

LOCAL CAMPAIGNS UPDATE

COMMUNITY HEALTH



60th meeting of SOCH at Cadnam

- The umbrella group, set up in 2005 first to save and then to 'SUPPORT OUR COMMUNITY HOSPITALS', has met regularly at Julian's Cadnam office. We recently celebrated our 60th meeting, and liaison between the Leagues of Friends and the NHS representatives remains strong and productive.
- Two campaigns were crowned with success. Hampshire County Council (HCC) was persuaded that the excellent Dementia Team and residential home at CRANLEIGH PADDOCK in Lyndhurst must be saved; and Public Health England was finally forced to withdraw its threat to add FLUORIDE to Totton's drinking water without public consent.

- Yet, a shocking decision by an HCC sub-committee – later, mercifully, disbanded – allowed Southern Health NHS Foundation Trust to close our prized Woodhaven mental health acute unit at Tatchbury. As promised in 2010, Julian has created a 'SAVE OUR MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES' group of service users and providers. Some bridges have been rebuilt with the Trust, but much work remains to be done.

EDUCATION & WELFARE

- After meeting the New Forest-based group SCARF, which campaigns for children with special needs and their families, Julian secured a debate in Westminster on the FUNDING GAP for 16 to 18 year-olds, and arranged a meeting for SCARF to brief the relevant Minister and his advisers. Over the years, Julian has also seen at first hand the outstanding work done by the Minstead Training Trust in giving skills to learning-disabled young people and adults.
- Having gained immensely from a state school and university education, Julian strongly opposed the policy of trebling STUDENT TUITION FEES and allowing some universities to charge higher fees than others. The jury is still 'out' on what the results will be for student debt, loan repayment and access to higher education.



Minstead Training Trust Summer Fete

FOREST & WATERSIDE



Ramblers at Lyndhurst

- The bizarre proposals to transfer OWNERSHIP OF THE NEW FOREST to a charity and to privatise the UK's forest estate were strenuously resisted by Julian before hastily being scrapped. Meanwhile, after a change of top personnel, the NPA has tried with some success to work 'with the grain' of Forest society rather than cutting across it. This is a welcome development.
- Ministers confirmed to Julian, at Westminster, that changes in planning law would NOT make the building of a container port on sensitive land at DIBDEN BAY more likely.

- Working with Conservative and Liberal Democrat councillors, Julian has also closely monitored moves to lease land at MARCHWOOD MILITARY PORT and has sought and received assurances about the retention of the Army presence.