

What's new.

**SURF – Winter 2011
Swale User Representation Forum**

As you will no doubt notice we have a 'new look' Surf Newsletter this month. This is all to do with Rethink's new rebranding.

**It was felt that there was a need to heighten Rethink's profile to help people to know what Rethink is really about, so the words "Mental Illness" has been added to the logo.
Please let us have your views.**

SURF

SURF is for anyone who uses, or has used Mental Health Services in Swale.

Everyone is very welcome to come along to our informal meetings, become a member, and share their views. It's a good place to make new friends and become involved.

If you would like to find out more about the forum, we would be very pleased to hear from you.

All the dates of group meetings and venues are listed at the back of this newsletter.

A BIG thank you to all those who very kindly contributed to the content of this edition.

Your views and contributions are always very much valued and appreciated.



Coping with mental health issues and money.

Martin Lewis of moneysavingexpert.com was shocked to discover that debt and mental health problems often go hand in hand.

He has spent the last three years working with Mind, Rethink and other mental health charities to produce a guide. This is his advice on how family and friends can help service users who need it..

- **Under The Mental Capacity Act (MCA)**, you can't access a relative's account or talk to the bank except by getting lasting power of attorney (see below.)
- **Encourage Them To Open A Basic Bank Account**, which won't let them withdraw cash if there's none there. However, if a direct debit bounces, they will still be charged.
- **Or Consider A Joint Bank Account**, so you can monitor spending, but be aware that any bad credit ratings will also affect your own rating.
- **Lasting Power Of Attorney (LPA)** allows you to control a relative or friend's accounts if they have lost mental capacity, but must be drawn up when the person is able to understand what they're doing. It can be drawn up for anyone over 18 – they don't need to be unwell.
- **If it's too late for LPA**, you need to become a deputy of the Court of Protection to act for the person. The court decides if the person has lost capacity and whether the applicant is appropriate to be their deputy. It's costly, with fees up to £5,000 and a supervision fee of up to £800.

More advice is available from your local Citizens Advice Bureau (citizensadvice.org.uk), Rethink (rethink.org) or Christians Against Poverty (capuk.org).

For Martin's free 40-page guide, go to www.moneysavingexpert.com (From **Woman & Home**)

DO SOMETHING

In searching for a poem for the Rethink newsletter I came across a file of different pieces of writing that I did over a ten year period. I have always found writing a therapeutic outlet. After attending a three day course about four years ago on 'writing your first novel' I gathered up some fragments of ideas and made a start. Unfortunately several depressive episodes overtook the writing and the novel has a contents page of 14 things and 1 page written! I offer you that page:

A Novel

Prologue

Where do you go when you have run out of hiding places? You have run out of names to call and people to see. You have lived with yourself long enough to know the spiral downwards has begun and it is going to hurt. It always does. You have checked the therapy contract, the care plan and all your to do lists but the darkness closes in. Fear beckons, greets you with the warmth and depth of the sunniest smile it tricks and grasps you, leads you into the abyss.

The book case is full of books you bought in haste, desperate for a cure, a clue, just something to help make sense of the complexity of facing and surviving each day. Pages are read and turned, print blurs and tears drip as help does not come. The words are familiar, they are empty and full at the same time with knowing clichés 'get out more, talk to some one, get out more, do something'.

The clue is in the history of the complex pattern of ups and downs and all the messy bits in between. You try to focus on the very first time it happened. The urge to let the fragments of your brain totally crumble and hide. Hide, yes hide until it passes, only it doesn't pass, it stays with you through conversations, silences and misunderstandings.

Here it is. The last hope. No carers, no friends, no family, no new books, just yourself. Do something. You. Do something.

By **Sindy**

From Cauliflowers to Culture! Or a wet day out in Whitstable –4th August 2011

A small band of 'Rethink members' together with Freda set off for a day at the seaside.



Trying to look on the bright side after arriving at Whitstable in heavy rain we made the most of the opportunity of being out together and shared news, views, ideas and soaked up, literally, the local weather.

First stop of the day saw the group purchasing large quantities of healthy fruit and vegetables from the local market, cauliflowers proving a firm favourite!

Next stop, a short stay in a busy coffee shop with a table big enough to cater for all 6 of us.

Warmed and slightly drier we headed off in search of what is a certain feature of any day out, lunch, of course. After a few changes of mind and checking menus and prices and seating we settled on a small cafe where most people tucked into good old fish and chips, sadly any romantic ideas of eating fish and chips straight from the paper on a sunny day at the beach were firmly ruled out.

To meet every ones idea of a gentle relaxing time out the group split up and walked, visited local shops and glimpsed a brief view of local art work.

Despite the miserable weather it was a good trip out where time, thoughts, chats and ideas were shared.

Just to show that it is possible to look ahead to brighter sunnier days I purchased a bright pink cotton sunhat (that's it in the picture) from a charity shop for the very reasonable price of £1.50, happily it was worn the very next day.

A big thank you to Freda for organising the trip and for keeping us all afloat and cheery.

By **Sindy**

USEFUL Numbers

Urgent GP or nurse care when surgeries are closed, even if you are not registered with a GP practice – South East Help 03000 242424

Dentaline – Emergency treatment when surgeries are closed – 01634 890300

Accident & Emergency Medway Maritime Hospital – 01634 830000

Sittingbourne Memorial Hosp – 01795 418300

Advice, & Complaints-PALS 0800 0856606

SERVICE USER REPRESENTATIVES NEEDED!

The Swale User Forum would like members to attend regular meetings so that the Forums views can be put across to professionals.

As you know it is very important for members to become involved as hearing Forum views first hand from Service Users means opinions may be taken more seriously

For further information please contact

Freda Padgett on
01795 473048

SURF - Swale User Representation Forum

CHRISTMAS FORUM

Phoenix House, Central Avenue, Sittingbourne

Thursday 15th Dec

2pm-4pm

Pop in - EVERYONE WELCOME

Come and enjoy our Christmas afternoon with music, snacks and drinks.

For more info contact Freda 01795 473048 or 07976 123906

Ladies Day (& no it wasn't Royal Ascot !)

A wet weather forecast did not deter us.

After meeting @ Phoenix House & no sign of Freda's car we decided to text her as we thought maybe Freda was encountering traffic problems, & quickly received a text back, she was in her office waiting. (& Working.)

Everyone turned up; I think we had a quick coffee & left for Whitstable. I confused Freda who was about to launch us on the M2 ! So we went the snail route; A2 via Ospringe & amazingly there were no delays. Finding the car park in Whitstable was not quite so straightforward, but eventually we all met again.

It was pouring with rain but myself & Bet espied a fruit & veg stall & they were to pack up & leave at 13.00 hours, so we stocked up. I resisted the free range eggs as we were in rather a "posh" car, & I don't think Freda would have been impressed with a mess of broken eggs & I still had to get them home from town.

Fish & chips & mushy peas were very nice despite reservations on the chosen venue. (Didn't fancy oysters in the rain !) The cafe where we had coffee was also good & I obtained some promotional material that we took back for interest & ideas for further adventures, family days out etc.

The charity shops didn't do much for me, I have too much junk of my own. I would have been happy just chilling out on the shore & taking in the view, & it would have been difficult to resist going out to sea had there been a boat available. We checked out the Lifeboat station. Then we rejoined Freda & crew in a tea shop (cafe) at the K.C.C. base near to Pearson's Oyster House. I just had to go round the corner & check out a certain Gallery.

There were a stack of old fashioned cases with quite large price tags. I told him "I have one like that in my loft."

What I did not tell him was it is not in as good condition, slightly battered & full of books ! & not to be parted with.

We got back quicker as Freda used the motorway. It was nice to spend a few hours in good company;

Thanks Bet

Jo

SURF (Swale User Representation Forum)

Phoenix House, Central Avenue, Sittingbourne

Thursday 23rd February 2012
2pm - 4pm

Speaker:

Jan Buckman-Drage

Primary Care Psychology Service manager

Jan will be giving an overview of what the service provides and an outline of IAPT - (Improving Access to Psychological Therapy)

For more information contact Freda Padgett at Rethink 01795 473048

PRESS RELEASE

Sheerness Mental Health Centre Closure:

THE TRUTH.

Andy Oldfield, Assistant Director for Mental Health Recovery Services, East Kent, attended the Rethink Forum at Trinity House in Sheerness on Wednesday, 16th October, to answer service user questions regarding the article in the Sheppey Gazette, this month.

The article stated that the KMPT (Kent & Medway Partnership Trust) were expecting to close the Trinity Road premises by the end of the year.

This caused anxiety for service users, as assurances had been given, in August this year, that the temporary closure from 5 to 3 days a week was to be resolved when the vacancies of reception staff were filled. It was felt by those present, and Andy agreed, that the article was grossly misleading and would request the KMPT to give a new press release stating the truth.

Andy explained that due to efficiency savings (that all areas of NHS have to find), KMPT is looking at preserving staff and services, rather than buildings. It was felt that services could be delivered at alternative premises, e.g. The Gateway, integrating people with mental health problems into the community, hopefully reducing any stigma.

Andy made the following assurances

- To liaise with service users of developments via Freda at Rethink before any decisions are made.
- He would consider suggestions, made by service users, of possible venues suitable for delivery of services.
- **We were assured by Andy that Mental Health services will continue to be provided on the island and that no service user would have to travel to Sittingbourne for appointments.**

It was agreed that the Forum would continue to monitor the situation. At the time of printing this newsletter, clarification of the newspaper article by the Trust was printed in last week's Sheppey Gazette

By Surf Member

The views and opinions expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily those of the editor or the organisation.

SPEAKERS DAY AT PHOENIX HOUSE

On Thursday 29th September there was a Service User Forum Speakers Day at Phoenix House, organised by Freda. It was well attended. The keynote speakers were Dr Marcos Pisaca who answered questions about the situation of opening/closing hours at Trinity House and many other issues to do with what is happening locally within the mental health service.

Much concern was raised by members about the implications of reduced hours or closure of Trinity House the latter was also addressed by Paul Absolon our social Care Commissioner. Paul also spoke about the forthcoming launch of the Live it Well Day which we attended on World Mental Health Day in Maidstone.

Because of the volume of concerns and questions it was at times an intense afternoon.

Dr. Hipkins the Mental Health lead GP from Sittingbourne Memorial Doctors practice spoke to us about the future GP. commissioners and answered questions on how the changes might affect mental health service users. He was also helpful in answering questions about prescriptions of mental health drugs and some information about self help. Dr Sena Singh asked questions about prescription difficulties for some drugs.

Despite the forum being for mental health service users, some NHS staff attended which made some members feel awkward about asking some questions. It can be difficult to speak up if you are anxious about unexpected staff members being present.

The weather was unseasonably very hot and bright and it was a challenge to keep cool and comfortable. I would like to thank Freda for organising such a full and varied programme. She works extremely hard and with a calmness and dedication that we really do appreciate. **SURF MEMBER**



'Live it Well'

Promoting emotional wellbeing in Kent

**Go online for advice on simple steps
to wellbeing**

www.liveitwell.org.uk

**For everyone with an interest in
Mental Health**

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND – PDF

Sevenoaks Area Mind are the administrators of the Personal Development Fund, which is intended to promote the personal development of individuals living across the whole of Kent whose lives have been directly or indirectly affected by severe or persistent mental ill health.

The fund has been able to pay for things like conferences and training courses, travel and accommodation for such events, art materials, Reiki training, laptops, printers and so on.

A panel of service users, carers and voluntary organisations meet every three months to decide on awards. For more information please visit www.sevenoaksareamind.org.uk

AT CHRISTMAS - LET'S NOT FORGET

Christmas is not always a happy time for some people for various reasons; bereavement, loneliness, memories of loved ones, money problems, divorce proceedings, illness, family problems. In the build up to the day people can feel very apprehensive, even afraid because they just don't want to be part of what is unavoidable around them. Many of us know exactly how this can be and would like to help others at this difficult time of the year especially when the weather is not suitable for many people to get out and about.

Some ideas on what might help us feel better

1. Hire a DVD or watch a film on TV over the festive period, So-called "movie therapy" can leave us feeling brighter, psychiatrists say.
 2. If you have friends who are spending Christmas alone, you could invite them over and if funds are tight to supply food ask them each to bring a dish or do something a bit different like a games evening. Getting together with friends can be a reminder that you're not alone.
 3. If you have time to spare on Christmas Day why not spend some of it brightening someone else's day? Helping others reduces stress and depression, so you might like be able to lend a hand in your local soup kitchen or visit an elderly neighbour. Contact CVS
 4. The Christmas afternoon walk is a British tradition, so if the weather permits why not wrap up and take a walk. Research shows that 90 per cent of people find being outdoors and being active improves our mental health.
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Are you from a Black Minority Ethnic (BME) background?

Would you like to have your voice heard?

Could you do with some Advice & Support...?

IF SO WE WOULD LIKE TO HEAR FROM YOU!

Many of the issues facing people with mental illness from black and minority ethnic groups (BME) are the same as for the white British community. Stigma, difficulties in everyday life such as problems with housing, being accepted by friends and family, finding or keeping work, are all issues that are commonly reported by those with mental health difficulties regardless of culture and background.

The SWALE User Forum Welcomes individuals from all backgrounds and would like to reach out to the wider community.

Whether you are interested in accessing our regular Forums or our Womens Groups, or even If you would like any kind of information and support please contact us at

RETHINK on **01795 473048**



Everybody's
Mental Health Matters

The Mental Health Helpline is now open from 5pm to 9am midweek and 24 hours on weekends and Bank Holidays.

Kent & Medway: 0800 107 01 **Medway & Swale Advocacy Partnerships**

The Medway Swale Advocacy Partnerships aim to promote the rights of people with mental health problems who are living in the Medway Towns and the Swale area.

Perhaps you could do with someone to help you with the benefit system, family law, and employment or housing agencies?

WHAT to do with you turkey leftovers –

Turkey and parsnip curry - serves 4

Ingredients

2 tbsp oil
2 finely sliced onions
50 gm chopped parsnips
500gm chopped cooked turkey
5 tbsp curry paste
1 can tomatoes + 1 can water
Low fat natural yogurt



Method

Fry onions in oil until soft, add parsnips and stir
Stir in curry paste and tomatoes along with a pinch of salt
Add water, bring to boil and simmer for 15 – 20 minutes or until the parsnips are just tender
Stir in turkey, cover and simmer for 5 minutes until turkey is thoroughly heated through
When ready to serve, swirl in the yogurt and serve with rice

Can be frozen as long as thoroughly defrosted before heating

Make it your own by using a variety of vegetables or using pulses such as lentils or chick peas.

Festive Wordsearch



W I W T G X Y C I Z E T T C L W K S S O
S H B B A U F Q R D E G D I T E Q Q T B
Y L I S L X B K I A Z U L T G T S H H W
H O G E X A C T Q X C A M P Q L T N G A
R O L G R E E T I N G K V O W A L H I U
A O L S E L B U A B E N E E E M W S L T
G O J L U C A R D S Q P P R M E V T A O
V M F Y Y F H Y Q A F M W B S T G P C Y
P K J K R F D W I I A R T I U T O Q N W
L U M V L K C Z E W C Y J F G A I E H Z

BAUBLES

LIGHTS

CRACKERS

FIBRE-OPTIC

GREETING CARDS

HOLLY

YULE LOG

TINSEL

WREATH

LAMETTA

YULETIDE

USEFUL INFORMATION

Helplines

An out of hours helpline through which you can speak to a trained volunteer in confidence. All calls are free.

Mental Health Matters

0800 107 0160

Rethink

Asian Mental Health Line

0808 800 2073

Community Mental Health Centre

7-10 Trinity Road

Sheerness

ME12 2PJ

01795 580528

Community Mental Health Team

Memorial Hospital

Bell Road

Sittingbourne

01795 418 000

Mental Health Resource Centre

Sittingbourne

Filmer House

21-23 High Street

Sittingbourne

01795 426988

Sheppey Resource Centre

7-10 Trinity Road

Sheerness

ME12 2PJ

01795 580528

National Drugs Helpline

0800 776600

Medway Swale Advocacy

Strood

Rochester

01634 713739

Email: advocacy@msap.org.uk

Drinkline

0800 9178282

FRANK

National Drugs Helpline

0800 776600

Alcoholics Anonymous

08457 697555

NHS Direct

0845 4647

Citizens Advice Bureau

17 Station Street, Sittingbourne

4 Hope Street, Sheerness

0844 499 4124

Swale (CVS) Volunteer Bureau

Sittingbourne

01795 473828

Sheerness

01795 580847

Adult Education Centre

College Road, Sittingbourne ME10 1LF

0845 606 5606

Lesbian and Gay Switchboard

0207 837 7324

East Kent Rape Line

0800 458 2818

Saneline

0845 767 8000

Website: www.sane.org.uk

Samaritans

08457 90 9090

Website: www.samaritans.org.uk

Memorial Hospital, Sittingbourne

01795 418348

01795 418373

Mobile: 07917 198382

The Surf Diary

Sittingbourne Forum

Speakers on Mental Health Issues

Phoenix House, Central Avenue

Sittingbourne

Last Thursday of each month 2-4pm

Sheppey Forum

General mental health issues, speaker days, and walking sessions Meet at the

Healthy Living Centre, Sheerness

1st Tuesday of each month 2pm-4pm

Sittingbourne Resource Centre

Members meet for an informal support group, tea and coffee

Filmer House, 21 High Street,

Sittingbourne

3rd Tuesday of each month 2-4pm

Sheppey Resource Centre Forum

Sheppey Resource Centre

Trinity Road, Sheerness

3rd Thurs of each month 1.30pm-3pm

Sittingbourne Women's Group

A support group for women held monthly Filmer House 21 High Street, Sittingbourne

1st Thurs of each month 2-4pm

Sheppey Women's Group

A support group for women held monthly

Sheppey Resource centre, Trinity Road, Sheerness

1st Tuesday of each month 10.30am 12.30pm

Walk & Talk Group starting in the New Year!

For details or to express an interest ring us at the Rethink Office 01795 473048

RETHINK Mental Illness

Advice & Information Service

Expert advice and information for people with mental health problems and those who care for them, as well as health professional, employers and staff. Advice line is...

Independent

Impartial

Confidential

Free Access

Uses Language Line

(For non- English speakers)

Telephone: **0845 456 0455**

Email: advice@rethink.org

Service available

Monday - Friday

10am to 1pm

Contact us

Rethink (Freda Padgett)

Phoenix House

Sittingbourne

ME10 4BX

Phone **01795 473048**

www.rethink.org

Working together to help everyone affected by severe mental illness recover a better quality of life

Registered in England Number 1227970. Registered Charity Number 271028.
Registered Office 89 Albert Embankment London SE1 7TP.

Rethink is the operating name of the National Schizophrenia Fellowship, a company limited by guarantee.

