



Press & Media Release

Proposed Bed Closures at West Mendip Hospital – Street Parish Council Raises Serious Concerns Over Transparency and Impact on Local Healthcare

For Immediate Release: 1st August 2025



STARTS

At an **Extraordinary Meeting held on 29 July 2025**, Street Parish Council responded to serious concerns regarding the proposed closure or repurposing of **20 beds at West Mendip Hospital in Glastonbury**. The changes form part of wider plans by Somerset NHS Foundation Trust affecting community hospitals across the county.

Despite the scale and significance of the proposed changes, **no public consultation has taken place**, and the **business case has not been published**. This lack of transparency has caused considerable distress to staff and raised alarm within the community—particularly as the implementation is reportedly scheduled to be finalised **just two days before the next Somerset Council Adults and Health Scrutiny Committee meeting on 21 August 2025**.

At the meeting, **Street Parish Council**:

- **NOTED** the concerns raised by Cllr Claire Sully, Vice Chair of Somerset Council’s Adults and Health Scrutiny Committee¹;
 - **DISCUSSED** the potential impact on local residents—particularly those without access to transport who may be required to travel further for care;
 - **SUPPORTED** calls for Somerset Council to hold an emergency scrutiny meeting to examine the decision in full;
 - And **RESOLVED** to write to Somerset NHS Foundation Trust requesting an immediate pause on implementation and the publication of the business case for proper public and committee scrutiny.
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Background: West Mendip Hospital’s Original Purpose

West Mendip Community Hospital was opened on **18 April 2005** as a purpose-built NHS facility on Old Wells Road in Glastonbury. It was designed to consolidate services from **Butleigh Hospital** and **Wells & District Hospital**, creating a modern community healthcare centre to serve central Somerset.

The hospital was established to:

- Provide **36 inpatient beds**;
- Offer **outpatient rehabilitation and recovery services**;
- Operate a **Minor Injuries Unit**;
- Act as a hub for **community-based care** across the region.

The proposed closure or repurposing of 20 beds marks a **significant departure from the hospital’s founding vision**, raising serious concerns about reduced access to care—especially for elderly and vulnerable patients in the area.

A Call for Transparency and Accountability

Cllr Bryan Knickerbocker, Chair of Street Parish Council, said:

“West Mendip Hospital was built to deliver modern, local NHS care for Glastonbury, Street, and the surrounding area—bringing together services from Butleigh and Wells into a single, integrated site. The prospect of seeing inpatient beds removed or repurposed without any public consultation or scrutiny is deeply troubling. Local people deserve better. These decisions must be made with transparency, community involvement, and compassion.”

The Parish Council will now write formally to **Somerset NHS Foundation Trust** to:

- Express **strong concerns** about the decision-making process;
- Request an **immediate pause** on implementation;
- Request **publication of the full business case**;

¹ <https://clairesully.com/community-hospital-beds-could-be-closed-or-relocated-questions-need-to-asked-and-answered-by-nhs-somerset/>

- And highlight the **negative implications for local residents**, particularly those who may struggle to access distant services.

ENDS

Notes to Editors:

Further Information and Media Coverage

For further background, see the following news articles and statements:

- BBC News: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cq5471l6dd8o>
- Somerset County Gazette: <https://www.somersetcountygazette.co.uk/news/25342267.sarah-dyke-raises-concerns-glastonbury-hospital-beds/>
- Wells Nub News: <https://wells.nub.news/news/local-news/local-hospital-beds-at-risk-under-new-nhs-proposals-265624>
- Glastonbury Nub News (historical context): <https://glastonbury.nub.news/news/local-news/minor-injury-unit-at-west-mendip-hospital-in-glastonbury-at-risk-of-being-closed-down>

For additional information, please contact:

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