

MP Richard Foord "We Must Preserve community hospitals in East Devon"

Richard Foord MP has published his views on the future of healthcare, and cited excellent community hospitals across Devon such as in Axminster, Honiton, Ottery St Mary, Seaton and Sidmouth. He makes the case that changes must “complement and enhance our existing rural services, such as our community hospitals.” “Any plan that develops health services at a more local level is to be welcomed and I will be asking the Health Secretary to cherish and develop our five excellent community hospitals.” Link to read [more](#)

NHS community diagnostic centres speeding up access to tests, survey finds

Patients are having important tests such as X-rays and scans more quickly thanks to the NHS’s rollout of a network of community diagnostic centres (CDCs), the health service’s patient champion has found. CDCs are located within local health care services such as community hospitals. Read more [here](#)

New community ward opens at Gainsborough hospital

A new community ward has opened at John Coupland Hospital in Gainsborough, Lincolnshire. Work began last year to transform the former Morton Suite into the £4.5m Scotter Ward. The 17-bed ward includes a larger palliative care suite and four beds for stroke patients. Lincolnshire Community Health Services NHS Trust said the ward would play a vital role in preventing patients from having to be admitted to one of the county's larger hospitals. Read more [here](#)

North Dartmoor health meeting urges community to feed back to NHS consultation

The work on the Okehampton Community Hospital roof has highlighted concerns about the future of the hospital and the services it provides. Cllr

Goffey said she would be writing to the [NHS] Integrated Care Board asking for their intentions towards the hospital and the services on offer there. She said: "Rural services get a fraction of metropolitan services per capita payments. So please do answer this consultation, or rural services will continue to get left out." Read more [here](#)

Health Secretary visits East Lothian Community Hospital

SCOTTISH Health Secretary Neil Gray praised the "incredibly strong" work being carried out at East Lothian Community Hospital during a visit last week. Read more [here](#)

Call to block closure of community hospital

Hyndburn Council is set to examine East Lancashire Hospitals NHS Trust's decision to shut Accrington Victoria Hospital. "As such a short timetable was released by the trust, we feel it failed to allow residents and the community to have their voices heard. "We feel as a council this action has disproportionately affected Hyndburn residents, and particularly those of Accrington. This council asks the trust to pause this action rather than close it and invest in the building and vital services it delivers. Read more [here](#)

Hospital set to prioritise cutting A&E delays and Opening Community Hospital Beds

University Hospitals of North Midlands NHS Trust said it would be looking to reduce admissions, open community hospital beds and increase discharge rates, with a focus on treating frail patients as quickly as possible. Read more [here](#)

Study Tour - Doctors from Japan visit Community Hospitals in Gloucestershire

Tewkesbury and North Cotswolds community hospitals hosted a special visit from three international delegates. The guests, representing the Association of Community Hospitals (ACH) for Japan, were here on a 'fact-finding' trip. President of the ACH, Dr Yoshihisa Honda (CEO and MD of Kaita Hospital), family physician at Kaita Hospital, Dr Shin Yoshida, and Dr Yasuhiro Osugi, Assistant Professor, Fujita Health University, were given a guided tour of both community hospitals, meeting members of staff, healthcare professionals and clinicians, to find out more about how the community hospitals and services in Gloucestershire operate. Read more [here](#) The Doctors from Japan also took part in our CHA conference, and Dr Honda spoke at the end of the conference concluding that "*small is beautiful*."

CHA Welcomes New President of the Association

The CHA is delighted to have Dr David Seamark as President of the Association. David has many years of working in community hospitals, and has also pursued an academic career and published papers on community hospitals. The CHA celebrated his appointment as President and Director at

the Annual Conference in Gloucester.

Professor Chris Whitty Gives Support to Community

Hospitals

“Community Hospitals are an essential part of provision for both inpatient and outpatient care for many citizens in England and the wider UK. They provide high quality, local and relevant care for many patients, and in particular older patients who often do not live in the major cities where acute hospitals are found. The UK is very fortunate to have Community Hospitals and the wide range of services those who work in them provide.”

Professor **Chris Whitty** is Chief Medical Officer (CMO) for England, the UK government's Chief Medical Adviser and head of the public health profession.

Rheumatology services return to Minehead Hospital

Patients are now able to access rheumatology care at Minehead Hospital for the first time this decade, following the return of the specialty's outpatient clinics to the hospital. Dr Luke Gompels, consultant rheumatologist service lead for Somerset NHS Foundation Trust, says “The service at Minehead Hospital offers face-to-face appointments for patients with rheumatological conditions, such as arthritis, and our team also coordinates how patients are managed in the community. “We’re aiming to see as many patients as needed at Minehead Hospital, along with our other community hospitals in Bridgwater, Chard, South Petherton, Wellington, Crewkerne, and across the Dorset border in Sherborne. Read **Error! Hyperlink reference not valid.**

Pictured are members of the team involved in Somerset NHS Foundation Trust's rheumatology services. For further information, please contact: **Paul Hopkins, External Communications Lead at Somerset NHS Foundation Trust:** paul.hopkins@somersetft.nhs.uk

Nairn Hospital Article

Dr Alastair Noble and Dr Helen Tucker have been talking to Professor Giovanni Fattore and his research team at the University of Bocconi. The team are advising the Italian Government on the development of their community hospitals. This collaboration between the team and the Community Hospitals Association has been mutually beneficial, with useful comparisons between well established community hospitals in the UK, and the new development of community hospitals in Italy. Francesca Medan said *“What was a highlight for us is how examples such as Nairn and the UK are really valued by their communities, they are grassroots realities, which people rely on, and that is particularly important in a rural setting. They are able to adapt to the requirements that come from the people who use the service.”* **Read more** Error! Hyperlink reference not valid.

Tregaron - Last beds to be removed from rural hospital

Peter Skitt, county director for Ceredigion at Hywel Dda University Health Board (HDUHB) announced the closure of beds at Tregaron Community Hospital because of staffing difficulties. He said "Our proposal is to move our staff from being hospital based and looking after the nine beds, to being community based." A planned project "Cylch Caron" will see a GP surgery, pharmacy, outpatient clinics and community nursing, as well as 34 flats for people who need extra care, on the hospital site. A four-week period of engagement will launch on 1 August and run until 29 August. Read more [here](#)

Nairn Hospital - Staff Describe their Experiences in a New Video

Dr Alastair Noble, CHA committee member and lead for CHA Scotland, has been the driving force behind the creation of a video about Nairn Town and County Hospital and Primary Care Centre where he previously worked as a GP. Staff interviewed on the film talk about the value of the service and the importance of working together in a way that is co-located and integrated. The film is a celebration of all that has been achieved, including the hospital's development and expansion. Dr Noble is promoting community-based care wherever possible. The film is available to watch on youtube [here](#)

Cancer Research UK Chairman, Lord Stevens, tours ‘excellent’ expanding facilities at West Berkshire Community Hospital

“We are very lucky to have such a wonderful facility in the Newbury area to provide treatment close to home for patients”, said Dr Tayton, of the Newbury and Thatcham Hospital Building Trust, who added that WBCH is likely the most up to date community hospital in the UK. Read more [here](#)

Frome Community Hospital road fixed by local firms

A road with a number of large potholes near a community hospital is being repaired, thanks to the goodwill of local contractors. The full resurfacing of the access road to Frome Community Hospital was estimated to cost £35,000, but the work is being carried out for free with donated services and materials from several local companies. Nick White, from Trustee Friends of Frome Hospital, said: "It's a tremendous effort by local people. Read more [here](#)

Forest of Dean Community Hospital was honoured with a visit by the Princess Royal

Her Royal Highness the Princess Royal has performed the official opening of the Forest of Dean Community Hospital. The building, which has been operational since May, provides inpatient beds, a Minor Injury and Illness Unit, an outpatient department. Gloucestershire Health and Care NHS Foundation Trust said it provides a purpose built, modern facility. It replaces the two former Forest hospitals and the Trust says it will meet the needs of the local community now and in the future. Read more [here](#)

Cataract Surgery at Edgeware Community Hospital

A married couple had their cataract surgery together at Edgeware Community Hospital. Anne Marie Williams, sister in charge at the day surgery unit, said: "It's a rare occasion to have a couple go through surgery together. It makes a routine procedure unique, and it was special for the nurses who were taking care of them – it brings smiles to their faces." The Royal Free London operates an ophthalmology service from Edgeware Community Hospital, where the majority of the trust's 3200 cataract surgeries are performed in the eye surgery hub each year. Read more [here](#)

Bishops Castle Community Hospital's much-missed inpatient unit will start welcoming patients again in July

The in-patient unit at Bishop's Castle Community Hospital is on course to re-open in mid-July, a health trust has now confirmed. In April, Shropshire Community Health NHS Trust delighted campaigners by confirming that the ward, which had been closed for two years, would be re-opened following a successful staff recruitment campaign. Read more [here](#)

Mindfulness Garden at Halstead Community Hospital launched

Jennifer Tolhurst, Lord Lieutenant of Essex officially opened the Mindfulness Garden at Halstead Community Hospital last Thursday. The space has been funded by the League of Friends, and supported by the Royal Horticultural Society (RHS). It will be used as a tranquil space for patient rehabilitation and staff relaxation. Read more [here](#)

Bishops Castle - Success! - People power helps reopen community hospital's inpatient ward

People power has helped save a community hospital's inpatient beds after campaigners supported efforts to recruit staff to reopen the ward. Shropcom Chief

Executive, Patricia Davies praised the efforts of the community and trust staff in the recruitment drive, and said the success had provided lessons for recruitment elsewhere. Read more [here](#) Thanks to Chris Humphris of the CHA for his support to the community and the campaign group.

Teignmouth Hospital campaigners 'euphoric' after council support to keep building open

Supporters of Teignmouth Hospital say they are 'euphoric' after Teignbridge councillors voted in favour of another bid to keep the historic NHS building open. Their sustained campaign received a much-needed boost as Teignbridge councillors agreed to push ahead with a referral to the Secretary of State to reconsider the closure. A councillor said *"There is a lot of work to do to get the evidence together and we have to add to the work which was already done by Devon County Council but we will make sure we will put the referral in as soon as we can."* This is the first time that a community hospital closure proposal has been referred to the Secretary of State twice - once by Devon County Council and now by Teignbridge District Council. Read more [here](#)

New 15 bed ward opens at Coalville Community Hospital

A third adult ward has opened at Coalville Community Hospital. The new ward will provide rehabilitation and health care for up to 15 patients to help maximise their recovery and enable them to take their next step before they go home or to a residential or care home. The hospital, which is run by Leicestershire Partnership NHS Trust, also has a dedicated stroke ward, and a general ward providing sub-acute, rehabilitation and end-of-life care.

Sam Leak, director of Leicestershire Partnership NHS Trust's community health services, said that the additional 15 beds at Coalville come on top of a new ward in Loughborough and an additional five beds opened in Hinckley. We have an ongoing recruitment campaign to recruit the 225 staff for the

additional 52 beds across our network of community hospitals.” Read more [here](#)

Rye - Delivering the UK's First Carbon-Neutral Community Hospital

Steve McGregor, Group Managing Director of DMA Group tells how his company worked with the Rye Charity Trustees in their aim to reduce demand, curb emissions and limit global warming. Steve Mc Gregor says *"We are incredibly proud to have supported Barry and his team to help them achieve a national first – becoming a fully-functional, net-zero community hospital."* The article describes how this was achieved. Read [more](#) Do read the case study of Rye on the DMA website [here](#) . We congratulate the DMA Group for winning the Energy Savings Award 2023 for their work with Rye Hospital. Read more [here](#)

Health chiefs to consider reopening inpatient ward at Bishop's Castle Community Hospital

The 16-bed inpatient unit at Bishop's Castle Community Hospital has been closed since October 2021 due to a struggle recruiting the amount of staff needed to run the service safely. However, following a protest from the Save Our Beds campaign, the trust decided to expand services at the community hospital and implement a 'targeted recruitment campaign' for inpatient services. The inpatient service needs to recruit two more members of staff to safely reopen. ShropCom will discuss the future of the inpatient unit and the next steps required at their meeting in April. Read more [here](#)

Long Delays in Shropshire

The past five years has seen a huge rise in the number of patients facing long delays at Shropshire's A&E departments. Over 1,000 people waited more than 12 hours in the A/E Department in Shropshire December

2023. On average throughout December, there were 44 patients who had been in hospital for more than 14 days waiting for a rehab bed in a community hospital or nursing home. Read more [here](#)

Proposed Closure of St Peters Community Hospital Maldon

There are plans to close St Peters Hospital permanently as the 150 year old building is considered no longer fit for purpose. The birthing unit moved to Braintree Community Hospital in August 2023. The Stroke Rehabilitation beds were moved to Brentwood Community Hospital last year. A report on proposals cite outpatient clinics and says clinics such as orthopaedics, rheumatology, radiology and ultrasound which need to be together and might be based outside of the Maldon district. There is a consultation on 2 options, which is open until 21st March. Consultation [here](#) Read more [here](#)

New surgical hub in St Austell Community Hospital

The £15 million modular build is set to deliver around 5,000 day surgery procedures a year. Located in the grounds of St Austell Community Hospital, the hub will have two theatres, four recovery bays and six pre-op assessment rooms, as well as a reception and waiting areas. Read more [here](#)

Beccles Hospital set to mark special 100th anniversary

The centenary display will be open to the public from 3pm to 5pm on Saturday, February 24 which is 100 years to the day of the original opening ceremony. It will also be open from 10am to 5pm on Sunday, February 25. Signed copies of the book “Beccles and its Hospital – a Century of Caring”, which was written in 2004 by former nurses Pam Hardman and Maureen Saunders, will be auctioned with proceeds going to the League of Friends. Read more [here](#)

Victory in fight to Save Seaton Community Hospital

Seaton Community Hospital has been granted the status of an 'Asset of Community Value' in a big win for the campaigners fighting to save an endangered wing at the hospital. Being listed as an 'Asset of Community Value' means the facility provides a positive benefit for the local community and should be protected. Once listed, the local community will be informed if they are listed for sale or removal. Read more [here](#)

Loss of NHS Community Beds in Henley

Funding for seven care beds in Henley appears to have been switched from the NHS before they were closed. The short stay hub beds, which were based at the Chilterns Court care centre next door to Townlands Memorial Hospital, were axed in December. Ian Reissmann, who chairs the Townlands Steering Group, said: "In 2016, the 11 beds were commissioned to replace the Peppard ward beds in the rebuilt Townlands Hospital. We were told these provided 'step-down' NHS care by NHS clinical staff. The rules state that significant changes to NHS services, such as bed closures, must be the subject of a consultation. This allows the NHS to explain clearly the evidence to support the changes and the community and patients the opportunity to scrutinise the proposals to ensure patient need is being met.

"The sequence of events since 2015 has resulted in the de facto closure of NHS beds without the mandatory consultation and the protection and safeguards. We consider this to be unacceptable. "The solution is simple: rather than argue about historic, arcane details, the only way forward is to hold a consultation in which the proposals are presented by the care board, including the supporting evidence so the community can scrutinise and consider whether patient need is being met in a way which is fair to all." Read more [here](#)

Get Creative

Dr Bob Liddell, GP in Turriff and for many years a member of the Scottish Association of Community Hospitals, has had a letter published in The Scotsman commenting on the need for well resourced community hospitals.

"I read with a heavy heart of the plight of people who had to wait up to 80 hours for care over the festive period. Part of the answer lies in having a network of locally based and well resourced primary care centres, largely using existing premises, where patients can be seen with minor injuries and the range of acute illnesses normally dealt with by GPs. In rural areas community hospitals provide the ideal focus for out of hours emergency care – including, for suitable patients, inpatient care. They

should be supported and opened, not closed, regarded only as a great source of “savings”. (Dr)
Robert W Liddell, Turriff, Aberdeenshire published in The Scotsman 11th January 2024

Read the letter in full [here](#)