



The threat to Rothbury Hospital

**Save Rothbury Community Hospital
Campaign**

**Katie Scott
Co-ordinator**

To the west of Rothbury, at the mid-point of the National Park, lies Coquetdale. Through it, the River Coquet meanders past rolling moorland, rocky outcrops and ancient hay meadows.





There has been a Community Hospital in Coquetdale since 1905. The present hospital was built, using PFI, in 2007.

- The hospital has 12 beds, each with en-suite facilities
- The beds have been used for 'step up' and 'step down' and for end-of-life care. Available to all, but mostly used by elderly.

A shocking blow which angered the community.

On Friday September 2nd, 2016, Northumberland CCG closed the ward, and sent the staff and patients elsewhere.



Rothbury GP Practice

The GP practice announced on 7th September:
The suspension of the beds will mainly impact a frail and vulnerable group of patients and we are wary of the long-term implications of this measure.

The Save Rothbury Community Hospital Team @June 2018



Dr Angus Armstrong
David Blackburn
Dave Brown MBE
Chris Butterworth
Maurice Cole
Rev Frances Dower
Alan English
Maureen Hine
Dr Billy Hunt
Dr John Lewis
David McKechnie
Dr John Monaghan
Julie Porksen
Dr Steve Proctor (Emeritus Professor)
Alison Rutherford
John Rutherford
Katie Scott
Ian Webb

Consultation? ONLY ONE OPTION OFFERED.

Close the ward – permanently

What was offered instead?

A 'Health and Well-being Hub' - a vague concept which has never been properly explained. However, we have welcomed it - but we still need the beds.

We asked:

- Our ageing population is set to increase by **20%** in next 5 years. What will the new centre provide for an ageing population?
- 'Hubs' elsewhere have become expensive office blocks for staff – how to ensure this doesn't happen in Rothbury?

Dialogue and Research

Talked with other campaign groups, experts, academics. Researched evidence. Made dozens of FOI requests



WELL OVER
7,000
signatures on
our petition



Talked with residents in Coquetdale
Held 3, very well attended, Public
meetings. Organised marches.

Talked with:
CCG Northumberland
NHS Northumberland
NHS England
NHS Improvement
Ann Marie Trevelyan MP
All Coquetdale Parish
Councils

What do we know about Northumberland CCG?

		2015/16 components of assurance				
CCG	Headline rating	Well led	Delegated functions	Finance	Performance	Planning
NHS North Staffordshire CCG	Requires improvement	Requires improvement	Good	Inadequate	Requires improvement	Requires improvement
NHS North Tyneside CCG	Inadequate	Requires improvement	Good	Inadequate	Good	Inadequate
NHS North West Surrey CCG	Good	Good	Good	Good	Requires improvement	Good
NHS Northumberland CCG	Inadequate	Requires improvement	Good	Inadequate	Good	Inadequate

The latest report rates our CCG in the lowest quartile of CCGs nationally for 4 indicators.

Northumberland CCG remains in Special Measures – rated ‘RED’ - for ‘Financial Performance’ and ‘Quality of Leadership’. (2016-17, latest figures).

The Campaign Group asked the CCG to consider our option ***‘Coquetdale Cares – the Community Vision.’***



NHS Northumberland, Clinical Commissioning Group. Proposed changes at Rothbury Community Hospital

Statement in response
by the
Save Rothbury Community Hospital Campaign
[Full Version](#)

24th April 2017



Save Rothbury Community Hospital Campaign

EMAIL: saverothburyhospital@gmail.com

Save Rothbury Community Hospital Campaign



Coquetdale Cares – The Community's Vision

Coquetdale Cares – The Community's Vision (CC-CV) is a combination of the CCG's Options 1 and 5. It is an option which has the flexibility of being able to add other services which may become required from time to time. In our option, the whole of the hospital building would operate in an integrated way, with all services having immediate access to each other to enable maximum efficiency, effectiveness, economy, and co-operation.

The Community's Vision:

The 12 beds in the Rothbury Community Hospital should be reopened immediately, not least because of the change in the NHS rules relating to any proposal to close beds in community hospitals, but also because it makes absolute sense in every way.

The impending relocation of the Rothbury Practice should not prevent this from happening, as it has always been intended from the commissioning of the building onwards, that GP practice should be co-located. The hospital can continue to care for patients while the structural alterations to the ground floor were being carried out.

It is sensible to use the twelve rooms containing the beds for nursing. They were built for that purpose and to seek to use them efficiently for other services would inevitably result in the need for costly structural alterations and the removal of the en-suite facilities.

Two offices used by the nurses would continue to be needed by them.

However, some management changes would be necessary.

Firstly, once the Rothbury Practice is relocated, the new admissions and discharge policies and the digital bed data scheme, both recently specified by the CCG for community hospitals, should be supervised daily, not by nurses, but by doctors.

Secondly, the structure of the nursing establishment should be examined to ascertain whether any financial savings could be made.

Thirdly, staff should be given training and should be allowed to gain - and retain - skills, by rotating around other hospital wards.

Who to believe?



- CCG claim that the suspension of the ward caused no problems
 - BUT we have seen 95+% occupancy of acute beds in Northumbria (85% is safe limit)
 - Norovirus affected major hospitals – Rothbury ward is infection controlled
 - We have many documented cases of people being sent home then ending up back in an acute ward
 - We have had several people have to end their life outside of Coquetdale, causing difficulties for their loved ones

September 2017 The CCG Voted - Unanimously - To permanently close our ward

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 28, 2017

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PAGES 36 & 37



**Care to
dance?**

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Cries of shame after board agrees closure

By JAMES WILLOUGHBY
james.willoughby@press.co.uk
Twitter: @jwilloughby_jay

Controversial proposals to shut Rothbury Community Hospital's inpatient ward moved a step closer to becoming a reality, after a health board voted in favour of closing the facility.

But determined objectors are not giving up on their attempts to force a U-turn, vowing to fight until the last and threatening to take the issue to a judicial review.

There were cries of 'shame' and 'give us our beds' after the Joint Locality Executive Board of the Northumberland Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) made its contentious decision at Morpeth Town Hall yesterday.

Members voted unanimously in favour of permanently closing the inpatient ward and shaping existing

services around a Health and Wellbeing Centre at the hospital.

Making the decision in front of a host of protesters who had packed into the room – many holding Save Our Beds placards – the Board rejected the option to reopen the inpatient ward.

The members also turned down an alternative bid put forward by the Coquetdale community to reopen the inpatient ward and develop a Health and Wellbeing Centre on the site.

The decision will now go to Northumberland County Council's health and wellbeing overview and scrutiny committee, which will consider the ward's fate during a public meeting at County Hall on Tuesday, October 17.

The outcome of yesterday's meeting sparked dismay and anger among the objectors, who afterwards issued a message of defiance to the decision-makers.



Protesters outside Morpeth Town Hall.

Katie Scott, coordinator of the Save Rothbury Hospital campaign group, said: "We are not finished. We have got something else up our sleeve and we will fight on."

Fellow protester Alan English, who is also involved in the

group, reiterated this stance.

He said: "We are extremely disappointed that they did not do the honourable thing and reverse their decision and listen to the community."

"But it is not over yet and the fight continues. The next

meeting is on October 17 and if we are not successful, we will go to a judicial review. We have already started funding for this. We will fight all the way."

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**Warden is
spared jail
after £35k
church fraud**

A former church warden has been ordered to pay back more than £35,000 after he forged signatures and falsified documents to steal grant money he had secured for the restoration of a village church.

Steven Clark, 48, of Hill Top Cottage, Alnham, spent the cash he pocketed on private members' clubs, train tickets, petrol, supermarket bills and hundreds of pounds at the butchers.

The married father-of-one took the money over a period of almost two years, after heading a project to transform St Michael and All Angels Church.

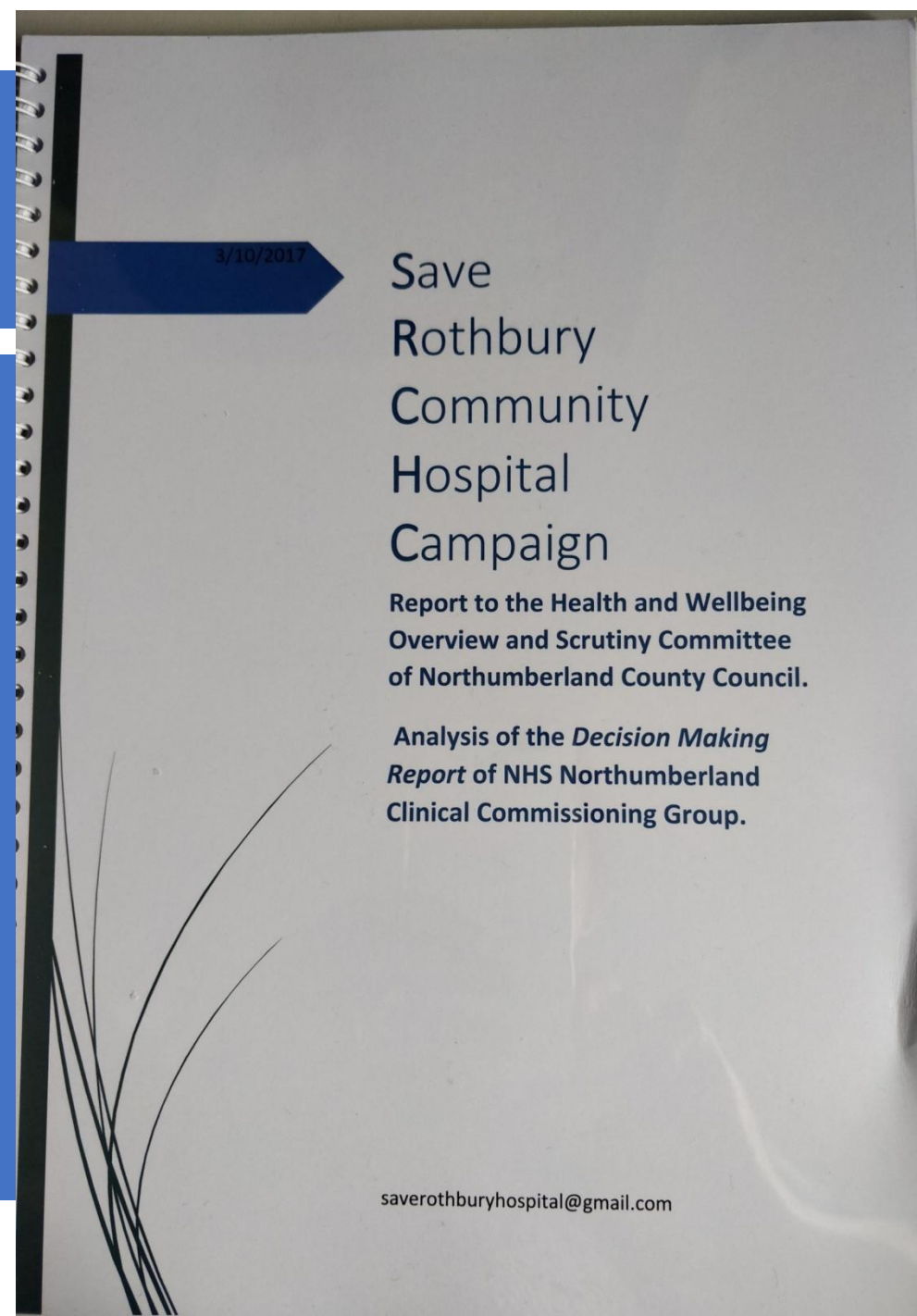
His deceit came to light when church representative Andrew Young became concerned about items of expenditure that didn't necessarily relate to church business, including 76 bottles of wine, a court was told.

Clark pleaded guilty to fraud by abuse of position, having taken £35,690 between January 1, 2015, and November 27, 2016.

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Our document for the Scrutiny Committee.

Our analysis of the
Decision Making
Report of the NHS
Northumberland
Clinical Commissioning
Group.



Northumberland County Council Health and Wellbeing Oversight and Scrutiny



Where are we now?

- Independent Reconfiguration Panel – initial assessment given to Jeremy Hunt, Department of Health and Social Care.
- We await his decision.

Since the ward closure, however..

- **The Rothbury GPs were right. Remember their prediction?**
The suspension of the beds will mainly impact a frail and vulnerable group of patients and we are wary of the long-term implications of this measure.
- There have been awful hardships since the closure.
- [BBC TV report on Look North](#)