

2nd May 2008

Dear Editor,

As we move into the closing stages of the Primary Care Trust's deliberations on the Fit for the Future consultation and in particular on the future of the Princess Royal Hospital, I thought it was an appropriate moment to write on behalf of the Support the Princess Royal Hospital Campaign to say how magnificent has been the support of local people in defence of their much treasured and greatly valued health services.

I really believe that the Campaign has put forward a very solid, measured and positive response to the consultation and we now await with great anticipation, the decisions that are to be taken over the next weeks and months.

It is my strongly held view that people in Mid Sussex will not feel safe without access to an A&E that they can reach within a reasonable time. They would definitely prefer to have their babies in a local hospital, which frankly means maintaining a full maternity unit, and when a baby is born or someone is taken ill in the night, the family wants to be able to visit the next day without making a long round trip, being unable to park and having great difficulty getting there and back. These are human needs and the PCT and the Strategic Health Authority need to grasp them and understand them.

Over 71,900 people from Mid Sussex have signed the petition and twenty one thousand people came together in two memorable marches to stand shoulder to shoulder in defence of the PRH.

We expect very strongly held local wishes to be respected and our health services retained and indeed expanded.

Yours sincerely,

Nicholas Soames