

City sex change ordeal is over

NOW DIANE FEELS COMPLETE AS A WOMAN

PORTSMOUTH'S first sex change operation has been carried out on a 55-year-old Southsea man.

Miss Diane Horscroft — formerly Mr. Richard Horscroft — battled with health authority chiefs who initially told him he was too old for the operation.

He won the fight after The News revealed his dilemma, and this week underwent surgery at St Mary's Hospital, Milton.

By TIM HALLISSEY

"Diane is very pleased with the success of the operation — she now feels complete as a woman," a friend said.

"She has been wanting this for a long time now and was really looking forward to it."

A spokesman for St Mary's confirmed it was the first such operation to be carried out in the city.

The surgeon, who has declined to be named, was helped by two independent psychiatrists and a consultant psychologist.

For Diane, who is "progressing well,"

according to the spokesman, the operation marks the end of a five-year torment that began when she discovered she was changing sex.

"I was sleeping with my wife when I woke up with excruciating pains in my chest," he said in May. "I went to the doctor and he said I was changing sex."

In the traumatic years that followed he lived the life of a woman — even joining a women's darts pub team. He separated from his wife although they remain on good terms, and he lost contact with his two adult children.

He refused to give up his fight to have the operation even after the agony of being told he was too old. He described the decision as "a form of mental cruelty."



● Flashback to May as Diane Horscroft waits for the operation.