

'A wonderful day to meet  
like minded people'

**together  
we are  
stronger**

National Survivor User Network

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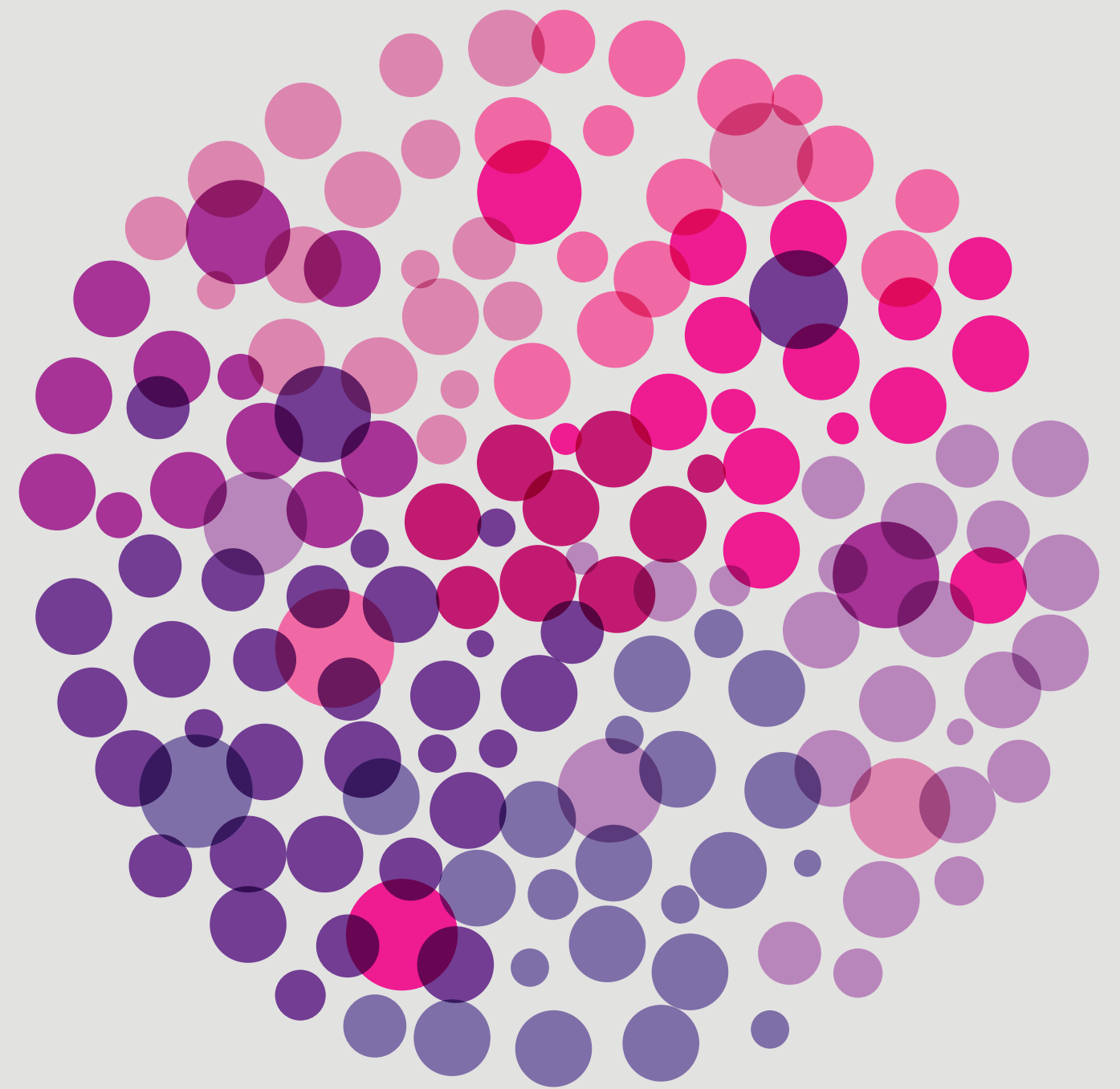
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## Annual general meeting and members event

Lowry Centre, Greater Manchester. M1 4RJ  
Wednesday 24 October 2012

 **network**  
nsun for mental health

**The following report records the decisions taken at the AGM and the comments made in the various discussions, feedback forms, message boards and other forums.**



# Annual general meeting and members event

Lowry Centre, Greater Manchester. M1 4RJ  
Wednesday 24 October 2012



**NSUN's annual general meeting (AGM) and get-together was a big success with over 100 members from all over England taking part.**

The one-day event in Salford, Greater Manchester followed our first ever AGM in Birmingham in 2011 and we tried to make it even better.

Members filled in post-it notes to give feedback on the day with one saying the event was 'better than Prozac' and most feeling uplifted by meeting new people and hearing how positive action is being taken to give them more influence.

People attending were treated to stunning views over the new 'Media City' development from the Lowry Centre and entertained by musicians who had themselves experience of mental health distress.

London singer-songwriter Julius Xavier played his reggae composition on personal budgets and bassist Matthew Saunders from Croydon played some laid back tunes in the intervals.

It was clear that many people were concerned about budget and benefit cuts and NSUN will use the messages we heard to shape our work this year.

'Welcome  
and  
thank you'



NSUN Chair, **Kath Lovell** welcomed everyone to the meeting. Members, staff and trustees were all thanked for their continuing support through out the year. .

**Sue Haworth** announced that this was NSUN's second AGM and there were minutes of last year's AGM to approve.

Approval of minutes for 1 November, 2011

The Chair asked for a true approval of the 2011 meeting.

**Clare Ockwell** proposed the motion **Julia Smith** seconded the motion and the motion was passed unanimously.

**Apologies** were received for vice-chair **Carolyn Anderson**.





# AGM Business

## item one

### Trustees report and accounts

**Chair:** Drew attention to the trustee's annual report and accounts and asked them to consider the statement of accounts and balance sheets of NSUN for the period ending 31 March 2012.

The chair gave her report and invited **Joyce Kallevik** and **Soka Kapundu** to give the treasurer and accountant's report.

The Chair thanked Joyce Kallevik and Soka Kapundu for their good stewardship and leadership and invited questions from the floor.

**Francesco Palma** asked why the overall figures on the pie chart on page 10 of the annual report were included with the overall figures. The Treasurer said the staff costs would be broken down in a separate pie chart next time enabling clarification of other costs. Colin Smith asked whether the names of the projects NSUN runs are published. Managing Director Sarah Yannioullou said this was all in the annual report and on the website.

**Hilary Myers** wanted to a more detailed break down of costs relating to direct services to members. The Treasurer said that this would be addressed in the next years report.

**Dominic Walker** asked if a breakdown of fees paid out to service user consultants would be reflected in the Future. This was agreed.

**Cluny Macpherson** asked if it was possible to have details of the debtors who owe 15 per cent. The accountant said most of the money was owed at the end of the financial year but was paid at the beginning of the new financial year, April 2012. The treasurer also pointed out that some funders' payments are paid after 31 March and the Managing Director said £30,000 of that money was outstanding from West Midlands NHS.

**Ryan Cowan** asked if NSUN employed people on a sessional basis. The Managing Director said payments were made depending on money available for the particular project, for example freelance, voluntary expenses and consultancy fees.

The Chair then put the resolution that the report and accounts be received.

**Micia Starky** proposed the motion Cluny Macpherson seconded the motion  
Votes for – 60 approximate. Against – 0.  
Abstention – six.

## item two

### Managing Directors report

The Chair invited **Sarah Yiannoullou** to give the Managing Director's report

**Alan Hartman** asked how many actual groups existed as part of NSUN. The Managing Director said at the moment it was an approximate figure of 467 groups. Alan Hartman also wanted to know how a genuine service user can have a voice. The Managing Director said that the National Involvement Partnership project was specifically focused on strengthening and supporting the direct voice of people at all levels. In addition to this a number of places on strategic groups such as the Ministerial Advisory Group and Joint Commissioning Panel for mental health had been secured.

**Dominic Walker** asked what steps we are taking to increase our BME (black and minority ethnic) specific groups. The Managing Director said joint work with Catch-a-Fiya continued to take forward the recommendations from the 2009 Dancing To Our Own Tunes report. This was being reviewed and would inform all NSUN project work such as the Care Programme Approach and Recovery research project and the National Involvement Partnership work. Munir Lalani wanted to know where the BME communities are and whether they had been invited to come to the AGM.

**Stephenie McKinley** asked where the membership survey was. The Managing Director said a hard copy was in each delegate pack and a link had been included in the ebulletins and on the NSUN website. Jo Nicolson asked what NSUN was doing to support people with negative experiences. The Managing Director said NSUN had recently increasingly received calls from distressed people who had been directed to

various places for help. NSUN is now working with the British Institute of Human Rights on their health and social care programme and collating information related to common issues.

NSUN staff and delegates tweeted about the event at #nsunagm

## item three

### Election of trustees

It was explained that under NSUN's constitution, trustees are required to retire in the third year following their election. As this is the second AGM all trustees voted for last year would remain in post. The following people indicated that they would like to re-stand for a further three year term:

- **Carolyn Anderson** (second year)
- **Alisdair Cameron** (second year)
- **Susan Haworth** (second year)
- **Joyce Kallevik** (second year)
- **Kath Lovell** (second year)
- **Clare Ockwell** (second year)
- **Dominic Makuvachuma Walker** (second year)

**In addition, the following appointments have been proposed**

- **Keith Blackburn**  
David Ralph proposed the motion  
Val Baker seconded the motion  
Against - None  
Abstainers – four

- **Tania Towns**  
Saira Walker proposed the motion  
Alisdair Cameron seconded the motion  
Against – None  
Abstainers – three

The honorary officers shall be elected for a one-year term after which they will be eligible for re-election.

- **Chair: Kathleen Lovell**  
Majority vote  
None against

No abstainers

- **Co-vice chair: Dominic Walker**

Majority vote  
None against  
No abstainers

- **Co-vice chair: Carolyn Anderson**

Majority vote  
None against  
No abstainers

- **Treasurer: Joyce Kallevik**

Majority vote  
None against  
No abstainers

## item four & five

### Appointment of auditors and remuneration

The chair thanked the auditors (**Martin Morrison and Co Ltd**) and recommended their re-appointment.

The chair also suggested that the executive officer be authorised to agree the amount of remuneration for this year with the auditors.

Dominic Walker proposed the motion  
Keith Blackburn seconded the motion  
Majority in favour  
Against - None  
No abstainers

## item six & seven

### Any other business

Chair: Asked if there any other business

Chair: There was no special business at this meeting

Declared that the statutory business is complete.

Closed AGM business at 12.45 ●

## Q&amp;A

# round table – questions to and answers from members

## 1a) Do you feel you have a say or any influence over public services changes that affect you?

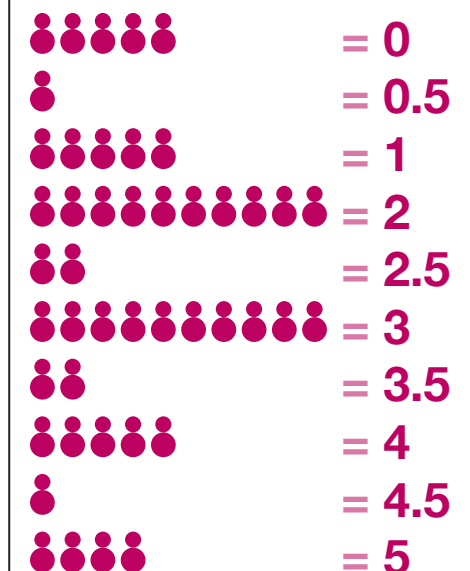
- It's feasible to have an influence over the changes in public services, or at least that it is possible if enough people stand-up for having a voice.
- Service-user leaders are needed to always speak up for people and fight on behalf of other service-users.
- Reservations about having an impact over cuts.
- Cuts put fear into people and it is that fear makes the situation worse.
- It is easier to make a difference locally than nationally
- No
- There is some influence locally but not nationally.
- As an individual I don't think I have any influence. We need an organisation like NSUN to influence services.
- In theory yes, in practice no. Mostly influence is a tokenistic exercise.
- Can do something at a local level, but not really nationally.
- It's hard to influence when there is no clear direction and leadership is weak.
- Yes, I have some influence as co-chair of Autism Partnership Board.
- Yes, I have some influence through my patient reference group.
- Being informed is one thing. We may have a say but won't be listened to.
- They might listen to NSUN rather than small organisations on their own.
- NSUN can bring people together.
- Are MPs listening to their constituents with mental health conditions – especially about benefits?
- We need people who are brave and outspoken.
- We must take up opportunities for consultation.

"We need people who are brave and outspoken."

- No, at best we are just paid lip service.
- I don't have a say and I don't know where to get information.
- There are too many professionals swaying views on government boards for service-users to cut through.
- Influence takes a long time.
- There is going through the motions but not real influence.
- We have to choose our battles.
- Influence can happen at local level: Healthwatch, commissioners, Trusts.
- We need proper involvement and engagement with reciprocity, payment and outcomes.
- CCG involvement is tick-box.
- Voice with no power is of limited use.

## 1b) On a scale of 0-5

0 = No influence. 5 = Real influence.



## 2a) What is NSUN's role in ensuring we are as informed as possible in the changes?

- NSUN has a key role to take in ensuring that service users have full involvement in public services changes. NSUN fulfils this role.
- NSUN really thinks through what to say and how to pitch it.
- Website easy to navigate.
- NSUN to reach out to more isolated users.
- NSUN needs to lobby on everything.
- NSUN needs to be aware of all changes so that they can keep groups informed.
- NSUN needs to ensure it provides accessible information is available at national and local level in time for service-users to act.
- NSUN facilitates interaction between local/national groups – makes sure we all sing from the same hymn sheet.
- Collect/collate/publish alternative statistics using NSUN members to provide info.
- Someone from the Autism Partnership Board should be involved with NSUN and vice versa.
- NSUN should provide access to consultations with government and provide platforms to bring people together on local and national levels.
- It needs to provide local facilitation and national events – which it is doing well.
- Needs to use media to extend influence.
- It's good that it provides an open platform and is non-proprietary.
- NSUN should help to campaign and lobby: guarantee they are seen engaging and influencing. If you don't talk to the right people you never get anywhere.
- We have to challenge system.
- Offer training: leadership skills.
- We need a high profile celebrity to stand up.
- A Live Aid for Mental Health would be good.
- Need more regional events – to meet each other, but also to address issues.
- NSUN can demonstrate examples of good

"NSUN facilitates interaction between local & national groups – makes sure we all sing from the same hymn sheet."

practice, especially prevention, 'recovery' (what does it mean?).

- Networking and information is crucial, publicity and communication.
- Is NSUN too 'top heavy' and focused on London?
- More grass roots and information going up.
- More regional events to discuss topics.
- We must make sure we include ethnic groups – and understand their complexity, diversity.
- We should include older people's groups – experience inequality in mental health system.
- NSUN should publicise petitions, campaigns, e-campaigning, lobbying (local and national).
- NSUN has greater power to reach print media.
- We should have elected national rep for users.
- NSUN should ensure autonomy of peer led user groups.
- NSUN should be more involved in developing health policy.
- It should act as a mental patients union.
- NSUN's help to make funding bids is useful.

"Giving people support to attend meetings/NSUN staff to get groups together."

NSUN should identify and distinguish itself from other similar groups e.g. Mind.

- NSUN is useful to inform us when things are discussed/meetings take place.
- It is good to be able/encouraged to take part in influencing.
- NSUN communicated the voice of its members through active participation.
- Information needs to be in plain English not government English.
- Reduction in bombardment of incomprehensible info – we want tasty bites.
- It has a reputation of excellence.
- Must continue to do things the NSUN way and not the government way.
- We want regional offices.
- More coming out to places like today.
- The weekly update/MH watch/NIP standards are all useful.
- We should have monthly meetings facilitated by NSUN.

"More national events to share information."

## 2b) What do you need from NSUN?

Participants wanted NSUN to increase the support that it provides by, for example, empowering local groups to make an impact. A guide/tool to use might be helpful. There might also be focus groups to consider the effect of one's own issues on the impact that one may have (if one has negative issues, these may detract from one's influence) and to help people think about their strengths.

- NSUN should be more proactive in the market place.
- It should work with GPs.
- It should help groups understand changes.

- NSUN should identify and distinguish itself from other similar groups e.g. Mind.
- It should support peer support – how to offload, basic skills, positivity, mindfulness, goal setting. Filling gaps services don't provide.
- Raise profile further nationally and locally.
- Build the links – find the gaps.
- Structure and clear direction.
- More hard edged.
- More coffee!
- More national events to share information.
- Non proprietary open platform.
- Giving people support to attend meetings/ NSUN staff to get groups together.
- Workshops – more of – making things – therapeutic coffee mornings.
- Skills to train others in chairing/ constitutions/assessing people into groups.
- Clear objectives – communication strategy
- More of what you're doing.
- Keep growing. ●



# Annual General Meeting evaluation feedback 24.10.12

|                             | V.POOR<br>1 | 2          | OK<br>3     | 4                       | V.GOOD<br>5    |
|-----------------------------|-------------|------------|-------------|-------------------------|----------------|
| Information about the event |             | ●          | ●●●         | ●●●●●<br>●●●●●          | ●●●●●<br>●●●●● |
| Response to enquiries       |             |            | ●●●●●<br>●● | ●●●●●<br>●●●●●          | ●●●●●<br>●●●●● |
| Support to participate      |             |            | ●●●         | ●●●●●<br>●●●●●<br>●●●●● | ●●●●●          |
| The food                    | ●●●●        | ●●●●●<br>● | ●●●●●<br>●  | ●●●●●<br>●              | ●              |
| The music                   | ●           | ●●●●       | ●●●●●       | ●●●●●                   | ●●●●           |

## Most enjoyable part of the day

- Writing on the graffiti wall.
- Soapbox sessions (x8)
- Group discussion (x2).
- Reports in the morning.
- Learnt a lot about NSUN.
- Open mike (x3).
- Round table discussion was a good part of a good day overall.
- Hearing from people – talking about their own experience.

- Buffet was very good and a good place to network – nice to see people from local groups as well as across the way.
- Not needing to rush around meeting old and new friends.
- The food.
- Questions and testimonies.
- The service user case studies.
- Meeting people (x2).
- Good venue.
- Networking (x2).

'Great to hear folk talking about their own experience, the buffet was good and a good place to network – nice to see people from local groups.'

'It was great to hear from other people from all over the uk and see how they were dealing with things. What a great day.'

## Most useful part of the day

- View from the venue.
- Networking (x8)
- Group discussion. Other group information on stands.
- Finding out what other groups are doing.
- Learning about NSUN.
- Hearing what NSUN is doing and how to get involved.
- The man who suggested a name change.
- Speed briefings.
- Hearing from people from across the UK.
- Refreshment and lunch time.
- Information (x 2).
- Stands.
- Table top discussions (x2).
- Meeting old friends.
- All of it was useful.
- The summary at the end and peoples' concerns.

## Least enjoyable part of the day

- The morning – too many questions.
- Business part.
- Badly managed AGM.

- Getting there. Directions to Lowry were poor (Train and Tram).
- Climbing stairs due to slow lift.
- All enjoyable (x2) .
- Formal AGM ( x3 )
- Lack of drink e.g. tea.
- Lots to get into day? A bit of a rush. Need more time to talk to participants?
- N/A.
- Five hour journey home.
- Rushed summary.
- Running out of time for NSUN speed briefings.
- Music –running order getting regigged yet again.
- The food.
- Too rushed.
- Finance presentation.
- All ok/necessary
- Having to leave before the end. Should be longer for the summary.

## Least useful part of the day

- The food – wasn't enough to sustain anyone – only allowed three finger sandwiches?
- Questions for group discussion were not very clear – too broad.
- Ed Davie reading out his press release.
- Communications officer as a facilitator.
- All useful.
- Formal AGM (x2).
- Morning arrival could have been kept to 10-15 minutes, then there would be more time to talk.

- Music. However good, it doesn't easily fit in, especially as people like to talk. If used, give it its own spot on stage?
- Wasted time travelling a long way.
- Rushed summary.
- Usual AGM – needs to be tighter/shorter.
- Too much heckling.
- AGM!
- Statement resulting from the table discussions wasn't.
- N/A (x2)
- All ok/necessary.
- Need wheat free vegetarian food.

## Other comments

- Perhaps questions could be submitted in writing prior to the AGM to save time?
- A better conference could be had if people would refrain from calling out from the floor! Open mike – 2.5 minutes not observed for everyone.
- No vegan food.
- Expenses only for those unfunded and no more free bags (real waste of money).
- Good to get together but too much emphasis on NSUN and not enough on members' experience.

'So many people wanting to be heard and share their feelings. Could we have a bigger event to which all who are interested?'



**'Overall NSUN is impressive in terms of its organisation and professionalism.'**

- Alternatively there could be open regional events which can then send a number of delegates to national event.
  - NSUN staff and trustees, all talked about wanting to listen to members but the space and time to do that was unfortunately not well managed or thought through.
  - Soap boxes – too short.
- Shame that the only strict adherence to timings was during the Open Mic session. When choosing a location that has good public transport from national locations don't choose a venue with poor local public transport to get to it.
- Incredibly well organised, so efficient.
  - NSUN shows real awareness of accessibility issues including for hearing impaired people.
  - Several microphones, people speaking clearly, plus information in visual format (powerpoint).
  - Excellent variety in the format of the day.
  - Good networking opportunities.
  - Thanks for keeping the music low i.e no microphones or amplifiers (thank goodness no drums).

- I prefer no music but there was a good compromise.
  - NSUN genuinely does everything to be fully inclusive and democratic.
  - Loved the purple bag and contents. I am a new member of NSUN. I met old friends and made new. A big thank you.
  - Lunch was disappointing – good quality but not enough and no dessert.
  - Not enough tea/coffee throughout the day. Chairs and tables in the Quays bar would have been an improvement – more relaxing environment.
  - For the business part, I think the trustees and candidates should be on stage and /or each say something so we know who they are, especially if we have to vote on them.
  - Overall NSUN is impressive in terms of its organisation and professionalism.
  - Too top heavy an organization.
  - I look forward to hearing more from all the people I've encountered here – a user network is so needed both locally and nationally.
  - Hope to see you next year.
  - I enjoyed all of this.
  - Keep to one main aim.
- Coffee and tea would be useful at lunchtime.
- Venue- accessibility for less mobile participants.
- Great atmosphere – lots of networking. Very participatory.
  - In future, please provide concise directions. Some misleading information given

for today's event.

- Nice to see that NSUN is building year on year.
- NSUN deserves to exist. It needs to listen and reflect.
- Members expressed concerns such as the ratio of staff/service users in NSUN.
- NSUN must repeat strongly that staff are service users/survivors, to erase "them and us" feeling.
- Keen to get more involved in NSUN so that I can take information back to my own organisation/area.
- Biscuits very good.
- Don't like any music.

I think after event – maybe a last one hour for more networking at end. Maybe a speed dating event! ●

**'Keen to get more involved in NSUN so I can take information back to my own organisation.'**

## graffiti wall

- Access for parking for wheelchair was awful, not per venue's blurb.
- Same sex wards are not humane.
- Need site plan – disabled parking outside compass has steps to ramp.
- The parking is horrendous.
- I had a, should I, shouldn't I day today – my sons 18th birthday and a flood in my bathroom!! So glad I came. □ So much more than I thought – well done.
- They treat us all like rabid animals, inject us, medicate us and lock us up!!
- We are not mad, we are angry. With trusts you can't trust.
- NSUN is better than PROZAC.
- 'On Our Own Terms' Review. What purpose will this achieve?
- Matchstick men and matchstick cats and dogs.
- What's for LUNCH?
- Dietary needs not catered for – Prawns or tuna?
- Thank you. Also it was great to have the trustees on different tables and not on one together.
- Lunch: :o( Not enough variety for those who could not eat bread. Servers did not know if pepper was included with sandwiches. Refreshments: No tea or coffee with lunch – choice of orange juice or water all day. Very poor!
- Great to see so many people coming together. Good for networking old friends and new!
- There was no tea and coffee at lunch. We had to go and buy it in the café.
- Too much plenary, not enough small groupwork (which allows people to have their say).
- Only session that was shortened was the 50 minute soap box – reduced to 30 minutes and people felt under pressure to keep it short.
- The AGM was a bit long (shouldn't the honorary officers be elected by the Board at

their first meet up?) Not very interesting for most people in the room.

- Several people felt very uncomfortable at lunch-time as serving staff were very ignorant and unhelpful. People with special dietary needs were not catered for.
- MYSUN, URSUN, NSUN
- CONSULTATION? The answer is in the question.
- As next year marks 3 years, and in so being, one third of Trustees need to step down and Reapply, to stand, those who have attendance (sic) less than three quarters of the meeting, should step down. Info sent out about the nominees and a secret BALLOT by members.
- Good to hear that social justice is one of the important aspects of NSUN's work. NSUN are the user network for England. There is VOX in Scotland but what about a UK voice? Especially given the Scottish service users are affected by bills such as Welfare Reform Bill implemented by Westminster, not the Scottish Parliament.
- NSUN is a name that speaks to our members. Network for MH is fine as a trap line but not a name. There are lots of Networks for MH.
- Notes re: NSUN to Network for Mental (National Survivors User Network) Health (NMH). NSUN more approachable/"friendly" acronym/initialism (sic) than NMH. "Survivor" more positive/empowering?
- Network for Mental Health more 'searchable' on the net and less stigmatising to members. It is therefore more accessible.



**The AGM was promoted in NSUN's newsletter – 15,000 copies of which were distributed to members, 20 mental health trusts and at various events.**

**NSUN would like to thank our supporters who have recognised that we are doing a valuable job for our members and the wider community and that we are worth funding for the future.**

- **NHS West Midlands**
- **The Tudor Trust**
- **Trust for London**
- **Department of Health**
- **Comic Relief**
- **Esmée Fairbairn Foundation**
- **Awards for All**
- **Mental Health Foundation**