

13 February 2012

Deadline extended for expressions of interest in Harness Block

There is still time for organisations to express an interest in taking over the Harness Block at Southlands Hospital, after the deadline was extended until the end of February.

Western Sussex Hospitals NHS is keen to explore any possible use of the block, and will talk to any groups or individuals who are interested in using the building for health, community or other purposes.

Dozens of organisations have already been approached directly but no formal expressions of interest were received by the initial deadline of 1st February. To ensure that everyone has the greatest possible opportunity to come forward a new deadline has now been set, the 29th February.

The Trust conducted a public consultation last year, and the decision was made then that inpatients needing acute services would be safer, and get better care, if they were treated in Worthing Hospital rather than Southlands. An extensive range of other services, however, remain in place on the Shoreham site.

Trust Chief Executive Marianne Griffiths said: "Our clinical teams were clear that they would prefer their inpatients to be cared for at Worthing, where they would be safer, and that is the decision we took.

"Our Trust only provides acute care, and even though it is no longer appropriate for such care to be provided at Southlands we are still keen to see the Harness Block used for a purpose which serves the community if at all possible. That is why we have approached other organisations to see whether they might have viable plans for an alternative use, and why we are inviting anyone else to come forward.

"If anyone believes they can take over the Harness Block, and use it for something other than acute care, then I would urge them to talk to us."

Anyone who wishes to express an interest in the Harness Block should contact:

Western Sussex Hospitals NHS Trust

care of: BNP Paribas Real Estate

Alleyn House,

Carlton Crescent,

Southampton,

SO15 2EU or email:

sarah.ward@bnpparibas.com

Ends

Media contact:

Nick Brooks, Communications Manager

01243 831733