

# EASTLEIGH SOUTHERN PARISHES OLDER PEOPLE'S FORUM ANNUAL REPORT 2015/16

## 1 INTRODUCTION

ESPOPF's objectives, as stated in the Constitution, remain: to promote the benefit of older people in the southern parishes of Eastleigh by bringing unmet needs of older people to the attention of statutory authorities, voluntary organisations and the wider public and co-operating with those able to assist. ESPOPF's specific objectives for the year were to continue campaigning for more NHS services, including a walk-in centre at the Moorgreen Hospital site, to keep our NHS public and to publicise ESPOPF and attract more members. We have worked hard on these things, though with limited success, because the first two, while attracting massive support and publicity, do not tally with local or national government objectives. Many other campaigning issues deserving action and research, have been brought to our attention, as this report describes.

## 2 MEMBERSHIP

Membership is open to residents over the age of 55 living in Eastleigh's six southern parishes: Botley, Bursledon, Hamble le Rice, Hedge End, Hound and West End. Currently, 258 households have subscribing members and they, with their subscriptions, donations and membership of the 100 Club, contribute our income and enable ESPOPF to continue as an independent voice for older people. We rely on families to tell us if members die or move to residential care, to keep our mailing list up-to-date. Our membership year became the calendar year from January 2016 and the annual subscription remains at £3 (single) and £5 (couples at the same address). We have been very pleased to involve our 6 affiliated groups in our campaigns and research.

## 3 COMMITTEE

Monthly meetings have had an average attendance of 7.5 members. The Drug Safety Research Unit at Bursledon Hall offers free use of their Conference Room for meetings. The elected officers have been Diane Andrewes (Hon. Secretary), Tony Rest (Vice Chair) Betty Lawrence (Hon. Treasurer) Maureen Hunt (Minutes Secretary). Members have taken turns in chairing committee meetings and this has worked very well. We lost some members during the year when Mike Parker was unable to take up his place and Brian Knapp retired on health grounds. Nigel Caplen was not able to attend committee meetings because of work commitments. Tony Rest died recently after a long fight with cancer. The remaining committee members became members of their own GPs' Patient Participation Groups (PPGs) and that has proved useful for finding out what is happening in the NHS. The committee also made the important decision that ESPOPF should embark again on research and most members joined the current research team. As a team, the committee also run the Open Meetings.

## 4 NEWSLETTER AND WEBSITE ([www.espopf.org](http://www.espopf.org))

Following David Andrewes' resignation and lacking the necessary technical skills, we have had to abandon the e-Newsletter and now post about 280 hard copies of our bi-monthly Newsletter to subscribing members only, as they pay for the printing of it with their subscriptions. The Newsletter is available on our website. With great regret, we also abandoned the pink paper, as coloured paper is so much more expensive and it is pleasing to know that our members report that the print is easier to read on white paper! Our website contains our contact details, research, newsletters and news and we are grateful to Nick Andrewes for operating as webmaster.

## 5 OPEN/MEMBERS' MEETINGS

Bursledon Village Hall is the venue for our Open Meetings, as it meets all of our needs and includes a warm welcome. The Committee made a policy decision to concentrate on topics of particular rather than general interest, and to have one speaker in the morning and a workshop in

the afternoon with a fish and chip lunch which was easier to organise. Including the AGM, five meetings have been held, with an average attendance of 32 in the mornings and 14 in the afternoons. The morning topics have included strokes, driving, preparing for the end of life and audiology and in the afternoon workshops Breathe Easy, personal alarms, electronic subscribing and using mobile phones. Free transport has continued with Michelle Rice, our volunteer driver, though she has now retired with our thanks. Raffles and 100 Club draws are held for fundraising and the Hamble branch of the RNL held their charity stall in November as usual.

## **6 CAMPAIGNS**

Our campaign to establish a Treatment Centre/Community Hospital on the site of the former Moorgreen Hospital continued and our Survey of Patients Needs, delivered to 2,000+ households and yielding 900+ responses (90% for a walk-in centre and 80% for a minor injuries clinic heading the list) was accepted as evidence of patient involvement in the Listening Exercise organised by West Hampshire Clinical Commissioning Group. Regrettably, the acceptable intentions of the CCG to develop existing services and introduce a planned programme of more services seem to have foundered following consultations with GPs and Clinicians and, given the current state of general practice and the financial situation, the outlook is very gloomy – stalemate, in fact.

Other campaigns have been mounted on the creeping privatisation of audiology services; the lack of uniform operation of electronic prescribing; mobility aids on patient transport to clinics; proposals to prevent disabled parking in Southampton; the new pharmacy 2U online service.

## **7 RESEARCH**

Last year, a Moorgreen Petition was raised and, this year a very successful survey was mounted to clarify exactly the services that patients needed at Moorgreen. Details of the results have been published in Newsletters and on our website. We are most disappointed that so little seems to have been achieved after all our efforts. The result is more disillusionment with the democratic process and the whole notion of patient involvement in the NHS, *Nothing About Us Without Us*.

Early this year, our attention was drawn to the dire situation that some members found themselves in when they could not summon help during emergencies. After a brainstorming meeting on this topic, the Committee decided that some research was needed into personal alarms, special services for vulnerable people offered by BT and other telephone providers, and the experience of older people during emergencies. So far, a Questionnaire has been issued, the responses analysed, interviews undertaken and focus groups convened. It is proposed to launch the research later in the year. The contribution of members to all this research is greatly valued.

## **8 ENGAGEMENT/PARTNERSHIPS/CONSULTATIONS**

We are affiliated to the National Pensioners Convention (NPC), Keep Our NHS Public (KONP), One Community, Hampshire Neurological Alliance and we send representatives to Hampshire Association of Older People's Forums, Eastleigh Southern Parishes NHS Stakeholder Group, Pilands Wood Partnership and South Central Ambulance Patients Foundation Trust. We finally withdrew from the Age UK Sounding Board, in protest at their failure to listen to older people and give them a voice, especially in defence of the NHS – this was before the shocking public revelation about financial improprieties. We have engaged with Mims Davies MP on numerous issues, some in concert with 38 Degrees, including proposed tax credit cuts and numerous health matters. ESPOPF contributed to '*Safely Home*' (Healthwatch study on hospital discharge) and '*Making More of Moorgreen*' (West Hampshire Clinical Commissioning Group's Listening Exercise) and responded to consultations: '*Issues and Options*' (*EBC Local Plan*); *Transformation of Hampshire Library Services*; *EBC Planning Brief for the Moorgreen Hospital site*; *planning applications*.

## **9 CONCLUSION**

At its June Committee meeting, the Committee agreed that a motion to wind up ESPOPF be put to the AGM for consideration by members. It was hoped that as many members as possible attend to make their views known.

