

Summer 07 Newsletter

MATERNITY WARD TO CLOSE

The Board of the Epsom and St Helier Hospital Trust has decided to close Epsom Hospital Maternity Ward. However, the decision has to be ratified after a public consultation this autumn.

So it's not too late to do something about it – please see how overleaf.

The Proposals

The proposals are for a new consultant-led labour ward and a midwife-led unit at St Helier, and no labour ward or midwife unit at Epsom. Both hospitals are to have new early pregnancy assessment units and additional support for home births; ante-natal and community care is to remain unchanged.

The reasons for change are 'clinical viability'. This means increased consultant cover, meeting training practice changes and working-time hours regulations for junior doctors. and meeting new minimum ward size (number of births) requirements. Taken together, this means that all births should be on a single hospital site. The Medical Director stressed 'making changes in order to keep things the same'.

St Helier has been chosen as the single site because it is the larger unit, with more births in the locality, and the area is 'more needy' with greater numbers of 'deprived'.

Opposition – “No Safety Reason, No Regulatory Reason, No Financial Reason”

With more than 250 members of the public in attendance, including many new mothers with babies and prams, the Trust allowed Chris Grayling MP, and Dr Sneath, an Epsom Consultant to speak.

Chris Grayling said that the Trust had a 'problem at St Helier that it needed to solve'. He said that the Epsom maternity unit complies with all of the existing Department of Health clinical guidelines including the level of consultant cover, and that claims that it does not meet safety rules are false. The government has recently back-tracked on there being a minimum number of births in order to make a maternity unit viable. Epsom has a very good safety record. He also said that Trust had admitted that the changes are not being made for financial reasons. (The Trust's Chairman declined to discuss the financial aspects of the decision.) Our M P also pointed out that the Department of Health rules say that proposals for change must be developed in conjunction with local people, which these patently are not.

Dr Sneath said that Epsom has a better safety record than St Helier, and is above average nationally. She contended that the proposals are short on detail, and little financial information has been given. St Helier has the poorest buildings, and less space available for new units. She also said that insufficient work had been done on patient flows and preferences. In particular, St Helier is near three other large maternity units – St George's (only 4 miles away), plus the Mayday in Croydon and Kingston.

Young Children

The proposals for paediatric care raised less attention, with outpatient and A & E / Urgent Care at both hospitals. Both hospitals are to have 'extended hours' paediatric assessment units (to 10pm weekdays, and 12 hour weekend cover), but only St Helier would have inpatient services, and a high dependency unit. It is forecast that 2 very sick children would be moved daily from Epsom to St Helier.

Decision

The Board has accepted the proposal. The possibility of a mid-wife led unit at Epsom was raised and may be re-examined, but this is not included in the proposals at this time. But this falls far short of what most residents want and expect – a proper maternity unit, supported by consultants.

HELP THE FIGHT TO SAVE EPSOM HOSPITAL'S MATERNITY DEPARTMENT

A series of protest events are planned to begin efforts to get the NHS to change its mind.

On Monday 9th July there will be a protest outside St Helier Hospital at 9:30am to mark the first day of work of the new Chief Executive. She needs to be fully aware of the strength of feeling. Details from John Bland – johnkbland@hotmail.com

If you cannot be there, please write to her. Send your letter to:
Samantha Jones, Chief Executive, Epsom & St Helier NHS Trust, Wrythe Lane,
Carshalton, Surrey SM5 1AA

Then on Saturday 14th July, there will be a big event at Epsom Hospital. The aim is to form a huge walking line of protestors right around the hospital, and to lay flowers outside the gate as a lasting tribute to the work of the staff and as a reminder of the strength of feeling. Meet in Rosebery Park at 10:30.

If you have any questions, contact your Residents' Association councillors, or email Chris Grayling: graylingc@parliament.uk Or visit www.epsomhospital.com

There will be further protest events, and the campaign will be organising a mass response to the consultation this autumn. Send your contact information by emailing either John or Chris and the campaign will keep you directly involved in what is happening.

HELP CONTINUE THE FIGHT FOR EPSOM HOSPITAL

The *Epsom Hospital Campaign* is an informal group involving representatives of four local authorities (Surrey County Council, Reigate & Banstead Borough Council, Epsom & Ewell Borough Council, Mole Valley District Council) local MPs, local doctors, trade union representatives, hospital staff, volunteers and patients. It can be contacted via Chris Grayling MP, at 212 Barnett Wood Lane, Ashted, Surrey or R A County Councillor Chris Frost at County Hall, Kingston-upon-Thames.

This newsletter is sent to all members of the Tattenhams Residents' Association. Please pass on this information to others you know in the area served by Epsom Hospital.

FROM THE CHAIRMAN



Borough Council Elections

I am delighted that Nick Harrison was re-elected with an increasing – 58% - share of the vote and look forward to his continued hard work for our community. Every household in Tattenhams was canvassed – about 3,100 in total. Comments have been documented for attention, as shown overleaf.

Epsom Hospital

As you know, the Residents' Association prides itself on being non-party political, preferring to focus on policies and local issues, rather than 'attack' the main political parties. We can work with others, whatever their political persuasion. However, we feel we must take issue with the attacks on us concerning Epsom hospital by the local Conservative borough council candidate in his election literature.

We fully acknowledge the leadership role of our MP, Chris Grayling, in the fight to save Epsom Hospital.

However, the local Residents' Associations in Epsom and our local Tattenhams and Nork Residents' Associations are equally committed to the campaign. Tattenhams R A is well represented at meetings, rallies and other campaigning events. We have written in past newsletters on the hospital, and we carry in this issue a report on the June Board Meeting of the Hospital Board. We have organised public meetings on the issue. Residents' Association Councillors in Reigate and Banstead, and in Surrey County Council fully supported the legal action to halt the plans of the Health Minister to move the new critical care hospital from Sutton to St Helier.

The Residents' Association and its Councillors are an integral part of the opposition to the downgrading of Epsom Hospital. Don't anyone doubt it!

Refuse and Recycling

This subject came high in residents' comments, mainly due to national and local press coverage of suggestions to introduce fortnightly collections. **The R A is strongly opposed to this idea and we do not think it is currently popular with most Reigate and Banstead Councillors. We will be paying close attention to this matter.**

Roadside Hedges

Several residents have expressed concern over hedges and trees that overhang pavements, often level with pedestrian eye line and preventing people from walking two-abreast. Please check that the recent unusual weather conditions haven't encouraged excessive growth from your garden extending to the footway; it's inconvenient and sometimes dangerous.

Your Association

The R A Committee meets once a month, (except August), to discuss residents' needs and concerns. **We welcome more members to join our committee and keep it strong. We also need a new minutes secretary – look inside the back page to see what this involves.**

We just could not survive without road stewards! Once again we are grateful for their help in delivering election leaflets in addition to the newsletters and for collecting subscriptions. There is still a need for more people in this field. **Please help if you can.**

Music in the Park

This annual event on Sunday 15th July is for the whole family, and it promises to be better than ever. For details, see the panel on the following pages.

John Butcher

WHAT YOU SAID TO US

We picked up nearly 220 comments from our doorstep canvassing. If you have an issue and weren't in when we called, do contact a committee member or one of the councillors.

The types of issues raised with us were as follows:

Highways Issues – 42%	Road Safety Improvements – 9%	Planning Issues – 8%
Recycling / Refuse – 6%	Street Cleaning – 6%	Opposition to Fortnightly Waste Collection – 5%
Crime / Youth Issues – 4%	Epsom Hospital – 3%	Derby Day Issues – 2%
Council Tax – 2%	Schools – 2%	All Other – 11%

Not surprisingly, highways matters predominated, with comments about residents' **parking difficulties** slightly ahead of **potholes** and **uneven paving**. **Street lighting** was also a common theme.

A majority of **road safety** comments related to **Great Tattenhams**, and the good news is that the Surrey Local Committee approved construction of a scheme this financial year. It involves central refuges to aid pedestrians crossing at the Merland Rise and Chapel Way / Shawley Way junctions, plus hatching along the centre of the road to discourage over-taking. Council officers' surveys still show that average speeds are too low to justify vehicle activated warning signs or other measures.

The majority of the highways budget is allocated centrally by County Hall in Kingston, against overall priorities. However, we support the decision of the Surrey Local Committee to spend its limited discretionary budget to set up a local patching gang, so that more potholes and uneven pavements can be addressed – the aim is to fix all of the problems in a street rather than tackling *only* the deeper potholes / pavement trips. Residents constantly point out the inefficiency of fixing only the reported pothole, and ignoring the slightly less deep ones alongside. We should get five weeks of dedicated labour in Nork and Tattenhams under this scheme. We'll let you know how it works out.

We have compiled a consolidated list of all the highways issues you raised with us and reviewed it with the Highways Manager for our area; we will feedback information to you as we receive it.

We were encouraged that there was a drop from last year in the **crime and youth issues** you raised. In this regard, we have been told that the Youth Worker concentrating on building relationships with young people causing problems (under the 'Prevent and Deter' programme) has no youths on his books from the Tattenhams and Preston areas (although plenty from elsewhere).

In relation to **Derby Day**, a number of residents from Tattenham Grove and The Spinney told us of problems with the 2006 Derby concerning parking and lack of enforcement by the Police. For the 2007 meeting, we did succeed in getting additional signage at the Merland Rise junction, and as requested by some residents, barriers were put up on the green areas in Tattenham Grove. However, we understand that there was still a major problem with the lack of police enforcement. Let us know how you think the Derby meeting went this year, and what improvements you would like to see. We will put these forward at the next Derby planning meeting.

Doorstep comments were revealing for what you *did* not say to us. We had comparatively few comments raised on **Epsom Hospital**, **Schools** and **Council Tax**.

Perhaps on schooling, you are happy with our local schools, or maybe you see that comments are better directed at the Head Teacher and Governors.

We suspect very few are happy with what is happening with our local hospital, but think that the decisions are being made by remote Trusts and Strategic Health Authorities. Let's see if public pressure can force some back-tracking by these remote bodies.

On Council Tax, we can't imagine many of you are pleased. Your Residents' Association Councillors were the only ones who spoke out against Reigate & Banstead's 4.9% increase – identifying a hidden contingency in that the budget allowance for housing and council tax benefits of £410,000 is much too high, as central government refunds the vast majority of the cost.

LOCAL COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN (LCAP)

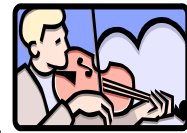
For the next few months, Ben Skipp, an officer from Reigate and Banstead Borough Council's Community Liaison team, will be working with your Borough and County Councillors from Nork and Tattenhams Wards to develop a Local Community Action Plan (LCAP) for the area. This plan is aimed at developing a better understanding of your needs for services and priorities.

The process will include carrying out extensive consultation to identify the key priority issues for the area. The Council and other partner organisations, such as Surrey County Council, Surrey Police etc, will then use the feedback to explore ways to try and address these issues. At the end of this consultation cycle, a Local Community Action Plan document will be produced. It is intended that the outcomes reflected in this plan will lead to improvements that are of value to you and that you will notice.

This approach gives local communities new opportunities to ensure that their needs and aspirations are considered and demonstrates that their own involvement can make a difference. Work on the LCAP for Nork and Tattenhams is just beginning and residents will be kept informed as work progresses. The extensive surveys carried out under the names NORA and TARA will be used to contribute to the Plan. Ben will also be present at the Music in Nork Park event on Sunday 15th July to enable residents to raise any issues with him directly.



MUSIC IN NORK PARK



SUNDAY 15th JULY

Hope you have all kept this day free! Once again there will be a super musical experience in Nork Park, on the field next to the Community Centre in Nork Way. This is a free event and you will be able to enjoy five great bands. Children will have fun with Punch and Judy, be able to have their faces painted and paint their own pottery figures.

Please bring your own seats, sit back and relax. Many people bring their own picnic, but you can enjoy our excellent barbecue, tea and cakes, bucks fizz and beer. It all kicks off at 1 o'clock and we look forward to seeing you all there.

P.S. Did I mention the raffle, the prizes are fantastic, so don't forget to bring some money!

Carol Stead Chairman, Organising Committee
Banstead West Music in the Park

DISABLED CHILDREN'S UNIT IN CHETWODE ROAD

The County Council has approved a new unit for children with physical, learning and sensory disabilities on the site of the caretaker's bungalow at the corner of the former de Burgh School Playing Field. It will accommodate children who previously used Wells House on the Wells Estate in Epsom, which has now been put to an alternative use by Surrey Children's Services.

The new unit will provide respite care – i.e. it will cater for a small number of children at a time on a daily or one to two nights' stay-over basis. No staff will live permanently on the site, but they will obviously stay over night to care for the children. The existing bungalow is not suitable for extension and will be demolished and replaced by a larger, but still single storey building. Completion date – July 2008 at the earliest.

POLICE UPDATE

Consultation

For some time, Surrey Police and the Police Authority which oversees them have been promising better consultation with the public - indeed a new Police Act requires it.

The previous arrangements were for a Police Consultation Partnership Group (PCPG) for the area of the borough to the north of the M25. This meeting was always well attended with more than 50 residents including Neighbourhood Watch organisers plus local youth leaders, head teachers etc. Senior Police officers responded to overall policing issues, as well as dealing with more local themes which were common to and impacting a number of local neighbourhoods.

At a more local level, individual police officers, known as Neighbourhood Specialist Officers NSO's held periodic 'beat panels' to engage with residents on specific local issues and priorities.

Surrey Police are rightly now seeking to upgrade the quality of their beat panels, although we have yet to receive a proper schedule of dates and meeting places – we'll publicise them if we get the information. There is a Banstead and Nork panel, which does in fact incorporate the area of Tattenhams north of the Reigate Road near to the Beacon School. There is also a panel focusing on Preston and the area of Tattenhams covered by the Preston Regeneration Panel. It is not clear if there is support for a separate panel for the rest of the Tattenhams area – let one of our committee know if you have any thoughts.

We are concerned that despite overwhelming public support for the Banstead PCPG, it has been closed. Surrey Police and the Police Authority acknowledge it is one of the most successful in the County, but also say they haven't worked out so well elsewhere. Local Residents' Association Councillors have asked questions at every opportunity of senior officers, including the Chief Constable and the Chairman of the Police Authority, and have received vague promises of some sort of co-ordinating successor body. We wait to see what this is.

Neighbourhood Watch

One of the Police aims is to re-vitalise Neighbourhood Watch. The local picture is very varied and there is little consistency in the ways individual groups operate. Overall coverage is patchy, and whilst there are a number of strong groups in our area, there are more to our north in Nork and to our south in Tadworth. We applaud the efforts of the Neighbourhood Watch groups in Tadworth to collate information, and arrange a meeting for all of the Watches north of the M25 – not helped by refusal of the Police to pass information on because of the constraints of the Data Protection Act!

Surrey Police have improved the way they distribute information to Neighbourhood Watch organisers, for onward transmission to their members, but are not able to send it directly to individuals. If you are not formally part of a Neighbourhood Watch group, and want to get hold of the Neighbourhood Watch Bulletins, then the Residents' Association is able to forward them on to you by email. Contact cllr.harrison@reigate-banstead.gov.uk

Who Are Your Police Contacts?

Borough Inspector	2726	Clive Davies
Neighbourhood Sergeant	2115	Richard Haycock
Nork and Tattenhams North of Reigate Road		
Neighbourhood Specialist Officer NSO	3027	P C Sue Roe
Police Community Support Officer PCSO	12660	Nicola Dooris
Tattenhams, Burgh Heath and Preston		
Neighbourhood Specialist Officer NSO	3657	P C Dan Henderson
Police Community Support Officers PCSO	11802	Darren Oliver (Tattenhams/ Burgh Heath)
	11453	Simon Watson (Preston)

Phone: **08456 125 2222** (general non emergency number)

E-mail: **PC Number@surrey.pnn.police.uk** (Individual PC numbers are given above)

NEWS FROM OUR LOCAL SCHOOLS

OFSTED

We are fortunate that both our local primary schools in Tattenhams – Epsom Downs Primary School and Children's Centre (formerly Merland Rise School) and Shawley Primary School in Shawley Way received positive results in their last OFSTED inspections.

In this Newsletter we focus on Epsom Downs School, whose last inspection was in March 2007. The Lead Inspector said that it is a good school with many outstanding features. It gives its pupils a good, all-round education with 'outstanding care, guidance and support'. Very good academic guidance is given in core subjects, pupils achieve well and standards are rising throughout the school.

The Headteacher, Mrs Sally Leach, would be pleased to show interested parents around the school, whether it is the Day Nursery for babies from 3 months, the Rainbow Unit for 3 year olds or older children joining the school. Call 01737 – 354313 to make an appointment.

Good Life Garden Open for Families

The Good Life Garden at Epsom Downs School was opened earlier this term. Here parents and children will develop the garden, growing and enjoying the fresh produce as part of the national *Healthy Living Programme*.

The Good Life Garden was designed by Jane Ireland together with parents and the help of Tony Smith at Hortus Infinitus. Tragically Jane died last September before her plans were transformed into reality. Jane started at the school 20 years ago, developing her pastoral role to support numerous children and their families in the local area. It is therefore a fitting tribute that parents and staff have now completed the garden as a living memorial to Jane. Jane's husband, Rev David Ireland, opened the garden and he also presented a memorial bench from the family. The occasion was an opportunity to celebrate Jane's life and immense contribution.

Tattenhams R A is grateful for the financial support of local businesses in publishing this newsletter. We welcome new advertisers – an ideal way to make contact with our 3,100 residents on a quarterly basis. For details, contact John Butcher on 01737 – 351572.

Your Association Needs your Help

The Tattenhams R A needs a
Minutes Secretary

Surely there is someone "out there" who can afford to spend a couple of hours each month, taking the minutes at committee meetings and typing them ready for distribution? It is an important job, but not too onerous.

For information, please contact either
Chairman John Butcher on 01737-351572
Vice Chair John Edwards on 01737-211137

Without help the Association cannot function and therefore cannot represent **your** views.