

Written by Administrator
Tuesday, 10 February 2015 11:18 -

PRESS RELEASE 10/02/2015 Stroud Against The Cuts

CAMPAIGNERS WHO WON LOCAL NHS BATTLE ORGANISE CRISIS MEETING

WHAT: “THE NHS IN CRISIS..? REBUILD THE NHS! Public Meeting”

WHEN: Monday 23rd February, 7.30-9.30pm (doors 7pm)

WHERE: The Old Town Hall, Stroud.

In 2011 and 2012, a determined Gloucestershire-wide campaign led by Stroud Against the Cuts successfully (1) used legal action (2), petitions (3) and protests (4) to force local NHS bosses to halt the transfer of local community hospitals and 3000 health and social care workers out of the NHS (5).

Earlier this year Gloucestershire’s A&E services declared a ‘major incident’ alongside A&E services elsewhere in the country (6). On Monday 23rd February, four members of the co-ordination group that organised the successful campaign to save Stroud Hospital and others from privatisation will speak at a meeting exploring the question “How we can rebuild the NHS?”

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Members of the Stroud Against the Cuts co-ordination group Hannah Basson, Chris Moore, James Beecher and Cllr Caroline Molloy will address questions including “Is the NHS sustainable?”, “Is PFI bankrupting the NHS?”, “What’s wrong with privatisation?”, and “What demands should we make?”.

Hannah Basson

is an NHS health worker and Equalities Officer for the Gloucester Health branch of Unite the Union (she will be speaking in a personal capacity).

Cllr Caroline Molloy

represents the Stroud Central ward at the District Council for the Green Party. She is also editor of

[the OurNHS website](#)

(7), and a freelance writer.

Chris Moore

led the local anti-poll-tax non-payment campaign in the 1990s, and is a Trade Unionists and Socialists against Cuts (TUSC) candidate.

James Beecher

is Chair of Stroud Against the Cuts.

James Beecher said: “We’re enormously proud that a campaign in Stroud was able to successfully resist the privatisation of local community health services, but since that victory in 2012, local non-emergency ambulance services have been handed to a private company, and around the country services are being forced out to tender and taken over by private companies thanks to the Health and Social Care Act – just the latest form of marketization and privatisation of our NHS. At the same time, health and social care services have seen their budgets cut, and workers have seen not only their pay decline dramatically in real terms, but – as in the case of District Nurses – experienced changes in their conditions of work that have led many to consider leaving the service. Morale in the NHS is at a low ebb and workers deserve better. We know we can resist, and win, so we’ve organised this meeting to provide people with information about what is happening and discuss the demands we should be making, and share lessons from our successful campaign” Stroud Against the Cuts have organised a further meeting, on austerity and the UK economy since the financial crisis, on Monday 23

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March, also at 7.30-9.30pm at the Old Town Hall.

Notes for editors:

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1. See the press release from the time “ [Landmark triumph for people power](#) ”. Covered [in the Stroud News & Journal](#)
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2. See the press release from the time, “ [Gloucestershire People Power on Show Again](#) ”. Covered [in Stroud Life and The Citizen](#)
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3. A [petition of 6,530 signatures was collected](#) in favour of keeping community health services public, and the formal ‘engagement’ exercise showed 96% of the public and 91% of staff who voted wanted services to remain in the NHS rather than enter a ‘social enterprise’.

4. Several protests were held, including two of over 500 people in Stroud. [Videos of many of the protests are available on the SATC website](#)
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5. The original plan was to transfer the following services to a ‘social enterprise’: the hospitals at Stroud, Berkeley, Cirencester, Dilke, Fairford, Lydney, Bourton (Moore Cottage), Moreton, Tewkesbury, the Health Clinics at Beeches Green Stroud, Stonehouse Health Clinic, Sandpits Clinic Dursley, Cinderford Health Centre, Coleford Health Centre, Lydney Health Centre, Hesters Way Healthy Living Centre, Hotts Health Centre Newent, Lydbrook Health Centre, Symn Lane Clinic (Wotton-under-Edge). All District Nursing, Occupational Therapy, Physiotherapy, Specialist Nursing, Out of hours medical and nursing services, Pharmacy, Sexual Health and Chlamydia screening, Podiatry, Dental services, Wheelchair services, Musculo-skeletal services, Telehealth and Specialist Domiciliary care were also to be transferred

6. “A major incident [was] declared for two hospitals in Gloucestershire, due to high demand in A&E departments”, on 4th January, see the [BBC News story](#) . The major incident status was lifted on the 14th January, see the [ITV News story](#)

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7. Read a recent article by Cllr Molloy, “ [The billions of wasted NHS cash no-one wants to mention](#) ”.