

HURSTPIERPOINT SOCIETY

Charity No. 263520

NEWSLETTER

AUTUMN 2006

CRISIS! WHAT CRISIS? – or 'SUPPLY-SIDE RECONFIGURATION'

It is incredible that the NHS with the budget of a small African State should also seemingly be run like one. With consultants resigning or being fired for speaking out, morale at an all time low, and services disappearing before our very eyes, the public meeting held on 13 September should have left the healthcare authorities under no illusion that we will collectively not tolerate any further reduction of services from the PRH. More than 12000 people have already signed the petition fighting to retain services at the PRH. There is considerable suspicion, bordering on certainty, that as on previous occasions the Strategic Health Authority has prejudged the situation. Debt has accumulated over several years and through changes in local health management. This overspend is now to be reclaimed in an impossibly short period, and through the dramatic process of reducing beds and downgrading services and staff at local hospitals despite rising population in the areas they serve.

There was nothing at the meeting held on 13 September about how this next set of managers intend to improve the diabolical financial management other than simply cut our services. They didn't seem to listen, or to understand the difference between a clinician, an accountant and a logistician. 'Taxpayers do generally recognize that resources must be used rationally' (Times leader 15.9.06) 'Creating an NHS Fit for the Future is focused on how we can bring more frequently used services closer to people's homes than the hospital serving their area, enabling hospitals to concentrate on the specialized work that only they can do' a Strategic Health Authority spokesman quoted in the Middy of 7 September 2006. The same formula was invoked in the past in the closure of the psychiatric hospitals and the transfer of mental health care 'into the community'. Little extra money was allocated; the patients fell through the gaps in the system. The government's theory is that this policy will save money but this is very much open to question. The NHS is far too highly geared to the production of statistics and the administration required to collect them at the expense of nurses and health technicians.

Concentrating services on the Royal Sussex County Hospital is equally foolhardy for all the obvious, much quoted reasons (Dire transport access, overstretched services, bad geographical position on county perimeter, and an apparently serious infection rate from MRSA. The system hasn't coped in the summer, as ambulances have had to be diverted to PRH so what will winter bring? For all this and many other equally cogent reasons it is vital that everybody joins our local MP's in signing the petition, attending local public meetings, and especially **the rally and march on 14 October** before the petition is presented to the Health Secretary in the House of Commons. **IT'S YOUR HOSPITAL AND YOU NEED IT AT HAYWARDS HEATH.**

HURSTPIERPOINT HEALTH CENTRE

The transition of the Centre to the Portacabins on the Brown Twins car park took place highly efficiently and with the minimum of dislocation at the end of June. The door was closed to patients on Thursday p.m, the removal vans moved in on Friday, and the new Centre opened at 8.30 a.m. the following Monday; a great credit to the organizational skills of the Manager, Mrs Marjorie Spires, and her dedicated staff. They were all very pleased with how the move went and are grateful to patients for their continuing cooperation. Dr Heeley will be retiring in December this year and applications are shortly to be sought for his successor. The new Centre should be available in August 2007; once planning permission was granted it was essential to press on with its construction to forestall any interference due to local NHS reshaping.

SMALL SCALE HOUSING ALLOCATIONS; LAND WEST OF KEMPS, HURSTPIERPOINT

Mid Sussex District Council have made their housing dispositions up until 2016, but there are other areas of land which developers wish to have included. Five fall within the Parish Boundary, of which the largest, for a proposed 114 houses, is situated behind and west of Kemps. Neither the MSDC nor the Parish Council is in favour of this site, nor of the other 4, 3 of which have already been considered and rejected. The Society is in process of alerting every household in Orchard Way and Kemps, and those most closely affected in Western Road and Nursery Close to this application. It is supplying a list of reasons why this proposal is unsuitable, e.g. lack of infrastructure and drainage, no local need so encouraging incomers, employment only to be found elsewhere, creating further transport pressure. There are difficulties in accessing the site, loss of pleasant country amenity and pressure on Strategic and Local Gaps. Also included is the official MSDC form of comment, and support for or objections against must reach the Planning Policy Division of the MSDC, RH16 1SS by Monday 2 October 2006. Additional copies of this form are available from the Library. Over 200 households are being circulated.

PARKING AND TRANSPORT

Well, it was inevitable. Those drivers, visitors and locals, who happily find they can lose their cars in the short stay section of the Trinity Road car park during the day for a 2 hour visit to the Library, Village Centre or to browse in the High Street are balanced by those working in the village who are exasperated when they reach the long stay section 7.30 a.m. and find all places occupied. They then look for the nearest slot in the nearby streets to the annoyance of those house owners. The Health Centre move has added, temporarily, to the problem. It would be good to write that help, if not a solution, is at hand and so it may be – but not immediately! The MSDC Parking Scheme in the village and car parks is on trial for 12 months and will then be reviewed, BUT the Parish Council, working with the Community Partnership, has taken the matter in hand. In the near future, probably as this Newsletter is printed, every village household will receive a questionnaire seeking views and answers on a wide range of queries to do with safety, accessibility, traffic and parking. On October 7, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., at 2 venues, the Village Centre and in a marquee at the North end of the village, those responsible will be receiving the village's comments, advice and proposals. When those ideas have been incorporated into a proper well constructed transport plan, and further reviewed by a village meeting, this will be submitted to the appropriate authority in the hope of gaining funds set aside for Community Partnership schemes. This money (if obtained) would be augmented by Section 106 reserves (funds which developers are required to contribute for community projects when granted planning permission). A useful sum is presently available. Our input will be vital to the eventual outcome; useful progress is expected early in the New Year. (Billingshurst's Community Transport Scheme, established 2004, grew out of a similar plan and now has a life of its own as a limited company).

WALKING BUSES

Much sooner, in fact already functioning in the summer term, were 2 out of the 3 proposed walking buses to the village school. More may follow. Up to 20 children, wearing distinctive bibs, assemble at a suitable meeting point (e.g. Willow Way, bottom of Western Road, and now in College Lane) in the mornings and WALK to school. An organizer is in charge; the parents have come together, and after suitable risk assessment (how **did** we manage previously? Ed.) have agreed on a suitable route. Pupils from different year groups take part and are much the better for having used up some of their energy before coming into school. This surely has reduced if only slightly, the congestion of cars outside the school gates, and hopefully may prompt a rethink on the part of other parents. Congratulations to St Lawrence School!

WATER – A USEFUL DIVERSION

Issue 57 of Mid Sussex Matters (Autumn 2006) reported a useful diversion of 'grey water' from the Triangle Leisure Centre. After a process known as 'back-washing' in cleaning the pool filters that water would normally be flushed into a holding tank before release to the main sewer. Modifications by the Council to the system have allowed a constant supply of 20,000 litres of (grey) water to be available for other purposes. After purification through a charcoal filter this water was used in fire fighting purposes and for watering public parks and gardens. To such good effect that Haywards Heath's display gardens won a medal in the South and South East in Bloom competition. Monty Don, the gardening correspondent, lamenting our profligate use of water, in some places a scarce commodity, recommends that sprinklers should be eliminated and water directed at the base of plants.

SEWAGE POLLUTION

4D, who are Southern Water's contractor, have begun work to increase by 5 the size of the Combined Sewage Overflow tank at Malthouse Lane, Hurstpierpoint. The overflow will be reconfigured to replace the 25mm screen with a 6mm screen. Flow speed will be increased by fivefold also, to ensure that this particular CSO will only discharge at this point in extreme conditions rather than every time it rains half an

inch. The Goddards Green plant will also be addressed to deal with this increase in expected flow. Christopher Maidment is continuing to work with South Water and MSDC (who own the adjacent paddock within the Green Crescent) to look at incorporating a reed bed to reduce further the impact of all additional discharges from this point. Southern Water is now preparing a 'Catchment Action Plan' that should be completed by March 2007. Let's see what they come up with.

Christopher now sits on the influential Sussex Area Environment (SAEG) that feeds directly into the work of the Environment Agency.

VILLAGE MATTERS – BREWERY MEWS

Issue 57 (quoted above) also displays a splendid photo of Brewery Mews on its corner, another one inside with a little self-congratulation on the MSDC approach to affordable housing. The Society was less than pleased with the placing of affordable housing on the Orchard Way site.

CHRISTMAS FAIR 24 AND 25 NOVEMBER

Location the Village Centre
Time Friday evening 6.30 – 9 p.m.
 Saturday morning 9.30 a.m. – 1 p.m.

Once again the Gym Club is organising this year's Fair. There will be the customary exciting range of stalls, and again the Hurst Society will be responsible for the **Cake Stall**. Whatever our loyal members provide us with is sold in a flash, and last year, though the quality was brilliant we were short on quantity. Please put the date in your diary **now**, and the Society will be very grateful to receive **your donations** on either day.

BIO-DIVERSITY GROUP: RSPB TALK

About 90 people attended a very interesting talk with slides on 29 August on the 10 most common birds in our gardens. Guidance on feeding and setting up nesting boxes in suitable sites was also provided. Mr David Golds, from the RSPB Centre at Pulborough Brooks, was warmly thanked. Michael Nailard (tel. 01273 834001) first reported on the progress of the Bio-diversity study and appealed for other enthusiasts to join in the survey. The group also hope to assist the dwindling population of owl species by providing a distribution of barn owl and tawny owl boxes in suitable locations throughout the parish.

ST LAWRENCE FAIR COMPETITION AND LIBRARY DISPLAY

As people were picking up their brain teasing Fair Quiz form in the Library their eyes may have strayed to the display featuring some of the Society's activities and achievements. Some projects took over a decade to gestate; e.g. the Footpath Map, which had to wait for WSCC to finalize all its legal boundaries before we could draw details from its maps. Others, the campaign to raise objections to the proposed 3,500 houses in the West Burgess Hill development and the surreptitious movement of the village boundary to take in more building land behind Hurst Wickham, were speedily fired up by the obvious imminent threat to the community. The Society is grateful to Maxine Tyler and Susanna Kemp for staging the display; also to the committee members who took part in assembling and manning the Society's stall at the Fair on a very hot day. David Robinson again won the competition. The **Footpath Map** is on sale in the Mint House and at the Parish Office, price £3.00.

HURST FESTIVAL

Building on last year's success, the Festival committee has brought together a wider range of functions and activities. Cows are materializing as if by (fairly substantial) magic; there is a varied programme of concerts, recitals, plays, readings, films, jazz, dance and other events to suit every taste. Substantial advance bookings have already provided a financial cushion; support and enjoyment from the village and friends will ensure success.

GATWICK AREA CONSERVATION CAMPAIGN

We have received a Newsletter from GACC, and the following is an extract from it.
'The take-over of BAA by the Spanish company Ferrovial has so far had little noticeable impact at Gatwick. The purpose of the take-over was to achieve a higher rate of financial return, and therefore we will need to be on our guard to ensure that this is not achieved at the expense of the environment.

BAA has actually been purchased by a faceless consortium, ADI (64% Ferrovial, the other owners being a Canadian pension fund manager and the investment arm of the government of Singapore), Ferrovial having

control. Set up in 1952 as a railway construction company (hence the name) Ferrovial is 58% owned by the Del Pino family; the chairman is Rafael del Pino y Calvo-Soletto, the second richest man in Spain. So now you know whom to phone at 3 a.m. when that aircraft wakes you up! Buenos Dias, Rafael.

It was unfortunate that these changes coincided with a management shake-out at Gatwick, with the result that several senior posts were vacant for months, and a number have been filled by people with little experience of running an airport. Following the chaos caused by the terrorist alert on August 10, several airlines criticised BAA and expressed the view that security is too important to leave in the hands of a profit-seeking foreign company. Much the same could be said about environmental protection.

The new Gatwick Master Plan, setting out plans for expansion of Gatwick, has been delayed while Ferrovial run their eye over it. BAA is also trying to amend the South East Plan to include a new runway at Heathrow or Gatwick. The SE Regional Assembly had decided that any new runway was not environmentally sustainable, and contrary to climate change targets – but BAA/Ferrovial think climate change esto no es importante.

The amount of aircraft noise permitted at night is to be slightly reduced in the coming year, and then gradually reduced by a further 9% over the next five years. That also is good news but less good than the government's original proposals – which caused screams of anguish from the airlines. Night noise at Gatwick will be slightly more than at Stansted but slightly less than at Heathrow.

The main improvement, which will be welcomed by many sleepless people, comes from the banning of night flights by the noisiest types of aircraft, which at Gatwick are mainly the cargo flights operated by Das Air. But it is unsatisfactory that flights by these aircraft will still be permitted if they are delayed. So whenever an airline is inefficient it is people under the flight path who will suffer.

STATION REBUILD FOR HASSOCKS STATION

Since the public exhibition in May at Hassocks Parish Council offices of drawings and concepts prepared by TTPP, funded by WSCC, an overwhelming 'yes' vote has been received supporting the station rebuild, and three powerful new volunteers have joined the team. The Group has to lobby hard with the Department of Transport, Southern Rail and First Capital Connect to keep our station functioning and viable. We are also working in partnership with Network Rail, WSCC, MSDC, Southern, FCC, HPC and developers to raise £2.5m for the rebuild. If you wish to help, give a donation to the Rebuild Fund, invite us into your company or group to speak and show the concept on power point, or simply call for an update, ring Gina Field on 01273 843012, or visit the Website at www.gina.field-pr@btconnect.com.

WILLOW GARDENS FIRE

The response from the village as a whole to this terrible event has been quite incredible. The village slogan 'kind and generous' seems to be alive and well here. As you may know Hurst Village Trust has opened an account for monetary donations. Please find below the account details:

Nationwide Hurstpierpoint
Hurst Village Trust No 2 Account
SC – 07 00 93
Acc no – 33333334
Ref no (which must be quoted) 0398 / 703923569

Donations can also be sent to:
C/o Ian McBain
63 Cuckfield Road
Hurstpierpoint BN6 9UU

THE CASE FOR COTTON NAPPIES

Supermarkets and people are taking greater notice of environmental issues, how to reduce waste and greenhouse gas emissions. With water shortage, the case for cotton nappies is less obvious. BUT West Sussex only has enough landfill space for approximately 5 more years. Disposable nappies take up a very large part (77,000 per day). New style cotton nappies need less water for washing. WSCC is encouraging new parents to try cotton nappies by offering FREE starter packs as well as a cash back scheme of up to £30. This free Home Washing Nappy Starter pack is worth £100, and contains about half the nappies needed for full time use. You will need to complete the Nappy cash back forms; call 01243 642106 or go online at www.bettertomorrows.org.uk.