

Sidmouth Primary Care Improvement Project Health Watch Consultation

I know you are trying to make the best possible use of dwindling resources in the face of an ideological attack on public services generally to the detriment of the quality of life for the poor, the chronically ill, the elderly and children and young people. I wish you well but "good luck" alone is not going to be enough to make us confident that we will have an NHS we can continue to be proud of. The more the wealthier members of our community feel driven to turn to the private sector, the weaker will be the public provision for the majority who are left behind. Clapping is not enough to ensure the recruitment and retention of the professional staff required locally. Pay and conditions are deteriorating despite widespread public appreciation for NHS staff. The age profile of Sidmouth makes this a laboratory for the provision required nationally in future decades. We need to set a good example and get this right. Thank you.

After i fell and broke my hip I have found It is difficult, despite a state of the art hip operation a year ago, to cycle uphill for two miles to the Beacon. I am conscious that I will not be fit and healthy for ever. As my ability to drive safely, to walk and to cycle substantial distances, to access and understand online guidance and advice, etc. declines and as my mental and physical health health deteriorates I anticipate that I shall (as will almost everybody else) become disabled in various ways and be in need of an increasing range of services from the NHS. The bus to the Beacon runs once an hour from Sidmouth (and from Sidbury) so the round trip can take over two hours. Taxis are costly. Home visits are a last resort it seems.

The range of services available locally seems to be reducing regularly. The eye-testing facility has already been removed from Sidmouth, requiring a full morning to get to Seaton or the RD&E and back for such routine checks. The Minor Injuries Unit was closed (or "transferred to Honiton") in the previous round of cuts. Will space and facilities at the Victoria hospital be further reduced by the transfer of Sid Valley practice across the road from the Blackmore, which NHS Property Services Ltd has allowed to deteriorate steadily for several years rendering the relocation all but inevitable? Will the public amenities built up over more than a hundred years of taxpayer contributions and volunteer fund raising be sold to the profit of private companies?