

PRESS RELEASE_August 17 2018 For immediate release

#Emsworth United – campaign meeting on August 22 to save the hospital site

Emsworth campaigners will gather at 6.30pm on Wednesday August 22nd in the Baptist Church opposite the old Victoria Cottage Hospital to hear more about the issue and make clear their views about the future of this vital site in the centre of the town. The vandalised empty building was suddenly put up for sale on July 25 2018 by the property arm of the NHS.

As the old hospital (originally funded by Emsworth residents) was taken over by the NHS in 1948 many local people believe that the community should have the key role in maximising the site for the future benefit of the local population. Few Emsworth residents would support profit-hungry developers building expensive second homes there.

The Emsworth United campaign was launched by local organisations working together to support the redevelopment of the hospital site by the local Community Land Trust*. This Trust could plan the site and aim to include some community/health related space on the ground floor and affordable housing units above. The proposals would be developed in full consultation with local people. The Draft Emsworth Local Plan and Havant Borough Council's Draft Local Plan include policies that require that the land be used for community facilities and a number of affordable dwellings.

Local MP, Alan Mak, has challenged the proposed sale of the hospital with the NHS Property Company and is meeting soon with the relevant statutory and community organisations to explore all the options. The imminent campaign meeting on 22nd August will indicate to politicians, local and national, the strength of feeling in the town about the fate of the hospital site.

Key figures have been invited to the meeting on 22nd in order to contribute their views. Expected to attend are: Deputy Leader of Havant Council, Cllr Tim Pike; Stephanie Elsy, Chair of Emsworth Forum; Dr Theo Schofield, Chair of the Emsworth Residents Association; Dwynwen Stepien, Chair of the Emsworth Community Land Trust; David Christopher-Thomas of the Emsworth Health Action Group as well as members of other key groups in Emsworth. MP Alan Mak is unable to attend but will be represented and will be holding his own meeting on the matter in September with local representatives, the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) and the NHS property company.

Ends

Information for editors

Release issued by the community organisations in Emsworth.

Please contact Maggie Gebbett on 01243 699517 or 07833 741508 maggie_gebbett@yahoo.co.uk

Website: www.emsworthclt.org.uk for latest news

*A Community Land Trust is a not for profit, community-based organisation that develops housing or other assets at permanently affordable levels for long-term community benefit. Emsworth CLT is seeking to develop community facilities and affordable housing, focussing initially on the Cottage Hospital Site but will be seeking other sites.