

C/o The Clerk, Uley Parish Council,  
6, Bailey Way,  
Dursley,  
Gloucestershire GL114FF  
Email: clerk@uleyparishcouncil.gov.uk

Ms Becky Parish  
Associate Director, Engagement and Experience  
NHS Gloucestershire Clinical Commissioning Group,  
Sanger House  
Valiant Court  
Brockworth  
Gloucester  
GL3 4FE

15<sup>th</sup> September 2021

Dear Ms Parish,

Proposed closure of Uley Surgery and Dispensary, part of Cam and Uley Family Practice (CUFP)

On behalf of Uley Parish Council (UPC), I am writing to object most strongly to the plans to close the Surgery and the Dispensary in Uley and to relocate the Uley practice to Cam.

The Uley Surgery and its dispensary are highly valued by the people of Uley and the surrounding villages who rely upon the ease of access to this practice for consultations, tests and treatments and for collection of medicines.

During the pandemic, patients were fully conscious and sympathetic to the huge pressures upon the NHS and upon the staff of the CUFP and did their best to work around the problem of having to go to Cam for consultations and treatment. A Help your Neighbour scheme was set up in Uley for the duration of the lockdowns and, as most people were working from home, it was thereby possible to arrange lifts to Cam. However, now that people have returned to their offices, the scheme has ended and this is no longer the case. It is clear that some patients forewent treatment altogether during the height of the pandemic because of the difficulty and expense of getting to Cam.

The inaccessibility of Cam surgery is the principal anxiety over the plans to close the Uley practice. The Parish Council's two letters to Tricia McClelland at PCSE, concerning the closure of the dispensary, give full details of these difficulties. I don't want to make this letter over-long and I believe that we have discussed all the points with you already but I attach these letters for reference rather than repeating myself.

We are aware that equity of access to healthcare and services is a guiding principle of the NHS. Uley is fortunate to have a good supply of social housing and of bungalows for the elderly and for those with mobility problems. There is therefore a sizeable number of patients in Uley suffering financial hardship, privation or physical frailty. If CUFPP were to transfer Uley's medical facilities to Cam, this would give rise to an inequitable service for some of its most needy patients.

We are grateful that the Gloucestershire CCG has now been called in to report on Uley's surgery building and we have been glad of the opportunity to put forward our ideas as to how the building could be adapted. As you may imagine, there has been a great deal of debate amongst CUFPP patients about the building being condemned as "not fit for purpose". We have not heard one voice supporting this contention. We realise that, during the pandemic, the lack of ventilation and the limited space made social distancing a problem. However, with modern technology this should not be insuperable. Patients would be happy to accept that throughput might be diminished during times of high infection. They accept that the surgery is not purpose built and allowances have to be made. We do not recognise condemnation of the building as "Not fit for purpose" as a valid argument. We contend that the answer is not to close the building but to adapt and develop it.

We hope that this letter, and those that accompany it, shed light upon the damage and hardship that these closures would inflict and upon how such a decision would conflict with Uley's designation as a controlled location and its status of rurality and with Stroud District Council's drive for sustainability. We hope too that the CCG and the CUFPP will comprehend the anxiety and the strength of feeling that the threatened closure has aroused both in this parish and in the surrounding villages.

As you know, the Save Our Surgery working party organised a vigil outside The Surgery last Saturday, which was attended by over a hundred people; everyone there was very supportive of the NHS and the message was a resounding "We value you and we want to keep you here!"

There has been an online petition which currently has 757 signatures, and a paper petition which will be forwarded containing 767 signatures.

We much look forward to hearing from you about Gloucestershire CCG's plans for the long-term future of our surgery and dispensary.

Yours sincerely,

*Melanie Paraskeva*

Ms Melanie Paraskeva,  
Chair Of Uley Parish Council

Enc. 1<sup>st</sup> Letter to Primary Market Management Services 15<sup>th</sup> July 2021  
2<sup>nd</sup> Letter to Primary Marketing Management Service 10<sup>th</sup> August 2021