

KING'S LYNN ST MARGARET'S WITH ST NICHOLAS WARD FORUM

A local amenity society working with the Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk
for a better, brighter, safer King's Lynn

Please reply to: Sally Turff, forum clerk, 15 Queen Street, King's Lynn PE30 1HT
Telephone: 01553 764422 E-mail: sally@smithandturff.demon.co.uk

Dr Antonia Moussakou,
GP Executive Partner,
St James Medical Practice,
County Court Road,
King's Lynn, PE30 5SY

March 30, 2016

Dear Dr Mossakou,
Re: Surgery move to Kilham's Way.

I am chairman of the St Margaret's with St Nicholas Ward Forum, which represents what is described as the 'Old Town' area of King's Lynn. Many of our members are also patients of your medical practice. Since the announcement of proposals to move the surgery to Kilhams Way they have expressed concern – alarm even – at the effect this will have. I am therefore writing to you to inform you of their concerns and to ask for clarification on a number of points. A copy of this letter is also being sent to Mrs Kathy Foley, practice manager and I am also writing to Andrea Patman, head of commissioning for NHS England (East).

Two of our members attended the briefing given recently to the Patient Participation Group (PPG) by Dr Galloway. Several concerns arise from this briefing. The forum is also aware of the assurances that nothing is yet decided: but as the site has been acquired – or is in the process of being acquired - we can only presume that the decision to move *has* been made. Why else go to the expense of acquisition at this early stage? We cannot believe that such a costly exercise is likely to be abandoned

You will be aware that many of your patients are located within the town centre area and further to the south. The first concern, therefore, is the difficulty they will have in getting to the surgery. There have been assurances that there will be plenty of parking at the new site, but will there be sufficient? Or will it be like the Queen Elizabeth Hospital where at most times of the day the number of patients' cars is far greater than the places provided, and one cannot be at all certain of being able to park. In any event, even if there are sufficient places, there will be patients who do not have cars or cannot drive – the practice has stated that 1,718 are over 75.

Buses. Dr Galloway was confident that bus services would be improved and you are quoted in the Lynn News of March 26 as saying that the move will only go ahead 'if suitable public transport arrangements could be made with organisations such as West Norfolk Community Minibus, Dial-a-Bus and Norfolk Green.' We regard this statement as an acknowledgement that public transport presently, if it exists at all, is inadequate. Public transport is very much dependent upon funding from government – local and national – without any guarantee that such funding, depending as it does on the availability of public money and political will, will continue even if it were to be provided.

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Moreover patients would have to get to the buses in the first place. This would be a particular difficulty for those who live in South Lynn. One of our members has written to me to say that she fears that because of her condition attendance at the surgery in Kilhams Way would undoubtedly mean a taxi, each way.

Consultation. It has been stated that consultation with patients has taken place at the surgery and on-line and that 60 percent said 'yes' to the move and 77 percent said they would stay with the practice if it did move. Perhaps we have been speaking to the wrong people, but we are aware of only one or two who participated – or even knew about the consultation. Can you tell us how many of your 16,500 patients did participate? Only with this figure can one adequately assess the degree of support for the move.

Geographic area. Are you able to give a break-down of the various locations in which patients reside ie how many are in the town centre and to the north of it? how many will have to travel a greater distance.

Alternative sites. Was the NHS site in Extons Road considered?

Health and well-being. This may be regarded as a minor point, but many patients in this ward are able to walk to the surgery, and frequently do, with all the advantages that exercise brings. They will now almost certainly have to be transported – no exercise – causing more vehicle movements and with them pollution, a serious matter which the borough is presently having to address.

I look forward to your response, which I shall forward to our members.

Yours faithfully,

Julian Litten,
Chairman,
St Margaret's with St Nicholas Ward Forum.
CC: Mrs Kathy Foley, practice manager.
Andrea Patman, head of commissioning for NHS England (East).
Cllr Lesley Bambridge. County Cllr Alexandra Kemp.