meetings and they have 33 carers on their books. I thought this was an impressive turn out and is to my knowledge the only black carers group in the borough. Given the endemic racism in the mental health system, I think it is very important that this vital resource remains available to carers.

The black history which is celebrated at the centre was another thing that users value

and want to keep, as was the café which serves African Caribbean food, and the name, the Lambo Day Centre. However, whilst all these things seem to be part of the black identity of the service, I question whether the commissioners and service providers will automatically agree to keeping all this. Whilst most service users are clear that they want to keep a black identity, Ashley Road is not a black only service, and they have a different way of doing things. Whoever wins the contract to run the day centres will have to make decisions about whether to do things as the Lambo is used to, Ashley Road are used to, or find new ways of doing things. Whatever the final decisions, someone is likely to have to get used to changes they may not want.

Some users were aware that, when Ashley Road moves to the Lambo, there may be something of a culture clash. 'This service is set up to be culturally and religiously sensitive to black people.' said one user 'Will they understand us?'

When I asked Lambo users about the future, I received more questions than answers, and it became apparent that they are unclear what the future holds for them. 'No one has been to talk to us, we don't know what will happen to us' said one service user. The staff too commented that communication had been poor and there are no active, detailed plans about what happens to them or service users once Ashley Road moves to Despard Road. The Lambo also gets 30% of its

funding from central government, and there has been no discussion about what will happen to that money.

I asked users what they thought about the idea I had heard one of the commissioners, Kath McClinton, float, that the new service has a black and ethnic minorities day. Service users were unimpressed 'what good is one day a week?' said one person 'that is an insult to us'

I was somewhat taken aback to discover that Despard Road has no lift, as lack of wheelchair access was one of the reasons Ashley Road is being closed down. 'We have been asking for money to make the service more accessible for four years, without success' said a staff member 'Now suddenly there is money to do up the building

Some service users were distinctly bullish about the proposals. 'We don't want options' said one user 'we want the Lambo to stay as it is.'

This is the only service in the whole of North London that works with African and Caribbean people' said one service user, 'we are unique but they want to close us down.'



Between us we got some insight into the topics of discrimination in the workplace presented by Stonewall and Young People and Mental Health; in both cases the networking systems were sophisticated.

LGBT Conference

By Phillip Fox

We attended this event which was a mark of the 60 years of the NHS. We were rushed to arrive on time but with comfortable chairs and a good choice of food and drink and a convivial atmosphere we were all refreshed.

The introductory speeches were Professor Clair Chilvers, a local resident, and Surinder Sharma, director of the Human Rights Group, who both put us in the picture and prepared us for the days events.

Our next speaker was Prof Anne Rogers, a sociologist from Manchester University, who provided a summary, questions, and feedback on inequality and mental health, followed by Tim Franks, the director of PACE, who followed a similar format.

The 150 or so guests then split into groups for morning workshops - between us we got some insight into the topics of discrimination in the workplace presented by Stonewall and Young People and Mental Health; in both cases the

networking systems were sophisticated.

After lunch Michael King from V.C.L. gave a talk on self-harming and suicide, followed by Christine Burns whose subject was transgender issues. Our afternoon workshops were about suicide prevention and social perspective networking. Both groups were lively and educational, and we both made a useful individual contribution.

The afternoon concluded with a talk by Lindsay River on older people and LGBT issues which I found very interesting as I fit this category. At 4pm there were messages back to the centre and finally thanks and close from Clair Chilvers. We both felt that we had gained enough information and taken the opportunity to publicise iBUG sufficiently to make the conference worthwhile.

There was a lot of energy and enthusiasm and people had integrated well from the start.

Many thanks to the Britannia Hotel, who, despite the shortage of space and scene shifting

for split groups, had run it smoothly with the minimum of shunting about. There was a plethora of good quality food and drink available throughout the day provided by cheerful and friendly staff.

The only drawbacks were limited time for speakers who seemed rushed in some cases and extra floor space would have been useful as there was a general buzz of conversation during the workshops and it was sometimes hard to hear our individual groups above it.

Overall, it was an enjoyable and educational day out.



Chair's Report (Continued from page 1)

and was sitting next to the Director of Islington Services (Foundation Trust) who can say without doubt that iBUG's rebuttal was firm and that we do not and never have supported the proposals. What we have tried to do was to try and save Ashley Road from total closure. We wrote letters at different times in the review process. The first one was when the original review document came out. It proposed the total closure of LAMBO. iBUG said there was no point discussing Ashley Road and Southwood Smith at this time as the outcome of the Foundations estate policy was unknown and therefore any discussion was useless.

When the new paper came out iBUG sent a letter making it very clear that the argument for closing Ashley Road was not made. We asked if there had been any independent survey into the use and future of Ashley Road.

The only reason that the discussion of Ashley Road being used as a satellite service came up was to stop the total closure of Ashley Road. It was proposed in good faith and not done to sell any service user down the river (these allegations have been made about iBUG). Ibug has never been the instigator of any of the proposals and has nothing to gain from any

of these proposals. The Council, The PCT or The Foundation Trust have never required us to support any one proposal. We have no fiscal interest in the proposals. iBUG has always tried in good faith to do the very best for all the service users in Islington whether they are members or not. We have a particular interest in our members' views and are therefore taking this opportunity to listen to all the various views our members may have. Most of all we wish to be honest and transparent to all our members.

It has been alleged that there had been no discussion about Ashley Road being used as a satellite service and why was no-one at Ashley Road consulted about this before the Executive Meeting. The simple truth was there was no time. At the Executive meeting things were going very badly. Cllr Andrew Cornwall spoke eloquently in defence of Ashley Road but all the other executive members voted against him. The satellite proposal was made to secure a future of sorts for this service. iBUG could have said nothing and let the service close completely. This would have been an easier situation for iBUG to have adopted. There could then have been no attacks on iBUG. However, now we would be discussing the

total closure of Ashley Road rather than what service may continue from its much loved walls. In fact the situation is now completely up in the air yet again and the U-turn of not closing Ashley Road has made all options still possible. The proposal to keep Ashley Road in the property estate has opened the door for the whole of Ashley Road's usage to be considered.

There is only so much an organisation like iBUG can do. iBUG has always wanted to act honourably in this difficult time of change. Due to health considerations and resource implications iBUG may not be able to consult with everyone as much as it would like.

Therefore the iBUG directors would like the complete support and understanding of the iBUG membership.

Peter Jones

Suzy Lee

Margaret Newton

iBUG Directors

The motion was carried unanimously

*We do not
and never
have
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proposals.*

*What we have
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*Ashley Road
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closure.*



Gain back your self-confidence with Movement Therapies!

I decided to write a series of articles about Art and Alternative Therapies and this time I will explain more about Movement Therapies.



Dance Movement Therapies & Therapeutic Movement Classes

By: Edit Szarvas

Gain back your self-confidence with Movement Therapies!

I believe for us to find our balance in life and our inner peace within our selves, we need to pay equal attention to our mind, body and soul.

I believe art therapies can help us to explore our personality and bring our talents to light. The more we get to know ourselves the more self-confidence we gain.

I decided to write a series of articles about Art and Alternative Therapies and this time I will explain more about Movement Therapies.

What is Dance Movement Therapy?

According to The Association for Dance Movement Therapy (UK): Dance Movement Therapy is the psychotherapeutic use of movement and dance through which a person can engage creatively in a process to further their emotional, cognitive, physical and social integration. It is founded on the principle that movement reflects an individual's patterns of thinking and feeling. Through acknowledging and supporting clients' movements the therapist encourages development and integration of new adaptive movement patterns together with the emotional experiences that accompany such changes.

Dance Movement Therapy in the Trust

"Within Highgate Mental Health Centre (HMHC) there are three main artistic therapies"- as Sue Newell,

Head of OT explained to me- "there is Art Therapy, Music Therapy and Dance Movement Therapy."

The Dance Movement Therapy at HMHC is facilitated by Catherine Beuzeboc.

Unfortunately, at the time of writing this article there were no community therapy sessions available provided by the Trust.

Therapeutic Dance Classes in Islington

I have found two fantastic centres where you can join a group or a class either as "drop in" or for a certain period of time. You can find many more interesting and exciting classes and therapies apart from than ones I listed below:

Islington Arts Factory

Phone: 020 7607 0561

Fax: 020 7700 7229

Address: 2 Parkhurst Road, Holloway,

London, N7 0SF

Email:

IAF@islingtonartsfactory.fsnet.co.uk

Moving Arts Base

134 Liverpool Road

Islington

London N1 1LA

Tel: 020 7609 6969

"Eastern" Therapeutic Movements

Ki Aikido

Ki means "Life Force", the natural energy, Aikido means: "Way of Life to find Harmony with Nature".

In the Art of Ki Aikido there is no aggression, tension or competition.

The purpose of the practise is to learn to co-ordinate our mind and body through enjoyable exercise which will enhance the quality of our lives. We can learn through the Ki exercises to obtain a calm mind and relaxed body enabling our power to be fully extended.

Shiatsu

Shiatsu is a Japanese form of integrated bodywork that can be enormously relaxing and pleasurable.

Shiatsu is rooted in oriental medicine, and works to balance your body's energy as it flows in the twelve meridians of Traditional Chinese Medicine. The treatments aim to stimulate your body's ability to balance and heal itself. Often this is experienced as a sense of deep calm and relaxation, and you may feel increased energy once your body has had time to adjust.

Thai Chi

Thai Chi is a Chinese martial art that is known for the claims of health and longevity. Thai Chi is best known as a slow motion routine class where one is taught awareness of one's own balance and what affects it, awareness of

Dance Movement Therapies & Therapeutic Movement Classes (continued)

the same in others, and appreciation of the practical value in one's ability to moderate extremes of behaviour and attitude at both mental and physical level.

Shakti Dance

Shakti Dance is the yoga of dance, a flowing movement practice that increases prana in the body. Phases include Shakti stretching, standing exercises for the chakras, free dance, and meditation in movement.

Egyptian Dance

Egyptian dance is often called bellydance; this term derives from 'danse du ventre', a phase coined by 19th century French travellers to describe the intricate torso and hip movements.

Apart from being an excellent workout for all the body many students also find that it helps overcome issues such as low self-confidence and poor body image. It offers a perfect escape from the stress of everyday life – including the chance to dress up.

“Western” Therapeutic Movements

Pilates

According to practitioners, the central aim of Pilates is to create a fusion of mind and body, so that without thinking about it the body will move with economy, grace, and balance. The end goal is to produce an attention-free union of mind and body. Practitioners believe in using one's body to the greatest advantage, making the most of its strengths, counteracting

its weaknesses, and correcting its imbalances.

Contemporary Dance

The name "Contemporary Dance" describes a range of techniques and styles used in classes, workshops and dance choreography. It was developed in the early 20th century as a reaction against the rigid techniques of ballet and it is characterised by its versatility: it can be danced to almost any style of music, or united with other dance forms to create new styles of movement. Contemporary seeks to work with the natural alignment of the body, and is therefore safe and accessible for beginners.

Classical European Dance



Dance is an art form that generally refers to movement of the body, usually rhythmic and to music, used as a form of expression, social interaction or presented in a spiritual or performance setting.

That is why dance is performed for various purposes like Ceremonial dance, Erotic dance, Performance dance, Social dance. The classical dance categories are: Jig, Waltz, Tango, Disco, Salsa, Electronica, Hip-Hop and many others. You can find many dance classes in the community.

The Benefits of Dance Movement Therapies and Therapeutic Dance Classes

- increasing self-awareness, self-esteem and personal autonomy.
- experiencing links between thought, feelings and actions.
- increasing and rehearsing adaptive coping behaviours.
- expressing and managing overwhelming feelings or thoughts.
- maximising resources of communication.
- contacting inner resources through contained creative movement play.
- testing the impact of self on others.
- testing inner with outer reality.
- initiating physical, emotional and/or cognitive shifts.
- developing a trusting relationship.
- manage feelings that interrupt learning.
- enhancing social interaction skills.

I hope you have found the type of dance that is suitable for you and this article has given you the inspiration and encouragement to go and join a class. So go ahead, and dance today! Don't leave it for tomorrow, because as we all now, "tomorrow never dies"!:-)

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Islington Borough User Group

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Would you like to contribute to the iBUG Newsletter? We are always looking for new contributors and any articles are paid for. You can write the article yourself or you can join up with Suzy at the iBUG office to produce an article you can be proud of! If you are interested, please contact Suzy Lee at the iBUG office on 0207 561 4140

iBUG Diary



01/08/2008 1.00-3.00pm

Islington Mental Health Forum
Stress Project, 2 Shelburne Road
(Annett Road corner, enter
through garden).

Contact iBUG 020 7561 4140
All iBUG members may attend.

04/08/2008 1.00pm

Black Women's Forum
32 Drayton Park Women's Crisis
House
Contact Drayton Park 020 7607
2777.

All Black women may attend.

12/08/2008 2:00-5:00pm

Patients' Council

Highgate Mental Health Centre,
Dartmouth Park Hill, London
N19 5NX

Contact iBUG 0207 561 4140

Members from Camden and
Islington may attend.

15/08/2008 3:00-5:00pm

Highgate User Forum
Jaffar Kareem Conference
Room, Highgate Mental Health
Centre, Dartmouth Park Hill,
London N19 5NX

Contact iBUG 0207 562 4140
Open to all Service Users.

26/08/2008 2:00-5:00pm

iBUG Business Meeting

Hanley Road Education and
Employment Centre, 75 Hanley
Road, London N4 3DY

Contact iBUG 0207 561 4140

Open to all Service Users.