

Village Newsletter article December 2019 from Woodhill Surgery

Development of our surgery

Since 2013 when we took over the contract to provide GP services to the area, we have been approached several times and attempts have been made to develop/re-locate Woodhill Surgery. On each occasions this attempts have been proven unsuccessful. More recently, the partners and I were approached by Mayfield and Five Ashes Parish Council to consider joining forces for the development of our surgery.

It is recognised not only by us, but also the High Weald Lewes Havens Clinical Commissioning Group, that our existing premises present real challenges to patients and staff and that an improved site with additional space and facilities would enable the practice to deliver a more extensive range of primary health care services in a building more suited to the demands of modern general practice.

For those of you who visit us, you will be acutely aware of the condition of the building and indeed the improvements we have made since 2013. However, we are clearly restricted to improvements that we can make given the space we occupy. I submitted a business plan to our CCG highlighting our challenges and they have offered their support for future development.

Some of our challenges are:

- Very poor disability access
- Inadequate staff facilities
- Lack of storage
- Lack of private space (patient confidentiality)
- Lack of parking
- Lack of office space
- Unsafe entrance and exit to the practice
- Inadequate heating provision
- Size of premises (90 square metres) prevents development
- Size of premises is below national guidelines for a GP surgery

Demand on GP services is growing nationally and patient dissatisfaction is increasing. We are not unusual in feeling the pressure, and the practice is actively seeking ways to improve patient access, be in a position to offer, facilitate and provide integrated services. Long term planning is a vital part of our future. Integrating services, with consideration to offer facilities for future networks, training hubs and extended access are fundamental to our future.

A new, larger purpose built premises (approx. 350 square metres, 75% increase) will enable us to offer advanced services closer to home such as Minor Surgery, Microsuction, services that we are currently unable to provide in house. In addition, improved premises will facilitate the option for Woodhill surgery to sign up for more locally commissioned services of which we are currently unable to facilitate.

Working closely with other service providers with consideration to incorporate other services within the unit will be facilitated in the future. A new purpose built premises will future proof a village based GP surgery and offer facilities that are stronger and fit for future use.

Offering a purpose built premises will ensure we meet all necessary, national compliance requirements and also provide a facility to staff that protects their wellbeing, assists with staff retention and recruitment projects.

One can only imagine our excitement when I attended a meeting on 27th September together with Mayfield and Five Ashes Parish Council and Wealden District Council to discuss the possible options for a new surgery/community centre. The meeting was very positive and I left feeling that there is hope on the horizon for the future of our (YOUR) surgery. To this end, the partners and I would value your support in making this dream a reality, without this we are unsure what the future of your surgery holds.

We are aware that this project will be put to you, residents of Mayfield and Five Ashes for consultation, and we urge you to please support us and the Parish Council in delivering this exciting and much sought after facility for the future.

Andrew Cornell

Practice Manager