

A REPRESENTATION FROM WHITSTABLE MEDICAL PRACTICE – SECTION 3, WHITSTABLE, OF THE DRAFT CANTERBURY DISTRICT LOCAL PLAN

Introduction

This representation is written on behalf of the Whitstable Medical Practice (WMP) which is the sole NHS general practice serving the population of Whitstable. This representation is relevant to Chapter 3, Whitstable and also many other areas of Canterbury district as patients access services at the Whitstable Medical Practice from many adjacent areas (for example, see heat map of the Urgent Treatment Centre, attendances at Estuary View Medical Centre (EVMC) at Appendix 1, 55% of attendees come from outside the Whitstable postcode CT5 area). The WMP practice population includes 12% of our patients who have elected to register with us from adjacent areas. We would like to continue with this liberal approach to offering services to the wider Canterbury City Council population.

Description and Scope of WMP

Whitstable Medical Practice is the sole NHS general practice for the Whitstable district. It currently provides services from 3 medical centres, namely Whitstable Health Centre (WHC) in Harbour Street, Chestfield Medical Centre (CMC) at Chestfield/Swalecliffe and Estuary View Medical Centre (EVMC) at the boundary of Whitstable/Seasalter. WMP provides:-

- A high standard of NHS General Practice and a range of community health care services from the Estuary View Medical Centre. Services include;
- a busy Urgent Treatment Centre – 8.00am-8.00pm, 365 days a year.
- A range of diagnostics including x-ray, MRI, ultrasound, echocardiography.
- Outpatient clinics.
- Day surgery.

WMP has consistently been rated Outstanding with the Care Quality Commission, our regulatory body and has been described as a national NHS exemplar. We are pleased to record high levels of patient satisfaction.

The UTC and the elective services aforementioned are available to the population of Whitstable and beyond as per NHS rules (see two side description of the NHS general practice and community integrated services at Appendix 2). WMP has a continually expanding patient population which is currently in excess of 42,000 patients. Please see graph of list size growth since 1998 at Appendix 3. This demonstrates that our patient list size increases by an average of 400-500 patients per annum relentlessly. The constantly increasing list size together with increasing attendances at our community integrated healthcare services at EVMC means that our current estate is under pressure as is the car parking facility. Monthly clinical activity is increasing faster than we are able to increase estate size.

Population Growth

Our existing average population increase of 400-500 residents per year is about to be accelerated by two large developments in Whitstable named Whitstable Heights and Grasmere Pastures. Once populated these two estates will add some 2,000 patients to our existing list size.

The draft Canterbury district local plan proposes the following additional number of houses:-

Number	W5	W6	W7	W8	W9	W10	Total New Dwellings
Location	Land at Brooklands Farm	Land south of Thanet Way	Land at Golden Hill	Bodkin Farm	St Vincents Centre	37 Kingsdown Park	
New Homes	1300	270	120	250	10	7	1957
No of older persons accommodation	130						130

In conclusion, these new proposals will add some 5,000 patients to our list size which, together with another 2,000 currently due to the two estates under construction, making a total of 7,000 extra patients in addition to our average yearly growth of 400-500 patients (1957 houses x 2.4 people = 4697 people + 130 older people = a total of 4827).

These additional patient numbers coupled with a probable increase in out of area patients (which currently represents some 12% of our total list size) will mean our current estate and number of car parking bays will become woefully inadequate. There is also the added concern that the vacant land directly adjacent to EVMP (which includes a significant proportion of our car parking provision) is vulnerable to being developed for alternative uses, which would not only undermine the existing function of this primary healthcare centre but also prevent its future expansion and ability to accommodate the increased demand on our service as a consequence of the planned development in Whitstable but also the wider Canterbury District and beyond.

WMP consider that the draft Canterbury Local Plan currently fails to adequately consider and plan for future healthcare provision in Whitstable and the wider Canterbury District; and makes the following comments:

Policy SS3-1: Development Strategy for the District. The draft policy identifies floor space for many necessary amenities but unfortunately makes no mention of the need for extra community GP and healthcare facilities to meet the needs of the growing district population over the plan period.

Policy SS3-2: Development Strategy for the District. The draft policy states that the Canterbury urban area will be the main focus for development in the district. We believe that

the healthcare needs served from the Whitstable Medical Practice, notably at EVMC, are in need of inclusion in the plan and that funding should be made available for the population's health needs in Whitstable and also for those people who access EVMC from adjacent areas of the Canterbury district.

Policy W2: Whitstable Harbour. The draft policy should clarify that 'commercial use' is inclusive of health care provision to allow sufficient flexibility for the broad location to accommodate a relocated and enhanced Whitstable Heath Centre. If relocation of WHC was to occur then the current site could be released for alternative development.

Policy W3-5: Whitstable Urban Area. The policy states that 'the commercial area at Estuary View will continue to be the secondary focus for main town centre uses, complementing the town centre, with a focus on business, commercial and leisure space'. The current use of the term 'focus' suggests that alternative forms of land use could also be permissible in this location and therefore has the potential to undermine the existing and/or intended function of this site. The policy wording should be strengthened in order to protect this site for business, commercial and leisure uses, with added clarity that 'commercial' is inclusive of health care uses.

Policy W3-6: Whitstable Urban Area. The draft policy states that 'education and health provision will be supported to meet existing and future communities'. The policy fails to address the quantity and location of healthcare provision within the Whitstable urban area in the same level of detail as education. The Infrastructure Development Plan (IDP) (Schedule C) identifies that additional capacity will be required at WMP. We believe that healthcare provision should be dealt with as an independent criteria within the policy, which quantifies the additional healthcare floorspace required to support the increased population over the plan period, or as a minimum recognises EVMC as being the primary healthcare location that should be protected, and the opportunities for its future enhancement or expansion safeguarded and supported. Please note that the critical mass does not exist elsewhere within the WMP estate that would make it viable to develop or extend our other sites at CMC or WHC.

Policy W4: South Whitstable. The draft policy should acknowledge that the three strategic sites (W5-7) will be required to make proportionate contributions towards primary healthcare provision. It is also suggested that the 'South Whitstable Strategic Development Area – concept masterplan, be extended slightly to identify where within WMP increased healthcare provision is to be provided.

Policies W5-1(c(v)), W6-1(b)(iii), W7-1(b), W8-1(a)(iii), W9-1(b)(ii). The draft policies all require proportionate contributions for primary healthcare and other necessary off-site community infrastructure. Whilst this is supported, the plan and Infrastructure Development Plan (IDP) is currently deficient in identifying the location, amount and cost of future healthcare provision within the Whitstable Urban Area.

Policy DS10-8: Town Centres and Community Facilities. We support the draft policy that new medical, health and social care facilities, or the improvement or enhancement of existing facilities, will be supported on suitable sites across the district where there is a demonstrable local need for the proposal and the development accords with other policies within the plan.

We are seeking Canterbury City Council support for the following possible solutions in decreasing order of feasibility.

- **Safeguarding and expanding the estate and number of car parking bays at Estuary View Medical Centre.** This can be achieved by alterations to EVMC and possible acquisition of adjacent buildings and car parking areas.
- **A new enlarged Whitstable Health Centre,** to replace the aged and unfit for purpose Whitstable Health Centre within the Harbour re-development scheme (Policy **W2**).
- Consider a fourth medical centre for Whitstable within one of the larger proposed housing developments e.g Brooklands Farm.
- A first floor extension and lift to Chestfield Medical Centre, although even with an extension CMC will not be large enough to accommodate this influx of patients.

Conclusion

The increased housing proposed in the draft Canterbury local district plan, **Policies W4, 5,6,7,8,9, 10** coupled with the two large estates currently under construction but not yet occupied will expand the Whitstable Medical Practice list size by approximately 7,000 patients in addition to the normal annual increase of 400-500 patients. This will increase our total patient list size by more than 17%. Given that our estate is already full to capacity, we request that WMP be prioritised in order to provide high quality NHS general practice and community health care for our existing and future population, and that provision and funding for this is incorporated into the draft Canterbury District Local Plan.


Dr J M Ribchester MBE
On behalf of Whitstable Medical Practice

Appendix 1

NHS

Whitstable Medical Practice

Delivering comprehensive integrated healthcare, closer to home.




THE GENERAL PRACTICE

- A single GP Practice PCN covering the locality of Whitstable
- 27 GP's looking after a patient population of over 42,000.
- Individual GP lists and a named GP for each patient
- All GP's became equity partners following 1 year as a salaried partner
- 220 staff, comprised of 95 clinical and 125 non clinical
- 3 purpose built medical centres, all offering a full range of GMS, QOF and enhanced services, with Estuary View Medical Centre as main hub with conferencing facility. Also a further clinical building.
- A management team of specialist managers and elected GP's
- An advanced training practice with 5 GP trainers
- Fully integrated Urgent Treatment Centre
- 15 Allied Health Professionals directly employed - Clinical Pharmacy Team, Frailty Practitioners, Social Prescribers, First Contact Physiotherapist, Podiatrist, Mental Health Practitioner
- An emphasis on GPs's, specialist nurses and extended scope practitioners for tier 2 clinical work, alongside visiting consultants
- A forerunner and member GP practice of the Encompass MCP new care model vanguard (2016-2018)
- Clinical Practitioners to carry out home visits
- Accredited for research by RCGP


- Extended GP Access—evening and weekend appointments
- An active Patient Participation Group (PPG) and also a supporting charity – The Friends of Whitstable Hospital and Healthcare
- Rated 'Outstanding' by CQC
- 98.3% of patients recommend the surgery to friends and family
- 97.2% of patients treated with dignity and respect
- The 'Friends Café' at Estuary View Medical Centre
- Free parking at all sites

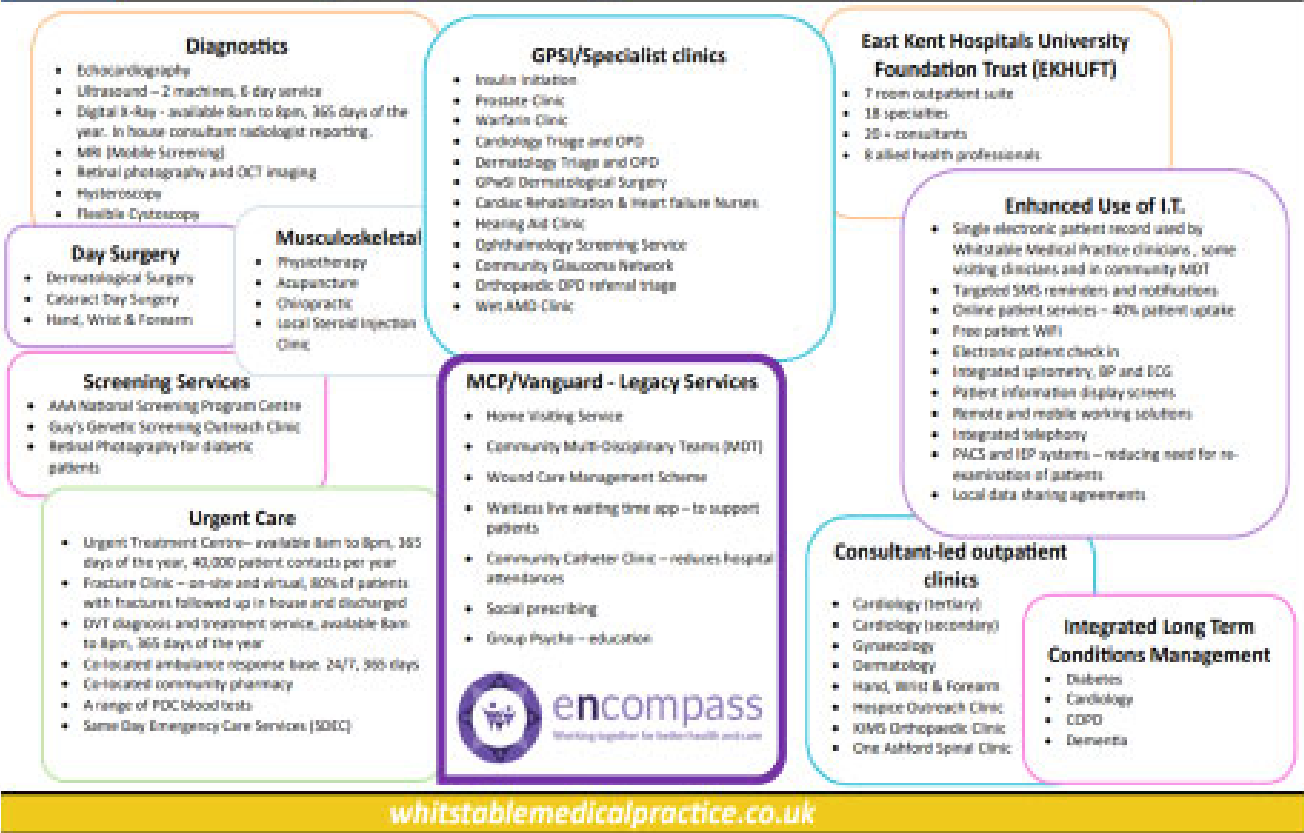
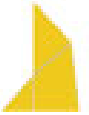
Estuary View Medical Centre:

- Main hub for additional, comprehensive community healthcare services and also in house GP and advanced nurse practitioner education programmes.
- More than 40 visiting consultants and AHP's – (see overleaf)
- **Has three tenants:**
 - EKHUFT (7 consulting room-outpatient suite)
 - SECAMB (an ambulance response base)
 - E-Nova Healthcare (a community pharmacy)



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Whitstable Medical Practice List Size Growth Since 1998

