

SOS Darlington

An introduction By Ian Holme (former Chair Hurwort Parish Council)

SOS Darlington is a none Party Political Campaign fighting to avoid the downgrading of Darlington Memorial Hospitals key services.

This campaign is supported by both Darlington's Labour MP Jenny Chapman and Richmond's Conservative MP Rishi Sunak.

Proposals to be put forward by County Durham and Darlington NHS Foundation trust could well include the loss of Darlington's A&E Dept and Consultant led maternity services.

This campaign is therefore aimed at preventing these changes becoming the preferred option when the formal consultation commences on the 1st June.

If DMH lost its A&E it would mean medical emergencies being transferred to James Cook, North Tees or Durham resulting in a catastrophic impact on the safety of our rural communities. Like most of us, I was made vaguely aware of these suggested plans via the media but the true potential impact was made only too real to me when my father was taken ill recently. His condition was such that he was taken directly to Durham. Having a life-threatening condition, we waited an hour for the emergency ambulance and then another 40 minutes to get him to Durham. Thanks to the care he received at Durham, Newcastle RVI and Darlington he is thankfully making a good recovery.

Given the above, the prospect of all A&E services being transferred away from Darlington, and with the Ambulance service under such severe strain, the end result can only be that lives will be lost due to the extra time taken to get appropriate hospital care.

I am hoping that HPC will be able to formally endorse this campaign and help publicise its aims in the Newsletter. If so I can forward the Chair and Clerk key contacts, details and further information.