

A Report on the current feelings and action with regard to Epsom Hospital.

Three LRA members (the Chairman, Pam Wilson and Chris Pelley) went to the Epsom Hospital Trust meeting on Friday 10th August. It was extremely well attended and the audience was not afraid of asking questions and voicing their varied opinions.

The Chief Executive, Daniel Elkeles, started by saying that his team had done an in depth examination of their estates and assets in order to clarify what grounds they had but didn't use, and what areas they would never use. He then listed some pretty awful defects in the current buildings and felt that sale of some parts would go a long way to rectify these problems. Such as sale would also provide the means to build a Social Care unit, some social housing and some straightforward residential units. He also mentioned the likelihood of a bonus if this hospital trust was able to achieve such positive results. He emphasised that the sale of the parts he had in mind would not jeopardise the possibility of the new Acute hospital being built in Epsom and showed us slides with the relative areas highlighted.

His presentation was followed by a counter argument from Chris Grayling, MP for Epsom and Ewell. Mr. Grayling felt it was too soon to start cashing in on the assets of the hospital and that a wait was necessary to see how the argument over where a new Acute unit should go would pan out. He did, however, agree that a Social Care Wing was a high priority together with some accommodation for staff.

Some people from the audience felt that a high quality building and work areas would ensure that high quality people came to work there, and, thus maintain standards.

A Councillor for Epsom stood up to oppose any sale because she felt any lost land would be regretted in the years to come, especially with the rising population.

Mr. Elkeles said he was hoping Epsom would go from being a 400 bed hospital to an 800 bed one. Also, Epsom is almost unique in succeeding to train up staff to do more demanding jobs. Clinical staff vacancies have been reduced there by 50%.