



Press Release

Immediate Release

6 March 2026

### **Collaborative Mural Brightens Up Somerset Mental Health Hospital**

Staff and individuals supported at a mental health hospital in Taunton have transformed a clinical space into a vibrant area.

Located on Orchard Portman, Cygnet Hospital Taunton is a 54-bed mental health hospital offering an acute service for adults and a specialist high dependency service for men with learning disabilities.

Service users at the Cygnet Health Care service came up with the idea of a visual escape, requesting a mural with themes of nature and calming colours.

Anya Colyer, Occupational Therapy Assistant at Cygnet Hospital Taunton, led the project working alongside seven individuals supported at the service.

She said: "We wanted to enhance the environment at our service and make it a sensory-friendly and inspiring space. Lots of information is often put up on walls, but I think it is vital to also have artwork among this to take away from the clinical feel.

"Co-production is so important and I worked with the individuals we support to create this mural. The involvement of both staff and service users helps to break barriers and promote inclusion and equality.

"By co-producing this mural together, it has really built a sense of community on the ward and a shared vision."

Using her background in Fine Art, Anya applied these skills to ensure the success of the project on Sycamore 2 Ward.

Three portals were created as part of the mural, inspired by the Cygnet Health Care service's surrounding fields and woodland.

The first portal is a local landmark – Wych Lodge – and the other two show the night sky and a sunset.

Anya said: "It was a great way to empower our service users to explore their creativity during their time at Cygnet Hospital Taunton. We worked together to design, draw and paint the mural. For those that weren't involved, they still added their own touch by putting a star onto the night sky.

"Each portal is a reflection of our passage through each day and the beauty that can be found in these quiet reflective moments in nature. The painting was a great

way to show self-expression and helped to build confidence and self-esteem as well as social, communication and problem-solving skills."

One service user involved in creating the mural said: "Even just watching everyone painting the mural was therapeutic."

The project is set to continue across the hospital allowing each ward the opportunity to design their own mural.