Oak Park Funding Crisis

As we go to press we hear the disturbing news that the funds required to pay the ongoing costs of the Oak Park Hospital may not be available. Oak Park is being funded through a 'NHS Local Improvement Finance Trust' (LIFT) project, using private funding to build NHS facilities. It seems that due to the current financial crisis, money available to the PCT is being cut over the next few years and may be insufficient to make the necessary payments to LIFT.

A recent directive from Central Government stipulates that all NHS LIFT projects that have not gone beyond the point of no return are subject to review and may be postponed, greatly curtailed or even cancelled altogether. The review of Oak Park will happen in July so we will not know any more details until then.

If Oak Park is cancelled, we in Emsworth will have to continue indefinitely using Havant War Memorial Hospital for GP beds. There will be no beds in the community for elderly people's mental health issues and the plans for the old Victoria Cottage Hospital site will be thrown into disarray.

Meanwhile, Tony Lowes and myself will maintain contact with senior NHS staff on the PCT at public meetings where we are able to present points about both Oak Park Hospital and the future of the old Emsworth Hospital site. We are keeping in touch in the hope that we may influence events later.

Chris Curry

What Price a Green Borough?

Of course it's legal, Havant Borough Council wouldn't do it if it wasn't, but is it wise, or safe? And does it look better?

What justification is there for spraying verges and around trees and bollards with herbicides? Environmental or ecological grounds do not support it but the Council continues to have contractors spray the edges of roads, car parks, shrubberies and even in Horndean Road Recreation Ground. Last year, spraying took place around the freshly planted Memorial Garden resulting in a wide band of dead, brown grass which looked far worse than before. While the year before, they succeeded in killing off many of the newly seeded poppies. Tell-tale brown areas appeared around the memorial waymarker at the junction of Horndean Road and Southleigh Road, a reminder of the battlefields it is commemorating. In the council car park in Bridge Road - a mini nature reserve - a concerned resident has been keeping a list of the wildflowers and grasses that flourish there (over sixty and still counting) including one rare plant for the area - narrow-leaved water-plantain (Alisma lanceolata). Spraying has also taken place close to the Westbrook Stream which runs into the town millpond. Allotment holders have free rein to use whatever chemicals they wish on council-owned land. All these toxic substances threaten not only plants, but insects, birds and wildlife.

The Core Strategy Document, which sets out how Havant Borough will develop and change until 2026, includes "protecting the natural environment" and there are rumours that the Council is attempting to become 'green'. But they do not have a policy that would support this. Money and effort is spent in planting up roundabouts and some verges with bulbs and bedding plants, while other places are sprayed. It is not enough to defend this by saying that "spraying is carried out by people trained or directly supervised by someone holding a pesticide application certificate."

Contractors are not trained to recognise the value of our wild plants nor, apparently, the grass around roadside trees.

What are the alternatives? Council employees and managers could acknowledge that a weed is only a plant growing in the wrong place, that some of our most valuable and rare plants flourish in the least convenient places and that this is not a justification for their destruction. The edges of the footpath under the motorway leading into Horndean Road Recreation Ground have been recently strimmed. Perhaps the Council could abandon the chemical solution and extend this method, a much gentler way of dealing with unwanted greenery, despite its use of fossil fuel. Perhaps allotment holders could think about how weedkillers can infiltrate the produce they grow. Perhaps residents who have trees growing outside their homes could weed around the trees, or plant bulbs as some residents in Selangor Avenue have done. No easy solution, but poisoning the earth with council taxpayers money is not an answer.

Spraying around trees (Library photo NOT a Havant contractor)

STOP PRESS:
A Friends of Bridge Road car park is being set up. Please contact Brian Fellows if you are interested in helping – telephone 375548 or email brianfellows@tiscali.co.uk

Ann Jolly

Push 4 Safer Homes - making homes, safe, warm and accessible

Grants totalling £8million are available across the Partnership for Urban South Hampshire (PUSH) area, which includes Emsworth, to make homes safer, warmer and more accessible.

Under the initiative, residents may be able to apply for a Home Improvement Loan, which can be used to pay for essential repairs and improvements to a home or make a home more environment friendly, for example, by fitting renewable energy, like solar panels.

Accessible Home Loans can either be used alongside a Disabled Facilities Grant (also available from Havant Borough Council) or on its own to pay to adapt a home to meet the needs of a disabled person.

Both the Home Improvement and Accessible Home Loans are interest free, secured on the property and only repaid when the property is passed on or sold.

Alternatively, home owners and private tenants receiving benefits may well be able to apply for a Warm Front Grant and a Warm Front Top-Up to improve insulation or heating, enabling older people, disabled people and families with young children to live in warm homes.

Push Chairman, Councillor Seán Woodward, said: "The project focuses on more than just keeping people warm, it also offers interest-free deferred payment loans to improve the safety and accessibility of the homes our residents live in."

The Loans and Grants are available in the following local authority areas: East Hants, Winchester, Havant, Fareham, Southampton, Test Valley and New Forest. For more information about the scheme, call the hotline free on 0800 519 1717 or visit our website at **www.push.gov.uk/4_safer_homes**

Jackie Churcher

HELEN'S
AIRPORT CARS LTD.
www.airporttaxis.co.uk
Emsworth - Havant - Southbourne - Bosham - Chichester - Westbourne - Itchenor - Horndean The Mardens - Petersfield - Liss - The Hartings Midhurst - Selsey - Liphook - The Witterings
Large Fleet of Reliable Taxis & Couriers
All Non-smokers All Long Distance
01243 868999
Door to Door can often cost less than rail or airport parking!
We have a Driver near You!
Our Drivers & Vehicles are fully licensed and properly insured

WELLIES Restaurant
Oldwick Farm, West Stoke Road
Chichester West Sussex PO18 9AA
01243 819007
E. info@welliesrestaurant.co.uk
W. www.welliesrestaurant.co.uk
Open 7 days a week
& Thursday, Friday & Saturday evenings
Situated only 1 mile from the centre of Chichester, 'Wellies' is set in a stunning old Sussex barn conversion within beautiful rolling countryside.
We provide an extensive lunchtime & evening menu although lighter meals are also available. All food is freshly prepared and only local produce is used where available. We offer a range of refreshments including chilled wine, lager, organic fruit juice and tea/coffee.
Please visit our new web site to see our current menu and to find out more about who we are and what we can do.
We look forward to seeing you soon.

ZM Accountancy Services Ltd
- Payroll
- Book-Keeping
- VAT Returns
- Accounts Preparation Using Sage Line 50
- Fast Friendly Service
- Cash Flow Forecasts
- Hours that Suit Your Business
- Sole Traders, Partnerships, and Limited Companies

Zoe Millington MAAT (Licensed and regulated by the Association of Accounting Technicians)
Tel 01243 430004
Email info@zmaccountancy.co.uk
Adelaide House Park Crescent Emsworth PO10 7NT
On or Off site availability (sage training given)

Together we can explore unresolved issues and lift barriers that are holding you back
I will give you 100% commitment, support and confidentiality.
Counselling Life Coaching & Clincal Hypnotherapy
Janis Meeks Counselling DipC
Life Coach NCFE DipLC
Clinical Hypnotherapist GQHP GHR
Cruse Bereavement Counsellor
Clinics in Emsworth and Chichester
Please phone 01243 374111

northstreet dental & aesthetics practice
29 NORTH STREET, EMSWORTH, PO10 7DA
Dental
- Private & Denplan Care
- Cosmetic Dentistry, Veneers & Teeth Whitening
- Hygienist Services & Oral Health advice
- Dental Products for your Smile & Fresh Breath

Facial & Skin Rejuvenation
- Anti Wrinkle Facial Contouring and Lip enhancement
- Cellulite, Stretch Marks and Targeted Fat Reduction
- Skin toning, Revitalisation and Non Surgical Facelift
- Excessive Perspiration (Hyperhydrosis) Treatment

All treatments provided & supervised by a Dentist or Surgeon
- Full initial consultation and treatment plans
- Absolute confidentiality & Privacy
- Wheel chair access surgery

CALL: 01243 372643 / 01243 379699 FOR APPOINTMENTS
VISIT: WWW. EMSWORTHDENTIST.COM

innovative design interiors
Feed your imagination with colour, design and texture
- interior design with a personal touch
- free one hour consultation in the comfort of your own home

Contact Alison Hannah on 01243 371 831 or 07968 598 138
www.innovativedesigninteriors.co.uk

THE FOOT SHOP
7 The Grove, Westbourne PO10 8UJ
Podiatry/chiropody services
Michael Walbrin
BSc(Hons) Podiatry
HPC Registered Chiropodist
Visit us for specialist and comfort shoes
• Hotter • Padders • DB Easy etc.
Friendly and Professional service
9am - 5pm Tuesday - Saturday
Call for more information
Tel. 01243 373663