



**Wiltshire and Swindon Users' Network**



**22<sup>nd</sup> Annual Report - July 2014**

**[www.wsun.co.uk](http://www.wsun.co.uk)**

# Mission Statement

“To promote the involvement of people and to disseminate examples of good practice in involvement in Health and Social Care purchasing, provision and evaluation”

This is done by:

- Supporting the empowerment of people.
- Enabling people to act as agents of change.
- Being proactive in facilitating learning amongst Community Care professionals, voluntary, statutory and private bodies both county-wide and nationally.
- Developing and managing projects.



# Management Committee's view

WSUN's Management Committee have had a very busy year with new subcommittees being formed for finance, staffing and Swindon. Individual committee members interests have been partnered with staff members, giving everyone a greater understanding of each other's role. This has created good relationships and communication between the Management Committee and staff, helping us to provide a quality service for all WSUN members.

Much preparation has taken place in order to address the many changes in health and social care with WSUN members attending various events including the Clinical Commissioning Groups Five year Plan consultations. Being involved in quarterly safeguarding meetings, where members voices are being heard, they are also influencing the services they receive.

Recently at the Management Committee and staff away day, everyone became a Dementia Friend. An initiative which gives people a better understanding of dementia and the small things that can make a difference to people living in our community.

*Another exciting and challenging year for WSUN made easier by the support and dedication of its staff, committee members and above all its membership. Please keep in touch we really do want to hear from you.*

**Diane Gooch Chair**

*We contribute regularly to discussions, workshops and consultations as we are all passionate about making sure services are provided that offer freedom of choice, aid independence and enhance the quality of life.*

**Mary Johns**

*As a member of WSUN for 20yrs. I have seen it go from strength to strength with an ever increasing membership. Long may it continue to do so.*

**Dorothy Roberts Vice Chair**



**Members of the Management Committee**

*In the time I have been a member of the WSUN Management Committee, I have enjoyed being involved in an organisation that makes such a difference to people's lives. From my experience, even later in life you can still learn and enjoy new and different things. I enjoy sharing information that helps people, including members of WSUN, but also in the many other groups I belong to.*

*I am very disappointed that Swindon Borough Council have ceased to fund WSUN. This will affect the existing members greatly as they may now feel they do not have a place where their voice will be heard. **Rosa Tran***

*'I was invited to join Wiltshire and Swindon Users Network as a Member of the Management Committee last year and was immediately surprised to discover how much is covered by the organisation. My NHS background has been a great help in picking up the many threads that make up WSUN.*

*The one thing that stands out, for me, is that all the different aspects of Health and Social Care get a look in and most small groups involved would be very lost without the support of this organisation.*

*The Safeguarding Reference Group, I feel, is a really important unit within WSUN, opening up all sorts of aspects of safeguarding highlighting how very vulnerable some people can be. The range of experience is great and members are able to feed their concerns through to Wiltshire Safeguarding Board.*

*As is said at the end of a Ministers speech in Parliament, 'I commend this (Group) to the House'!*

**Anne Keat**

*I have enjoyed my first year on the management committee and I hope that matters around the Swindon branch can be resolved as I wish to see Swindon remain in the organisation of WSUN. We have strong membership in Swindon and we can build on this. **Tim French***

*Can I say I enjoy being on the management committee, I have learnt so much being on such a very professional committee, plus the staff are very professional too, I know I still have a lot to learn and want to keep going although my time to take a break is approaching fast, after my year break I would like to rejoin the committee. **Jim Law***

# Louise Rendle – Head of Network Services

Welcome to WSUN's 22nd Annual report, which highlights some of the activities WSUN has undertaken during 2013/14. This year has been filled with some really exciting initiatives and opportunities for involvement. Service user voices have been heard on a wide range of topics including Rheumatology, Continence, the Mental health and Dementia Strategies, as well as almost 100 members attending information sharing forums about the Wiltshire Clinical Commissioning Group and Healthwatch Wiltshire.



WSUN's Development Team have been working hard outreaching to groups the width and breadth of Wiltshire and we have been looking at innovative ways to involve our Service Users through creativity including performance and art.

As always, the year has had its challenges; we are still actively looking for funding after Swindon Borough Council ceased to fund us in October, however this has not proved an easy task. Wiltshire Council is also currently undertaking a review of all User Led Organisation funding and as yet we do not know the impact this may have on us as an organisation. However with a knowledgeable, committed and enthusiastic, Management Committee, team of staff and strong membership I am confident that we can continue to take on any opportunities and indeed challenges that we may be presented with in the future.

## Development Outreach – Wiltshire

### Our Time to Talk - 20 years on

Our Time to Talk has been running for twenty years now, and the Chair and Deputy Chair, Denise and Samiha have given their time and support to the group for five years. This definitely makes 2014 a celebratory year. Users of mental health service, their families and carers, and the providers of services still face many challenges. The structure chart shows just how widely OTT's members can have influence and put forward issues about services.

***“Great speaker  
– very impressed  
by his kindness”***

Attendance at OTT meetings continues to be at a good level and as our guest speakers will testify, there are always a lot of pertinent questions, and well thought out suggestions. Issues raised at OTT meetings are taken to the appropriate group, meeting or forum.

# How Our Time to Talk links with others



**Our Time To Talk with speaker Maurice Menghini**

We continue to have regular Members input at both the Avon and Wiltshire Partnership (AWP) Community Care Forum and AWP Service User Forum. Members have been proactive and empowered to shape and influence the terms of reference, agenda and guest speakers.

***“Interesting discussion about new PIP (Personal Independence Payment) introduction and prejudice of employers about mental health (service) users.”***

*Wiltshire CCG Mental Health Commissioners are pleased to work with the ‘Our Time to Talk’ group and commit to developing this valuable exchange of ideas and service user feedback. We appreciate the skills, knowledge and experience that service users bring to the process of improving healthcare.*

**Mike Naji – Mental Health Service Improvement Manager**

*Very useful to meet service users and I find it can break down barriers. Good for sharing good practice and information. We are a caring organisation and want to work with WSUN and service users.*

**Maurice Menghini, Health and Disability Employment Advisor,  
Department of Work and Pensions**

Service Users also took part in important focus groups looking at the complaints system in in-patient departments for Healthwatch England and the Care Quality Commissions inspection of the Avon and Wiltshire Partnership Trust, earlier this year.

WSUN also held consultation forums for Wiltshire Councils Mental Health Strategy.

**Development team travelled over 13,000 miles**

*WSUN’s focus group helped us to develop a deeper understanding of people’s experiences of raising concerns about their care and treatment under the Mental Health Act. This will help us to build a picture of the complexity of the current NHS complaints system, and will inform our policy work in this area.*

**Chloe Peacock, Healthwatch England**



**Amesbury Mental Health Support Group**

**The Development team spent 4085 hours  
outreaching to the Wiltshire Community**

*I regularly see representatives of WSUN at the Wiltshire Carer Forum which provides an often lively insight into the issues that our service users are experiencing and what they feel should be done to improve the services we commission. As commissioners, this feedback is an essential element to our understanding of what is actually happening as opposed to what we believe is happening based on service specifications. WSUN also came along to our first Mental Health Provider Forum which took place in March. WSUN has left our providers in no doubt that the service user community had a powerful voice.*

**Miriam Turner, Mental Health Project and Commissioning Officer, NHS Wiltshire Clinical Commissioning**

*WSUN regularly attend various meetings across the AWP Trust Wiltshire Locality, in particular, AWP Wiltshire Care Forum. This is attended by various organisations. WSUN always contribute and play a positive role in WSUN/AWP service users being in regular attendance at these meetings. There is a good working relationship between WSUN and AWP, and we keep in regular contact.*

**Teresa Bridges AWP Involvement Co-ordinator**



## Celebrating World Mental Health Day – October 2013



Information about the other charities and organisations that are in Wiltshire & talks were very informative

Learning more about a subject I have little knowledge on

Finding info on Providers of Services

Gather information to disseminate to my community

Meeting people, playing music, seeing art

Hearing from Clinicians and users



## A new approach – Richard Conlon

After joining The Network in November of 2013, I began to look for organisations who also wanted to use the arts to help voice people's thoughts, feelings, views and opinions. South Wiltshire Mencap had a group primed and ready to take on that challenge. The '4&More' group is made up of young adults with a learning disability and I worked with them to create a short live presentation which looked at their experiences of childhood and the challenges, fears and hopes as they emerge into adulthood. Fourteen young people took part in developing the piece which was performed by a cast of eight at a South Wiltshire Mencap Conference entitled 'Mind The Gap'.

*I like...to stay in bed. That's what I like to do now.*

*I want to help out at a special school, here in Salisbury. I want to have a house and to keep going to the gym and keep swimming.*

*And the future...what's next...what do I want? No boyfriends!*



An audience of around fifty watched the performance, including other young people with a learning disability, parents and service providers.

*I found the performance inspiring, moving, funny and wonderful” and “It was a real thrill to see the youngsters perform such a wonderful and appropriate piece of drama...*



## The Horizons Project:

The Network has secured support from the Imagine Foundation and the Community Foundation for Wiltshire & Swindon for a two-stage project which will work with people on the autistic spectrum.

The first stage of this adventure will include bringing together a small number of people on the spectrum to explore ways of removing one obstacle in their lives. As well as peers helping each other through group-work we will bring in speakers who might help our participant to access education, employment, volunteering or a wider social life.

The second part of this initiative will see The Network creating a training event unlike any other. Building on what we have learned in the first part of 'Horizons', we will piece together a training module which uses performance techniques to lift the lid on the spectrum with warmth, charm, wit and humour



**WSUN attended over 400 meetings, events and activities**

## Help to Live at Home Customer Reference Group (CRG)

CRG volunteers who independently monitor the providers of Wiltshire Council's 'Help to Live at Home Service', are now recognised as an important, professional and independent contribution to the improved running of the service by both the service providers and the Council.

Earlier this year they were involved in evaluating Wiltshire Council, Help to Live at Home care assessments and the Service Provider support plans that followed from them. They evaluated some sixty assessments and their corresponding support plans.



**Completed telephone monitoring scripts - 280**

Findings from the evaluation were: that there had been a significant improvement in domiciliary care provided. That there was still need for considerable training in making the assessments more person centred as with the support plans that follow from them. There was also a need for both the assessments and the support plans to be more creative and imaginative to enhance a person's life.

Another new venture has been for one of the service providers, Somerset Care, to ask the CRG, to monitor one of their continuing complex care customers. Two members of the group visited the customer in their own home, asking about and listening to all aspects of the customers care package. This was then fed back to Somerset Care in a long debrief.

*The periodical CRG customer satisfaction audit has proven to be of great value to Somerset Care and its customers. Alongside our own quality assurance process, it provides independent data on the service provided by Somerset Care, with the feedback used for individual and service wide improvements. The CRG representatives are very professional, flexible and focussed – they always represent customer views in a balanced and independent way.*

**Martin Ross, Community Service Manager, Somerset Care.**

The group are also involved in the in depth monitoring of a pilot study being carried out in Salisbury by the Mears group. This ongoing monitoring, will consist of person to person surveys with each of the Mears Customers involved in the pilot, interviews with the Mears care staff working with those customers, interviews with the assessors who draw up the assessment and support plans from both Wiltshire Council and Mears and an interview with the Wiltshire Council Commissioner.



**Total number of calls made - 550**

*Our relationship with the CRG has grown over the years and is valued as a critical friend. The group has taken time to understand our business and we welcome the independent view they offer that helps us shape and continually improve our service to customer.*

**Carole Williams, Director of Clinical Services, Medvivo**

*We value the monitoring that the WSUN provides as the results give us an external independent view of the services that we provide. We can then use this feedback, both positive and negative, to develop the service, not only for Wiltshire, but to the benefit of other contracts.* **Andy Brown Operations Manager, Medequip**

We are always looking to expand our volunteers and this year we have gained 4 new members through various avenues including through Develops, Do-it website. We welcome any ideas of groups or organisations that would like us to talk about the work of the CRG to help us expand our volunteers.

## Number of Volunteers on the CRG 15

*I recently finished work but I wanted to remain active and “help”. I read about volunteering in Wiltshire whilst online and did some research to find some volunteering which would utilise my existing expertise gained whilst working. I discovered the WSUN Customer Reference Group which provides independent monitoring of the care suppliers who work for Wiltshire Council and their aims and objectives matched my background.*

*Independent monitoring involves telephoning people who receive Help to Live at home and asking what they think of the services they receive.*

*I have attended meetings, met other seasoned volunteers and also taken part in a monitoring session which I found interesting, spending time speaking to people who have used these services and listening to what they thought about the services they received. It makes me feel useful at the same time”*

***Linda Anderson (new member CRG)***

**Hours spent on monitoring sessions by  
volunteers 128**

**Development workers spent 654 hours on  
Help to Live at Home**

## Memory Groups – Time Well Spent

Wiltshire and Swindon Users' Network has successfully supported three wonderful memory groups to come into being. This is thanks to a team of dedicated volunteers who have worked with the network in all aspects, from finding venues to promoting the groups and making copious cups of tea. The model is simple – some willing volunteers who can give a few hours a month, a suitable venue, WSUN support, publicity and a warm welcome.

The groups are user led – essentially whatever the members want to use the time for can happen. Just a few of the activities and guests to date have included; Easter egg hunt, card making, musician, puppet show, Bobby Van Trust, poetry session, seaside trip, vintage car photos, heritage museum visit, quizzes, and plenty of talk and laughter.



### Some quotes from members of the groups show just how much benefit this simple model gives.

I didn't feel too good then came to group and brightened up

A big help is the practical things we learn from other group members

I don't feel alone in the frustration of not remembering things

We don't do groups. Didn't expect to enjoy it but it has been so lovely makes me feel more confident about going out and doing other things

It makes a big difference being with people who appreciate our situation, our concerns and worries

We're grateful for a group in Calne. It's great for mum because she needs the social time with people

Me coming here gives George a break – he spends time in his shed



Group volunteers also gain so much from their involvement.



“I needed to make more contact with people and have gained confidence”



“if you can give a little, it makes you feel so good.”

*Wiltshire CCG has really valued the input and involvement of the Wiltshire and Swindon Users Network in this year – which is the first year of the CCG! Working alongside WSUN, with their expert advice and insight has been enormously helpful. Specifically their work supporting people with dementia and involvement in the Dementia Strategy Board.*

*We look forward to working together on user involvement in the coming year.*  
**Jo Cullen Group Director, West Wiltshire, Yatton Keynell and Devizes (WWYKD), Wiltshire CCG**

## Wiltshire Users Safeguarding Reference Group

The group is hosted and facilitated by WSUN and is made up of adult care service users with a range of perspectives—with physical and sensory impairment, mental health service users, older people and people with learning difficulties.



It meets regularly in between the Safeguarding Board Meetings and at each of our meetings Margaret Sheather, Chair of the Safeguarding Board reports on items discussed. Service users have an opportunity to comment on the many issues and raise concerns from their perspective.

*The Wiltshire Safeguarding Adults Board (WSAB) has very much appreciated the support of WSUN in establishing a service user reference group. The WSAB is keen to make sure that service users' views are represented in its discussions and decisions, and this lively group is starting to make that a reality. We look forward to continuing and developing the work in the future.*

**Margaret Sheather – Chair of the Wiltshire Safeguarding Adults Board**

## Involvement in Social Work Students selection and training.

We continue to successfully support Wiltshire College with the Trowbridge Hub, by providing facilitation, administration, transport and financial support to enable the Hub to operate with an independent view. The Hub supports Social Work students by giving them a service user/carer perspective. One new member has been added to the Hub.



The degree course at Wiltshire College, Trowbridge is currently going through a re-design, this will include a new selection process for potential students. The College and Trowbridge Hub are looking at how they could broaden the range of services/carers involved with the programme. Service Users' are an important part of the selection process for students and also during the duration of the course.



**UNIVERSITY OF  
BATH**

Our Service users also continue to be involved with Bath University particularly around the selection interview process for students, their workshops and recall sessions.



## Stonehenge

For over two years WSUN has been involved in consultations with English Heritage on all aspects of accessibility at the new Stonehenge Visitor Centre.

In December, English Heritage held the official opening ceremony of the new centre. It was a very interesting day with an opportunity to test the accessibility of the centre, the land train and the circuit around the stones.



Although everything was manageable we did discover problems, including the accessible toilet wasn't particularly accessible due to large bins which made turning with a wheelchair very difficult. We weren't able to take Kath on the land train, because the disembarking platform at the stones hadn't been completed.



In May, we were invited back to look at the interactive materials in the Education Centre. We spent the day in the company of Julian Richards (archaeologist) who will be using the resources to run courses about Stonehenge. We also had another opportunity to test the accessibility during a normal operating day with thousands of the public visiting the stones. Three wheelchair users and one person with a visual impairment attended.

Access to the land train worked very well and English Heritage staff were very competent and helpful in assisting. However the silver grey columns that support the roof around the centre were very difficult to negotiate for a person with a visual impairment as they are backed by glass walls and therefore do not stand out.

The land train has a stopping point halfway down to the stones where people can explore the landscape. This is very difficult to do in a wheelchair and really quite dangerous because the carriage doors open and exit to the right and therefore into oncoming traffic.

All the issues found have been reported back to English Heritage.

Despite some difficulties it was a thoroughly enjoyable day and the presence of Julian Richards meant that all of us learnt a whole lot more about this magnificent monument.

*Working with WSUN on the Stonehenge Project has always been a great pleasure. They are a very professional, informative, helpful and inspiring organisation to work with and we have learnt a great deal from WSUN's members.*

**Rosie Sherrington, Social Inclusion and Diversity Advisor,  
English Heritage**



*Following the circulation of the 'Diverse Communities Report' (June 2013), WSUN prompted the formation of a task and finish group to explore how various partners could work together to develop more effective engagement mechanisms with Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) communities in Wiltshire. This leadership from WSUN on this agenda has been really important to drive forward the collective understanding (including those from BME communities) of what actions we needed to take, particularly in a county with very little race equality voluntary sector infrastructure. As a result, our focus is now on supporting the development of BME/Faith Clusters across the County; this work is being co-ordinated by West Wilts Multi Faith Forum and DEVELOP*

**Jane Graham, Equality and Inclusion Lead Corporate Function  
and Procurement Wiltshire Council**

# Development Outreach – Swindon

## Swindon Mobility Club

Although Swindon Borough Council ceased to fund us in October we have continued to support our service user members in Swindon, all be it on a limited scale.

The Swindon Mobility Club continues to meet every three months. There are approximately 15 regular members in attendance, and additional members attend when they can.



These are just some of the issues raised:

Eye clinic appointments are sent in small print at present.

Tramper scooter at Coate Water Country Park not fit for purpose

Not enough disabled parking spaces in the proposed new development Davis Place, in Swindon

Bus drivers from Thamesdown Transport driving away from the bus stop before the passengers are seated

Our coffee mornings are held in one of the committee rooms at the Civic Offices, Euclid Street, Swindon, on a quarterly basis. It is a very informal group which gives members the opportunity to discuss anything they feel relevant to mobility issues.

The meetings have proved very productive to date, with our members discussing issues they have experienced. It is also a great opportunity to share information and ideas.

Topics discussed include concerns at Great Western Hospital (GWH), accessibility to shops, restaurants and public transport. If members feel concerned about a specific issue, WSUN will support them to follow it up.



**148 members in Swindon**

A great way to communicate with one another, to share information and try to resolve their issues together

This is a good way to learn and find out about new things. It's a great way to get together with people in a similar position with the same interests

We can talk about mobility issues that we are concerned about and know we will always get help with trying to resolve them

**Outreach workers in Swindon supported over 300 people by signposting them to the appropriate services**

# Wiltshire Independent Travel Support (WITS)

Malcolm wanted to become more independent and be able to use a bus to travel into his local town centre. He had a visual impairment and uses a cane with a roller to help guide his walking. Additionally Malcolm has a partial amputation of his right leg.

Within a matter of weeks with support, Malcolm could catch the bus independently and was pleased that he was able to travel on his own, something he hadn't been able to do for several years.

He now enjoys taking his young daughter into the town centre to visit the shops and a local cafe.

**“The training was tailored to my needs and went at my pace, WITS has given me a new lease of life and renewed confidence.”**



**100% of service users said they strongly agree or agree that they benefitted from Travel training**

**95% of service users can now travel independently**

**100% of service users said they would recommend the service**

**60 referrals made to the service**

**371 bus journeys undertaken**



I wouldn't have been able to go to college without their help showing me how to catch the bus

It's helped me with my road safety and with my confidence

You helped me get used to people, I asked for a cup of tea in the cafe and that was hard, but you helped me.

He has now managed to travel independently to and from college by himself, this is something we didn't think he would cope with, but is now confident, thanks to WITS. We are very proud of him but more importantly, he is proud of himself – thank you

I hope travel training keeps being funded for us, for people of my age (48) and older, if it wasn't for WITS I would be stuck.



## Management Committee 2013/14

Diane Gooch (Chair), Dorothy Roberts (Vice Chair), Kathleen Brennan (Vice Chair), Jim Law, Rosa Tran, Paul Burgess, , Mary Johns, Heather Tucker, Tim French, Martin Fortune, Anne Keats, Pat Donlan (Associate Member)

Louise Rendle

Head of Network Services



Nick Crane

Dep. Head of Network Services



Claire Selway

Finance Officer



Lisa Chadwick

Swindon Administrator



Gemma May

Office Manager



Jessica Johnson

Administrator



Lorraine Reeves

Outreach Worker



Zoe Millington

Outreach Worker



Neil Bartram

Outreach Worker



Richard Conlon

Outreach Worker

## Wiltshire Independent Travel Scheme



Peter North

WITS Co-ordinator



Sally Cobb

Travel Supporter



Marie Hillcoat

Travel Supporter



Lisa Hawkins

Travel Supporter



Christine Keepence

Travel Supporter

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