

WISH

Newsletter



Spring 2008



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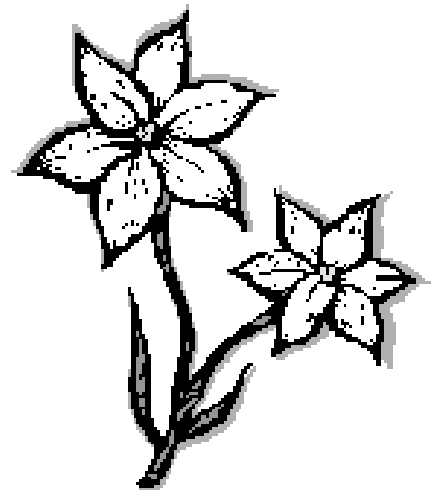
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WISH News

Hellos and goodbyes ...

Goodbye to **Carol**

White, a valued and long-standing member of WISH staff who left her job as Administrator for the Midlands and North office in January, and to **Ann Grant**, who has moved on from her role as WISH Advocate at Annesley House, Hazelwood House and The Willows.



Hello to **April Bell** who replaces Ann, and to **Ros Wilman** who joins us as Advocate for the Eastern region, covering St. John's House and Burston House in Diss, Grafton Manor, Oaktree Manor and Elm Park.

Visiting more units

WISH will now be providing advocacy at **Jigsaw Hospital** in Manchester, visiting once a week at first rising to twice a week in the future, and visiting the Women's Service at **Calderstones** once a fortnight.



We have also extended our contracts at **The Orchard** in Ealing and **The Bracton Centre** in Dartford.

Looking to the future

We are working with the **Cranfield Trust** on a marketing strategy for WISH. This will help more people know about us and our services, and should mean that we will be able to visit more units and reach more women in the future.



In addition, we are working on a new WISH website with **Community Views**, a social enterprise whose profits go back into a mental health project in north London. The new website should be up and running by the autumn.

We have also been fundraising for the **Community Link** project which covers the London area, and supports women through the transition between hospital or prison and the community.

Date for your diary – WISH AGM 2008

The 2008 WISH Annual General Meeting will be held on:



Tuesday 25th November



11:30 a.m. - 4 p.m.



**The Bond Company,
180-182 Fazeley Street,
Digbeth, Birmingham, B5 5SE**

All WISH members welcome

Stubbing Out Our Rights

At the beginning of March, WISH launched a campaign called **Stubbing Out Our Rights**, which is asking the Government to allow mental health inpatient units to keep their smoking rooms after 1st July.



The first stage of the campaign has been to collect signatures for a petition. At the time of writing we have collected nearly 1,000 signatures and counting, which just goes to show how many people have strong feelings on this issue. The campaign has also attracted support from many local advocacy and service user/survivor groups and one national organisation, the Mental Health Foundation.

Now that we have established strong support for the campaign, the next stage will be to start contacting MPs and the Government Ministers responsible to try and persuade them that the law needs to change so that smoking rooms can stay open. We will also be talking to associations that represent mental health nurses, as we know many staff on wards are also worried about how they will manage smoking after 1st July.

If you would like more information about the campaign, please contact Becky at the WISH office in London.

Update: A new name for WISH

You may have noticed that we are running behind schedule with deciding on a new name for WISH. We received many suggestions back on the postcards that were sent out with the last newsletter, so many thanks to those of you who came up with an idea.

We've been having discussions within WISH, with our Advisory Group (which is made up of women who have used WISH services) and with the Cranfield Trust who have been helping us with our marketing. Between us, we have come up with a shortlist of five names, and we would now like you to vote for your favourite.

With this newsletter, you should find a voting slip printed on yellow paper. Please tick your favourite suggestion and return it to the WISH office by **Friday 30th May**. All forms returned by this date will be entered into a prize draw to win £20. We will announce the new name that you have chosen in the summer newsletter, which will be coming out in July or August.

Correction

Thank you to **Mary from London** who wrote to the WISH office to correct a mistake we made in the last newsletter, in which we said that the 2007 Annual General Meeting was the first time a WISH AGM had been held outside a secure hospital setting. In fact, some years ago the AGM was held in a community centre in London – we stand corrected!

Mental Health Act 2007

Did you know that a new Mental Health Act will be coming into force later this year? The **Mental Health Act 1983** is the current set of laws that says how and why people with mental health problems can be detained in hospital. The **Mental Health Act 2007** is the name of the set of laws that will be coming in from October this year. It is an **amendment Act**, which means that the current set of laws hasn't been completely rewritten and a lot of it will stay the same – instead, this Act introduces certain changes to the Mental Health Act 1983.

The detail of mental health law can be quite complicated, so this article will just look at the main changes to the law, particularly changes that are likely to affect adults in secure hospitals and prisons.

Definition of “mental disorder”

There is now a single definition of mental disorder - “*any disorder or disability of the mind*” - this replaces the four categories (mental illness, mental impairment, severe mental impairment and psychopathic disorder) in the current Act. This means that mental health problems such as personality disorders, which have previously been a grey area in terms of mental health law, will definitely be covered by the new Act. The exemptions currently in place for drug or alcohol addiction on its own and learning disability without abnormally aggressive or seriously irresponsible conduct remain unchanged.

New roles for mental health workers

The person with overall responsibility for a patient's care is currently known as the Responsible Medical Officer (RMO), and this person could only be a psychiatrist. Under the new Act, the person with overall responsibility will be known as the **Responsible Clinician (RC)** and this person will not have to be a psychiatrist. Psychologists, nurses, social workers, occupational therapists and doctors who are not trained in psychiatry could also do extra training to allow them to take on this role. People with this extra training will be known as **Approved Clinicians (AC)**.

Another role that will have a different name is the role of the Approved Social Worker (ASW). From October they will be known as **Approved Mental Health Professionals (AMHP)** and other workers such as nurses, psychologists and occupational therapists would be able to take on this role with additional training. The AMHP will have the same powers and responsibilities as the ASW in terms of deciding whether someone should be admitted to hospital under the Mental Health Act.

Admission to hospital

The procedure for admitting someone to hospital under a section will stay more or less the same. The new Act does state that **appropriate treatment** must exist for a person's condition before they can be admitted to hospital to receive this treatment. This replaces the safeguard in the current Act which states that treatment must be beneficial to the patient.

Have your say - How has WISH helped you?

There will also be a definition of what constitutes “treatment”, and includes nursing care, psychological intervention, habilitation and rehabilitation as well as things like medication and ECT.

Renewing a section

Under the current Act, the decision to renew a person's section rests with the RMO. With the new Act, the Responsible Clinician (RC) will have to get another qualified worker from a different profession to agree that the section should be renewed.

Advocacy

One of the most positive changes introduced by the new Act is that it will give patients a **right to independent advocacy**. This right will apply to patients who are currently sectioned under the Act, or for whom sectioning is being considered. This will therefore include prisoners being considered for or awaiting transfer to a hospital. Unfortunately, this part of the Act will not come into force until at least April 2009.

Nearest Relative

The list of people who could be a patient's Nearest Relative (NR) has now been extended to include civil partners. It will also be possible under the new Act for a patient to go to court to remove their current NR and replace them with a person of their choice.

This is just a summary of the main changes to the Mental Health Act. Your solicitor or advocate will be able to give you more details if you need them, or contact Becky at the WISH London office (contact details on page 11) who can send you more information.

We are currently working on new marketing materials for WISH so that we can get information about our services out to more units and to more women. We would like to include quotes from women who have used WISH services in our leaflets, on our new website and in applications for funding.

You may have been supported by a WISH advocate, a befriender, or by our Community Link or Women Moving On project workers. You may have even just rung one of the WISH offices for some information, feel you have benefited from our campaigning work, or enjoyed reading the newsletters.

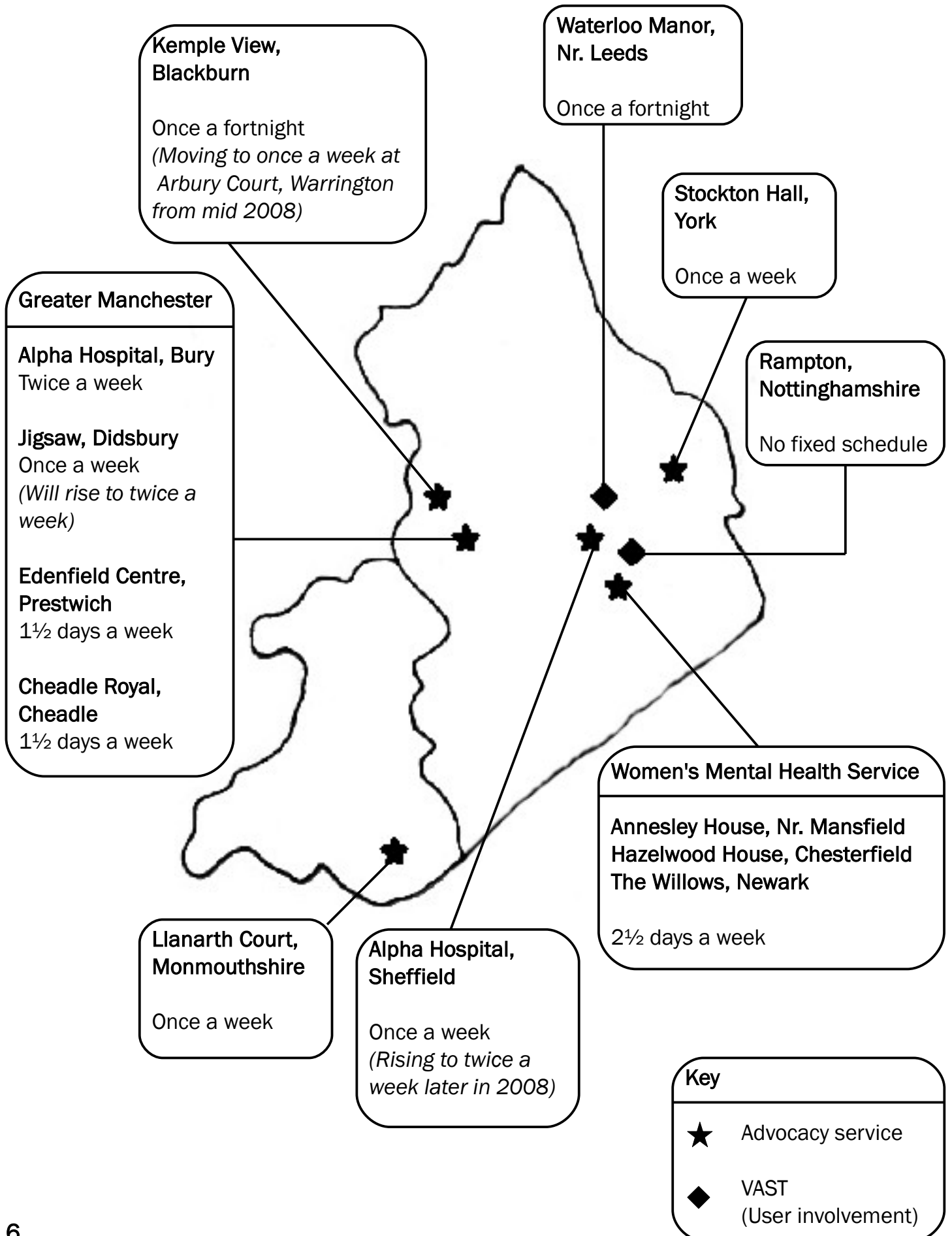
However you feel WISH has helped you, we would really like to hear about it. We have included postcards with this newsletter mailing that you can write on with your comments and send back to us. Any feedback you send us may be used in future WISH publications and leaflets or on our website, and it will remain anonymous.

There's no particular deadline for this – it's good to get feedback at any time of the year – but anything we receive before July is more likely to be used in our marketing materials.

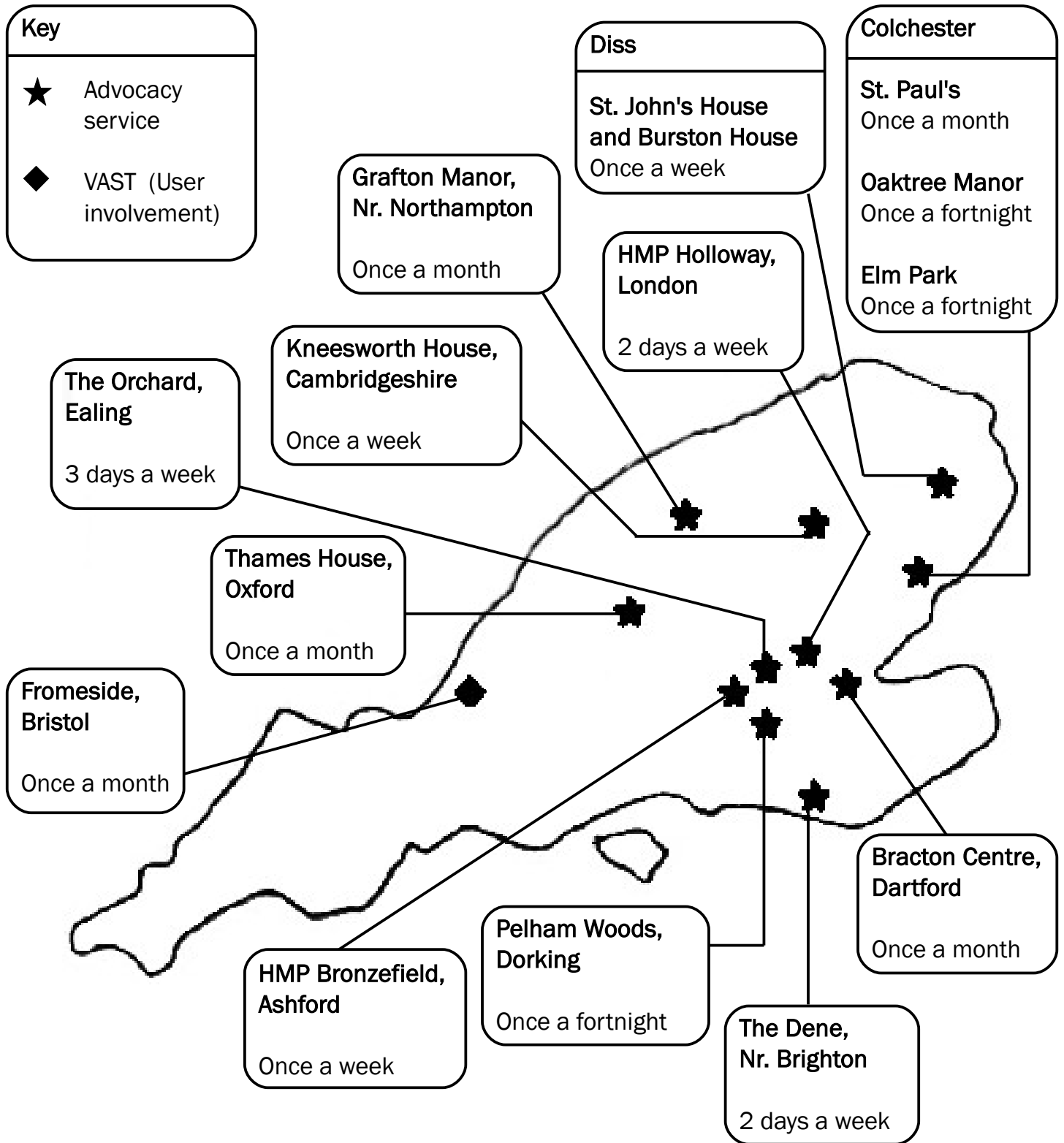
We look forward to receiving your postcards!

In the next newsletter, we'll be asking you about **your campaigning priorities for 2008**.

Units that WISH visits – Midlands and North



Units that WISH visits – London and South



WISH would like to be able to visit more units around the country, so that women can access a WISH worker wherever they are in the system. If WISH doesn't currently visit your unit but you would like them to, please contact the Liverpool office if your unit is in Wales, the Midlands or the North, or the London office if your unit is in the East of England, London or the South. A WISH worker may be able to arrange a visit to your unit, and talk to the management about setting up regular visits.

Looking Beyond the Mirror

Skin is a mask,
Smiles are too,
But who is the person
Deep in you?

See the shimmering glass
When you peer,
Into the mirror
Thinking things are clear,
But what you see
Is a shell to the rest,
It's her beyond the mirror,
I love the best.

Watch the pretty girl
Over there,
Glance in the mirror,
Perfecting her hair.
But you are better,
As you stare,
It's a deeper truer beauty
You hold to share.

A reflection is shallow,
Can't say much,
Never managing to come close
To a touch,
Of the person I see
Hiding in fear,
But if only she'd blossom,
Would be so clear.

I like the unique person
In the mirror frame,
Who when I needed comfort,
Always came.
No superficial beauty,
Could ever match the mind,
Of the clever and wonderful person
In you I find.



I looked *beyond*
The mirror for you,
I fell in love
With what you do,
So if you let me in,
To be there,
You will find
I'll *always* care,

I love you from deep
Within my heart,
So find it hard
To be kept apart,
Beneath your skin
And hidden away,
Is a woman who's perfect,
Let alone okay.

Go beyond the mirror,
Believe you can win,
And keep making me proud to know you,
So I can smile my grin.

Anita – HMP Holloway

This hand

This hand

Held my niece
At one day old

This hand

Has been shaken
By famous footballers

This hand

Has written
Poems and stories
From the heart

This hand

Wipes away the tears
For all the lost years

This hand

Expresses violence
That I still want
To inflict

This hand

With the other
Shows I can love my sister
With a hug

Karen – HMP Bronzefield



Feel Down – Free Me

When you are feeling down

And the hope you hoped
Can't be found

When your head tries to retrace the track

But you can't find

No way back

The gifts and the smiles

You used to share

Now met by

A long dark stare

Trying to find

The reason to complete

Something that once

Seemed neat

The cause itself

Smashes upon a rock

A thread of hope

Is all you've got

Even that thread

Snapped in two

I know what it is

I want to do

The force fed crap

Which fills my brain

Causes me endless pain

To continue when

There's no point going on

Not a life

But a painful existence to endure

I live in hope

For those even worse off

Than me

It's them not my life

It's something I wanted

There is no reason to go on

But there's something strong

I want to be free

Free me

It's so simple to see.

Fynn – Llanarth Court

My story

I was allocated a place at a Medium Secure Unit in the North West in October 1998 and was extremely ill at the time. I was initially placed on one-to-one supervision but after the court case and two years in intensive therapy and a Tribunal I was permitted to move on to a Care Home nearby, which I shared with eleven other people.



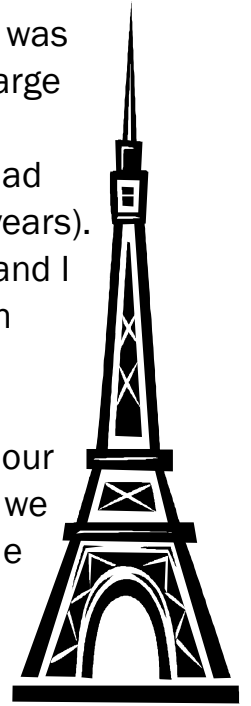
I have always been a determined person and decided to go on several courses which initially was the ECDL (European

Computer Driving License) and photography. I was highly successful with the photography and was part of an exhibition at a local gallery.

At the Care Home every Saturday, I cooked for all the residents and the staff. In 2005 it was decided that I could move on to my own flat which was an exciting prospect, but it also came at a time tinged with sadness for my mother passed away and my team thought I would have a delayed reaction. Fortunately, though, that didn't happen as I did everything that I could do. I continued with my courses at the local arts project and took up some voluntary work in Reception as a telephonist/admin worker.



2007 was really my year - I was granted an Absolute Discharge and could see both of my children on their own (we had been supervised for nine years). My daughter fell pregnant and I was able to attend the birth which was an amazing experience so I became a grandma in August. It was our first Christmas together so we decided to go abroad for the New Year (my first flight in 22 years!) and went to Paris.



This year I have decided to improve my self image and have joined a diet group - unfortunately all those years of taking Zyprexa have taken their toll with weight gain. I have joined the gym and have taken up an RSA course in computers plus I'm now doing voluntary work with a local housing and support organisation with a view to paid employment. I have also been told that I will soon be transferred to Local Authority care so that means I will finally lose the forensic tag.

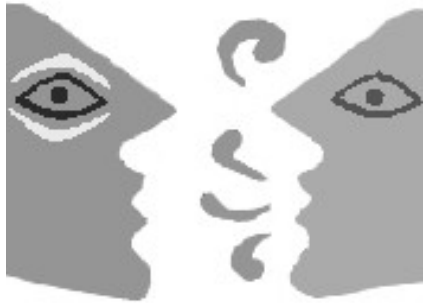
I hope that anyone reading this will gain encouragement from it because anything is possible if you believe in yourself. Initially, I couldn't see the light at the end of the tunnel but if I can achieve all this it means that anyone is capable of doing the same if you put the effort in. Also, learn to rely and trust your team around you for they want you to succeed! Good luck on your journey.

Your poetry

Burning and tying and slashing away,
To make the pain just go away,
But it will return another day,
I guess this is just not the way.

Want to scream and want to shout,
Need to let the whole lot out,
This tortured soul, so filled with doubt,
Must learn to cope and talk it out.

Bryonni – The Orchard



Top tricks

You: Which of these two sentences is right? “An egg yolk is white” or “An egg yolk are white”?

Them: An egg yolk is white.

You: Wrong! An egg yolk is yellow!



You: How many hands am I holding out?

Them: Two.

You: No, four. There are two hands on my watch!

Vicki – Alpha Hospital Sheffield

What do you think of this newsletter?

What do you think of how it looks?

What's in it?

What was your favourite bit of this issue?

Is there anything that wasn't in this issue that you'd like to see in a future issue?

We'd love to hear your opinions on the newsletter.

There are many ways you can get your feedback to us:

✉ **WISH, Freepost RLUG-GBUC-BXHB, 18 Borough High Street, London, SE1 9QG**

@ **wish.wish@onetel.net** (mark the subject 'Newsletter feedback')

📞 **020 7407 5191** (leave a message for Becky)

💬 **Or tell a member of WISH staff at your unit**

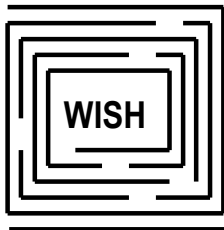
Want to contribute to this newsletter?

We welcome all contributions to this newsletter, including poems, artwork, puzzles, or articles about your experiences of the system or an issue that affects you. We pay £5 for each piece that gets published.

Please send any contributions to:

✉ **WISH, Freepost RLUG-GBUC-BXHB, 18 Borough High Street, London, SE1 9QG**
@ **wish.wish@onetel.net**

Remember to include your full name and postal address so we can send through a payment if your piece is published. Only your first name and the name of the town or unit you live in will be printed unless you ask otherwise.



WISH

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In the next issue:

WISH news

Announcing our new name

What are your campaigning priorities?

Update: The Stubbing Out Our Rights campaign

WISH membership cards

Your poetry

And lots more ...

