

Taunton Deane Disability Discussion Group
Tues 23rd Feb 2010 – Compass Disability Meetings Room

Those Present

John Attree – Strategic Projects Manager, Musgrove Park Hospital
Shaun Cregan – Britain in Bloom Co-ordinator and Chair of Friends of Vivary Park.

Musgrove Hospital Parking for Disabled People.

John Attree explained that the new helipad is now situated outside Accident and Emergency at the hospital to ensure the quickest possible handover of patients to clinical teams. In the past patients were transported to land at Queens College a mile away and then transferred in by road to the hospital. This has meant that the blue badge parking at the front of Accident and Emergency has been moved and re-located next to the Day Surgery with 6 additional spaces put in place (Total of 30 from 24 previous).

John explained that the trust were aware that this was going to be a difficult problem to resolve and that they had to consider future work taking place in the 'old' part of the hospital. Construction will begin in the summer of this year re-building the old part of the hospital which will remove the parking this area. As an interim measure parking will have to move to the multi-storey, however increased parking will eventually be located at back of the old building once the building work has finished.

Taking this into account it was felt that any addition to parking near the Duchess building would increase the need for vehicles to queue which would then mean that a queuing lane would be needed and re-alignment of the road. Therefore the decision was made to re-locate the blue badge parking next to the day surgery.

The group responded with the following questions/issues;

Parking

Why can't parking be free? Charges have to be in place, this is a decision of the Trust Board. This is a high level political decision. The trust is 4 years into a 25 year contract with Q Parks. Frenchay Hospital provides free parking for blue badge holders why can't Musgrove do this? Do Staff have to pay for parking? Staff have to pay £20 per month for parking.

There is a small parking area for volunteers; can they have concessions for parking?

John advised that the person responsible for parking at the Trust is Alison Clewes. John agreed to forward issues from the group to Alison and to provide contact details for individuals to get in touch if they wish;

Contact by email: alison.clewes@tst.nhs.uk

Telephone: 01823 3434759

Post: Alison Clewes
Taunton & Somerset NHS Foundation Trust
Musgrove Park Hospital
Taunton
Somerset
TA1 5DA

Where does money from the car park go? The hospital trust receives a fixed percentage of the income which is re-invested back into the hospital.

Concessionary Permit for parking – how do you obtain these?

This is up to the individual department to give. Enquiries need to be made with the department concerned to ask if you qualify.

Park and Ride

Can't the park and ride be re-introduced, as this would help people get closer to entrance of the hospital?

It was not the decision of the hospital to remove this service and the trust themselves were surprised at this.

Wheelchairs and Mobility Equipment

The location of the new blue badge parking has increased the distance that you need to travel to get to the main building. Why aren't wheelchairs available for people to transfer to?

John explained that wheelchairs should be in place at the entrance to the Duchess building.

Parking in the multi-storey is a greater distance for those with mobility impairments, there aren't any blue badge spaces in the multi storey. One member asked if mobility equipment could be provided in the multi-storey to help people get to the hospital.

Why can't the helipad be put on the roof?

As the whole point is to reduce the handover of patients, placing the helipad on the roof would not resolve this. Patients would still need to be transferred down to Accident and Emergency from the roof.

Won't it be frightening when the helicopter lands?

When the hospital knows a helicopter is on its way traffic barriers will be put in place to keep traffic and public at a sensible distance.

Will the bus stops be moved?

As they are outside the flight path they will not be moved.

Where did the money for the helipad come from?

From the trust budget. The trusts aim is to focus on treating patients and this project fits in with this.

Volunteers in the hospital. Some felt that they need to be more known, in other hospitals they seem to be more visible and more clearly identified with badges etc. John advised that they are in the entrance and are generally known around the hospital.

The group were given a chance to speak to John directly and look at the plans for the changes to the hospital. Copies have been left with Mandy at SAIN also.

Vivary Park

Emma Sharp and Shaun Cregan came to inform the group about the new Sensory Garden being installed at Vivary Park. A grant of £20,000 has been received from a Taunton Deane Borough Council Grants fund and £22,000 has been received from the National Lottery to install the new sensory garden. The garden will go in place of the old boating pond near the far left corner entrance next to the cricket ground. The garden will be low level and will have path which is accessible for wheelchair users and pushchairs. Swanpool Architects came up with design and Ladymead School helped to design sculptures for the new garden each relating to one of 6 senses. A variety of plants will be used to give different smells and textures for people to experience. A water feature will also be part of the garden. Somerset Sight have worked with Emma to advise on the production of the information boards. Pathways will consist of a combination of block paving and compacted gravel to give a difference in feeling. They hope to finish the garden in March when they will be inviting our group to come and visit to try it out.

They would like to add some additional features to the garden but these are dependant on future funding. Sponsoring trees and benches are a way of trying to obtain additional funding. Bristol Heart Transplant Unit has sponsored a new living willow tree.

Car parking near to park was discussed. Emma advised that money from car parking goes into a fund for the park.

The Avery in the park is going to be removed soon due to the costs of maintaining it. It has also been vandalised recently. If anyone is interested in obtaining one of the birds please contact Emma at the park.

Other Issues from those unable to attend the meeting;

Why are the council allocated blue badge parking spaces in Wellington all placed furthest from the shops? (Sent to Taunton Deane Borough Council for comment with notes).