

# **ST HELIER HOSPITAL**

## **BRIEFING MARCH 2010**

Plans to redevelop St Helier Hospital have been given the final go-ahead after the Treasury gave its approval to the £219m project. The plans will include replacing large parts of the existing hospital with new purpose-built wards, and renovating the rest of the hospital. The new wards will be made up mainly of single bedrooms, in order to cut down on infection and to improve patient privacy.

The decision was announced on Monday 22 March 2010 by London Health Minister Mike O'Brien MP at a public meeting in Morden Baptist Church organised by Siobhain McDonagh MP. This was the last stage in the approval process, after the Department of Health approved the plans in January this year, and NHS London gave them the okay in June 2009. What's more, the outline plans to build the new facilities at St Helier were also approved by London Borough of Sutton's Planning Committee meeting on 10 March 2010.

Plans to build 4 new Local Care Centres for outpatient services and even some operations had already been given final approval in June 2009, and procurement and some building work has begun. One centre will be at St Helier, with others opening at the Wilson Hospital in Mitcham, which will also become a cottage hospital with 50-70 beds for people needing longer hospital stays, and in Wimbledon and Wallington. An extra £12m is also planned to provide intermediate care beds and getting care teams to work in patients' own homes.

Overall, the investment in our local NHS will total £264m, although this should break even financially over the longer term, as the service will be a more cost-effective way to treat patients than is being provided at present. This funding is for the Merton and Sutton areas alone as Epsom Hospital is not included in the plans, despite being part of the Epsom and St Helier Trust. This is because a separate review of Surrey's health care has been carried out by Surrey's health authorities.

Building work will be phased in order to cut down on disruption, with new services opening bit by bit throughout the next six or seven years (Siobhain has written to the Government asking for it to be completed as soon as possible). Some improvement work at St Helier has already been completed, for instance the new maternity unit is finished, but the major construction work will commence from 2012. Building has already begun at some of the care centres. For instance, demolition has started at Shotfield in Wallington, and the Wilson Hospital will open a new GP-led health centre on 31 March 2010.

All these proposals are in line with the Government's 2005 decision to rebuild St Helier, which was strongly supported by Siobhain McDonagh, her Labour Action Teams throughout Mitcham and Morden, and local residents.

### **St Helier Hospital**

St Helier is being kept on its present site and substantially improved. This means:

- £219 million of improvements
- retaining a 24 hour A&E, as well as its intensive care unit and specialist departments
- demolishing a large part of the hospital (mainly Ferguson House) and replacing it with a state-of-the-art building which will house the majority of the hospital's wards and clinics

- 346 beds in the new building, with more than 50 per cent being in single rooms to increase privacy and reduce infections
- nearly £40 million will be spent on upgrading the remainder of the site, including those wards which will not be moved into the new building
- a new decked car park
- rebuilt wards and departments
- purpose-built outpatient facilities
- a new central pharmacy

Many other specialities will continue to be provided from St Helier, such as acute medicine, stroke care, emergency surgery, infectious disease, burns, kidney medicine, liver disease, ophthalmology, genito-urinary medicine, sleep studies, pathology, cancer, end of life care, renal services including dialysis, and teaching, training and research.

An outline plan of how the site could look, as agreed with planners at Sutton Council, is drawn below:



## Local Care Centres

These four centres will be at: St Helier Hospital itself (at the ‘front door’ – no admission would be necessary), the Nelson in Wimbledon, the Wilson in Mitcham and Shotfield in Wallington. The cost of upgrading these centres is approximately £57 million.

The idea is that people will only go to hospital if they need treatment that can only be provided there. Otherwise, they can be seen by their GP or at a local care centre like these. The centres will not be identical but will each offer a range of services, including outpatient appointments, X-rays, blood tests and scans.

The centres would open for patients at various times between 2010 and 2017. They could mean:

- some hospital care will transfer to local care settings
- a large proportion of diagnostic services such as X-ray, electrocardiogram, ultrasound, and blood tests would be available in local care centres and other clinics
- minor operations could be carried out in local care centres or at GP surgeries
- outpatient appointments could also take place in care centres or GP surgeries
- patients would spend an estimated 25% less time travelling for health care
- an estimated 1,000 fewer hospital admissions would be required each year

In addition, as people prefer to be seen at home, matrons and specialist nurses will increasingly do home visits, particularly to elderly people. Some GPs are also offering patients certain specialist treatments that could previously only be offered at a hospital, eg endoscopy, ear nose and throat medicine, dermatology, and diabetes screening.

### **The Wilson Hospital**

The Wilson Hospital was controversially closed under the previous Government in 1992, despite strong opposition from local residents, led by Siobhain McDonagh, who at the time was a local Councillor. The campaign to re-open the Wilson has never abated, and in June 2009 Siobhain McDonagh hosted an 'Open Day' Health Fayre at the Wilson to support the NHS's plans to provide a local care centre on the site.

The Health Fayre demonstrated significant support for redevelopment at the Wilson. Since then, NHS managers have built a new GP-led Health Centre which will open on Wednesday 31st March. The rest of the services and the cottage hospital will open by 2013, as major construction work will be required for the 50-70 bed Cottage Hospital and care centre.

The Wilson Hospital is a popular and well-liked building so it will keep the same front and the rest of the building will be knocked down and rebuilt to provide

- A 'Cottage Hospital' with over 50 intermediary care beds
- Minor Accident & Injuries Unit (open 8am to 8pm, 7 days a week 365 days a year (includes Christmas day and all bank holidays)
- Walk-in Health Centre and GP Practice (open 8am to 8pm, 7 days a week, 365 days a year (includes Christmas day and all bank holidays)
- Outpatient treatments, which include a baby clinic, physiotherapy, X-rays, speech and language therapy, ECGs, Ultrasound
- Specialist dentists undertaking complex procedures
- Minor day surgery

These services are almost exactly what residents asked for at the 'Open Day' in June 2009. The response from the 692 residents who came was incredible and had a big impact on local NHS managers who were overwhelmed with the numbers of people who showed up.

The need for 'care beds' was raised by many residents last June. These will be for residents who are unwell and need care but do not need the type of 'acute' beds that are available at St Georges and St Helier Hospitals. These beds will also be there for elderly residents who may have had an operation in a General Hospital but need more time to get well before returning home.

To access the GP-led health centre at the Wilson, it doesn't matter whether you have your own GP or not local residents will be able to walk in off the street and receive treatment 7 days a week from 8am to 8pm all year around. You can also register here if you would like to use this centre for your GP.

In addition to having doctors available the centre will have specialist nursing services during these hours. Nurses will be available to remove stitches, give flu jabs and so on. This 'Health Centre' has fifteen parking spaces and is well serviced by buses, trains and the tram.

## **NHS Dentists**

Although only a minor part of the reorganisation of our hospitals, dental services have also been improving. As a result of new dentists opening, there are now enough NHS dentists available for all local residents living in the Morden, Mitcham, Pollards Hill and Colliers Wood areas. If you want to find the nearest NHS dentist to you call the NHS locally on 0300 1000 898. For emergency out-of-hours dental services call 0845 603 1087.

## **Timeline:**

1992	Wilson Hospital closed
1996	Secret plans drawn up to close St Helier Hospital and re-locate services to Mayday in Croydon
1 April 1999	St Helier and Epsom hospitals merge into a new body, the Epsom and St Helier Hospital Trust
Summer 2003	Siobhain McDonagh launches Save St Helier petition, which is signed by more than 1,400 local residents, and hands in the petition to Secretary of State for Health John Reid MP.
September 2003	'A better future for your Healthcare' report was published to look at the shape of healthcare across Sutton, Merton and Mid-Surrey, which leads to the formation of "Better Healthcare Closer to Home" (BHCH). Recommends several local care centres and combining services at St Helier and Epsom to become one critical care hospital. No site is recommended.
Autumn 2004	"Consultation" on the BHCH proposals takes place. The consultation costs £286,000. The most popular site for the single hospital is St Helier.
January 2005	NHS boards agree a single critical care hospital, but decide it should be located in Belmont, Surrey.
March 2005	Labour-controlled Merton Council disagrees with the decision and calls in the proposal to move the critical care hospital from St Helier to Belmont to the Government.
December 2005	The Secretary of State for Health, Patricia Hewitt MP, agrees with Merton Council and instructs the NHS to build at St Helier instead.
February 2006	It emerges that NHS managers have been telling Transport for London that Belmont is still their preferred location for a new hospital, despite the Secretary of State ordering them to start work at St Helier.
Spring 2006	Tory-controlled Surrey County Council and Reigate & Banstead launch a judicial review of the Government's decision
June 2006	The Court allows these Councils to go to Judicial Review.
August 2006	Managers at Epsom and St Helier Hospital Trust ask the Government to reconsider the decision to build at St Helier, as they think it would be

	impossible to get planning permission there, and that it could be too expensive.
November 2006	Under pressure from the Courts and NHS managers, Patricia Hewitt withdraws her decision of 19 December 2005 and asks NHS London to carry out an independent review of the BHCH Programme. The review deliberately removes Surrey from its deliberations so that a separate review of Surrey's health services can take place.
February 2007	Siobhain McDonagh submits 56 page submission to NHS London outlining why the main general hospital should be at St Helier.
March 2007	The independent review recommends new local health centres at The Wilson, The Nelson, St Helier and Wallington. It also recommends a new general hospital located in the London Borough of Sutton, including an Accident & Emergency service
October 2008	BHCH finally submits a business case to NHS London to develop four local care centres and re-develop St Helier Hospital as a general hospital.
June 2009	Revised plans are submitted and on 30 June NHS London agrees to redevelop St Helier Hospital, provided the Department of Health approves, and gives the go-ahead to the Local Care Centres plus a new intermediate care hospital at the Wilson in Mitcham.
January 2010	The business case to rebuild and renovate St Helier is approved by the Department of Health, and passed to the Treasury for final approval
10 March 2010	Outline planning permission is granted for the redevelopment of St Helier by Sutton Council
22 March 2010	Health Minister Mike O'Brien MP announces that HM Treasury have given final sign-off to the decision to allocate £219m to rebuild St Helier.

### **Dates going forward**

31 March 2010	Wilson Hospital opens a new GP-led health centre
2010 to 2011	Procurement and planning for St Helier begins
2011/2012	Phased construction at St Helier commences
2013	Final parts of the 'local care centre' to open at the Wilson, for outpatient appointments and diagnostic tests, like X-rays, which are currently only provided in hospital. Intermediate care hospital with 50-780 beds to open at the Wilson.
2015/2016	Transfer to new facilities begins at St Helier
2016	Phased opening of new buildings at St Helier