

## ADVERTISEMENT



# Brighter prospects

## for Epsom Hospital

**The future of Epsom Hospital's maternity unit looks secure again after crucial decisions in the local NHS and a ground-breaking ruling over the future of a similar unit in Sussex.**

Surrey Primary Care Trust, which pays for all the services provided by Epsom Hospital, has decided that it wants to carry on commissioning

maternity services from Epsom. At the same time, a national appeal panel gave its backing to local protestors battling to save a maternity unit in Eastbourne. It said that internal staffing pressures are not a good enough reason to launch a major reconfiguration of services.

"These developments are hugely important for the future of Epsom Hospital," says Chris. "The campaign in Eastbourne has been very similar to ours in Epsom, led by my colleague Nigel Waterson MP. Their success means that it is very unlikely that our local NHS management would now seek to make major changes to the maternity set-ups at Epsom and St Helier."

"The fact that the NHS in Surrey has also thrown its weight behind Epsom's

*Maternity unit looks safe*

maternity unit means that its future is now much more secure. I think there will be some internal changes within our local NHS, and we will still need to be vigilant. But I am pretty confident that Epsom will now have a maternity unit for the foreseeable future. That's great news for everyone who has been involved in the campaign over the past few years."

FROM THE  
**Clock Tower**



AUTUMN 2008

'From the Clock Tower' is a twice yearly update from your local MP Chris Grayling.

The Epsom and Ewell parliamentary constituency covers the Borough of Epsom and Ewell, Ashted, Nork, Tattenhams and the Preston area of Tadworth.



You can write to

Chris Grayling MP at the *House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA*  
[graylingc@parliament.uk](mailto:graylingc@parliament.uk) [www.chrisgrayling.net](http://www.chrisgrayling.net)

# The planning battles continue...

## MP tells Tesco – your planned store is too big

Chris has warned Tesco that they need to drastically scale back their proposed new shop for Ashtead if they are to avoid fierce resistance from the local community. The supermarket chain plans to build a large store, taking over part of the existing car park and neighbouring gardens.

“My personal view is that Tesco should not be the company to develop this site, as they already have stores locally. But since they now own it, and it already has permission to be used as a retail site, they will clearly get permission for some form of store there. But we have to fight to ensure that it is of a scale that fits with the area, and does not damage other local businesses or the quality of life of its neighbours.”



*Will new development alter character of Ashtead Village?*

## Lord Halifax told – think again!

*Site has important role in area's heritage*

Chris has met Lord Halifax, owner of the racing stables alongside the Durdans in Epsom, and told him he believes plans to turn the site into a housing and office complex are unacceptable and will be fiercely resisted by the local community. The Earl, who lives in Yorkshire, plans to convert the historic site, which he says has become dilapidated in recent years.

Chris says: “The reality is that Lord Halifax has failed to maintain these Grade One Listed Buildings in good order – and he cannot use their condition as an excuse to redevelop the site. He needs to abandon his planning application, and sit round the table with the local community to find a way forward which keeps the site in the racing industry and protects the quiet environment in Chalk Lane.”



## Parsons Mead

*There are no grounds for a change of use for this site*



Chris has lodged a formal objection to the Appeal against Mole Valley's refusal of plans to build on the old Parsons Mead school site. “There is ample evidence that

the site has a potential future as a school,” he says, “ and I am intending to make a personal appearance at the appeal hearing to argue the case against these plans.”

## in brief

## Mental Health Services

Chris has met the Chairman and Chief Executive of the Surrey and Borders NHS Trust, which looks after mental health locally, to protest about plans to relocate inpatient beds from Epsom to Redhill. The move would involve the closure of existing units at Epsom Hospital and West Park. "This area is a centre of excellence for mental health," says Chris, "and it would be a nonsense to move patients and staff away from an area where there is such a high level of expertise."

## Pension Problems

Chris continues to lobby the Government for compensation for policy holders in Equitable Life, after an official report said that the Treasury had failed to regulate the company properly during the 1990s. The report, by the Parliamentary Ombudsman, said the policy holders who had lost out were entitled to compensation. "There have now been a series of reports into what went wrong," says Chris, and all have recommended that something should be done to ease the pressures on people who lost out. I will continue to press the Government to do something about the situation, and to provide recompense for what went wrong."

# Accident Blackspot!

**Chris has joined local residents in Worcester Park in calling for safety measures to be introduced on Grafton Road after a series of accidents at a busy local junction.**

Records held by the County Council show that there have been a string of accidents at the point where Grafton Road joins Cromwell Road, and local residents say they are constantly in fear of collisions taking place outside their houses.

"This is clearly a real accident blackspot," says Chris. "It needs urgent measures to slow down traffic when it passes this junction, particularly since Linden Bridge school is close by. It



*Time for proper safety measures*

doesn't need to be a major project, and it doesn't mean there needs to be traffic calming all along Grafton Road. But clearly something needs to be done to slow traffic down at the junction."

Chris with residents living close to the blackspot on Grafton Road.

*MP warns that unmanned stations will be a magnet for antisocial behaviour*

# Protests over station cutbacks

**Chris has made a strong protest to South West Trains about plans to reduce weekend staffing at Ewell West and Stoneleigh Stations. Under the plans, the stations would be unmanned for much longer periods on Saturdays and Sundays.**



"I think this decision is a foolish one, and has been driven by the fact that they have to save money because they overbid for their contract," says Chris. "Fares have already gone up as a result, and now we are seeing cutbacks in other areas."

"Stoneleigh station in particular has been a magnet for antisocial behaviour over the years, and the signal that these cuts sends just makes it more likely that we will see problems again in the future. I think South West Trains should think again."

# AROUND & ABOUT

## Visiting local community, voluntary and charitable groups

### MS Drop In Centre



Visiting the Multiple Sclerosis drop in centre at the Ebbisham Centre



### Male Voice Choir Dinner

At the 25th Anniversary dinner for the Epsom Male Voice Choir - Photograph courtesy of Sapphire Photograph and Video Productions 020 8643 7332

## Keep updated



Chris's website, [www.chrisgrayling.net](http://www.chrisgrayling.net), contains information about the area, local news and details of how to contact him, as well as electronic copies of this newsletter. You can also leave your views on the special bulletin board.

### Planting a memorial tree in Downs Avenue, Epsom



### Tree Planting



### Keep the Promise

Chris at the Keep the Promise rally against Child Poverty in Central London

## contact

### A visit from your MP

If you would like Chris to attend an event or to visit your organisation, please contact the constituency office at 212 Barnett Wood Lane, Ashted, KT21 2DB or telephone 01372 271036.

### Visits to the House of Commons

If you are part of a local school or organisation that would like to arrange a tour of the House of Commons, please contact Chris's office at Westminster. You can ring the office on 020 7219 8194 or write to Chris at the House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA.

### Surgeries

Chris holds surgeries every fortnight on a Friday afternoon. The venues rotate between the constituency office in Ashted, the Epsom Conservative Club, Stoneleigh Library and Tattenham Corner Library.

For details of the next surgery date and to book an appointment, please ring the constituency office on 01372 271036.

FROM THE  
**CLOCK TOWER**

