



New Romney Town Council – Press Release

Issue Date: 30th April 2018



“On the Road to Recovery”

Update on Health Services Provision in New Romney and across Romney Marsh

For over 3 years, New Romney Town Council has steered the campaign to improve local health services provision in the Town and across Romney Marsh. The campaign's key focus has been to address issues arising from the lack of GP's in the area. The Council has worked collaboratively with representatives from the South Kent Coast Clinical Commissioning Group (“CCG”) who are now responsible for delivering primary care service. The campaign has been supported by the ‘Marsh Forum’ – a group that includes representatives from around 8 parishes across the Romney Marsh.

In a recent statement, Dr Jonathan Bryant – Chairman of the CCG provided the following update for members of the Forum.

Quote:

- **CQC Status.**

I'm happy to report that all four practices on the SKC CCG portion of the Romney Marsh are now rated as 'good'. This is a significant improvement over the past year where one of the practices was rated 'inadequate' and at least one other was rated as 'requires' improvement. There's been a lot of hard work from the practices to modernise and improve their processes – they can now all demonstrate a way of working which the CQC considers safe, effective, caring and well led.

- **Workforce.**

The workforce at Church Lane has become more stable with less reliance on locums. There are now three senior GPs each working regularly. This has provided more leadership and some continuity to team.

The CCG has successfully bid for 'International GP' recruitment and two of the practices on Romney Marsh have expressed an interest in training this group.

- **Development of new estate.**

The CCG has been successful in bidding for capital investment for the development of healthcare facilities for Romney Marsh. An award of £1.5million has been made and I believe a site near/next to the Marsh Academy is being discussed. The aspiration is for a modular build (in stages) with a footprint of up to 5000sqm. Discussions are being held with local stakeholders about what this facility will look like and the sort of services it may deliver. Importantly, it would be 'healthcare in general' rather than general practice in particular.

- **Church Lane.**

Options are being worked up for a definitive solution to Church Lane. The local GPs have been involved in developing a business case to take over

the practice. The local community interest company is also involved. The final decision whether to 'disperse the list', have the practice taken over by another surgery or to enter into a procurement process will be made by the 'Primary Care Co-Commissioning Committee' in the coming weeks. The current contract has been extended to January 2019 to allow this process to take place.

- Local service developments.

The home visiting service has been well received by both local GPs and patients. 80% of visits are made within two hours of the request and we believe this will have a positive impact on helping people to be looked after at home.

The minor illness hubs have started to 'go live' across the CCG and there will be an extra GP working in New Romney seeing patients from any of the practices on the Marsh. This will allow people with acute 'on the day' needs to be seen quickly and with full access to their notes. It will also allow the GPs working on the Marsh to have more time to look after complex patients.

Unquote.

New Romney Town Council's Health representative, Councillor Patricia Rolfe observed: "It is pleasing to see that progress is being made to address the range of issues that have been of concern to local residents. The new interim hub and the additional services provide a major step in the right direction. I look forward to working with the CCG on the development of a new purpose built Health Centre for the area. The government grant of £1.5million certainly helps bring that vision closer to reality. The Council will continue to press for further improvements in relation to issues such as poor local ambulance response times, but it is clear from the above statement that health services in the area are indeed, well along the road to recovery."

'New Romney Town Council – it leads, it listens and it works'

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