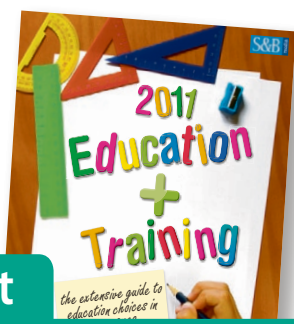




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Milford Hospital day assessment team members, including Ann Curtis, second left. Picture: Steve Porter. (Ref: SA114259_4)

Hospital enjoys welcome return after £1.5m refit

MILFORD Hospital staff and supporters have welcomed completion of the eagerly awaited £1.5m refurbishment. There were widespread celebrations last year when NHS Surrey announced that the 40-bed consultant-led specialist rehabilitation hospital for elderly people and day hospital, which had been under threat of closure for 20 years, would not only stay put

but also play a major role in the new rehabilitation care pathways approved for the Guildford and Waverley area. Last week, Milford's acclaimed day assessment and rehabilitation centre, which has been operating from Farnham, was back home with its 14-strong team. "It's wonderful to be back," said the manager Ann Curtis. "This is an exciting time for

us because, with all the changes in healthcare, we will become a very active hub for the elderly population in Guildford and Waverley. We provide very comprehensive assessments of elderly people with complex needs and we want to be at the forefront of providing an excellent caring service thanks to our rapid response team." Also welcoming completion of the £1.5m refurbishment,

Milford Hospital campaign group chairman, Margaret Iago, said: "Milford Hospital has truly moved into the 21st century. "It will provide modern holistic services to its in-patients, while the day hospital facilities will have the capacity to triage and support elderly patients to live safely at home. "It has 40 beds, but an additional facility to increase

the number of beds to 52 in times of emergency. Both staff and patients are thrilled that the hospital has been future-proofed. We are truly lucky to have this modern rehabilitation hospital in South West Surrey." NHS Surrey head of estates, Jamie Andrews, said: "The improvements to Milford Hospital are now complete, creating a greatly enhanced therapeutic environment for

patients and staff. Major improvements have been made to lighting, heating, water and fire safety systems. "The hospital wards have been re-decorated, kitchens and many bathrooms have been upgraded and new nurse call systems have been installed. We have also been able to create en-suite bathrooms in some areas.

"In addition, substantial improvements have been made to lighting, heating, water and fire safety systems." Milford Hospital League of Friends has just raised £500 towards further improvements for patients and has pledged to re-double its efforts: "This is indeed good news and, hopefully, bodes well for the future of the hospital," said the secretary Andy Rayner.

In brief

House burglary

A JEREBOAM of champagne was among £20,000 worth of goods stolen from a house in Elstead over the bank holiday weekend.

Thieves broke a window to get into the property in Hookley Lane sometime between 5.30pm and 7.30pm on Sunday August 28.

They made off with cash, computer equipment, cameras, jewellery and alcohol, including the three-foot tall bottle of Laurent Perrier.

Police are appealing for people who may have seen anyone acting suspiciously in the area to contact them with information.

Anyone with information is asked to contact Surrey Police on 101 quoting reference WV/11/4768, or call Crimestoppers anonymously and free on 0800 555 111.

Solar so good

SOUTH West Surrey MP Jeremy Hunt will be the special guest at the official launch in Godalming of The Wey Valley Schools Energy Co-operative next week.

It is the biggest solar energy co-operative scheme to date and has been put together by a small team of residents, with the aim of attracting local investors to help raise £670,000 and put solar panels of up to 50KW on five schools in Guildford and Waverley.

For further information on the scheme, call the organisers on 01483 421580.

Trio in court

TWO men and a teenager appeared in court charged with three counts of robbery and one attempted robbery.

Samuel Gilbert, 18, and Callum Hollingsworth, who turned 18 this week, appeared at Guildford Crown Court yesterday (Thursday) charged in connection with three late night robberies in which four men were targeted and injured on the night of Monday August 22 in Godalming.

The defendants appeared in court with a 16-year-old who cannot be named, but no plea has been entered.

The trio will appear again on October 6, allowing time for DNA evidence to be considered.

Exhibition set for Key Site plans

Proposal feedback welcomed

by Amy Taylor

THE FIRST public exhibition of the new plans for Godalming's long-awaited Key Site will take place next week.

Following a summer of consultation, new proposals have been drawn up and developers hope feedback will be forthcoming ahead of an application being submitted.

Successive applications to build on the land between Flambard Way, Catteshall Lane and Woosack Way in Godalming town centre have not found favour with the public and fell foul of Waverley planners.

The new exhibition will be held at Godalming Baptist Church Hall on two consecutive days, beginning on Friday September 16 from 4pm until 8pm, and opening again at 10am on Saturday September 17 until 2pm.

Anyone is welcome to attend and view the plans, and a comment box will be available for immediate feedback. Comments will be accepted for up to two weeks after the exhibition dates.

A spokesman for D&M Planning Partnership, acting on behalf of the applicant Country Homes, said the last few months had been spent in discussion with planning

officers at Waverley Borough Council as well as local interest groups, including the Godalming Trust, Godalming & District Chamber of Commerce, Catteshall Lane, Atrium and Frith Hill residents' associations and the CPRE (Campaign to Protect Rural England).

"It has been really helpful and we've had really positive discussions with everybody. The vast majority have been really encouraged by the changes in size, and some have made some interesting points, which we are looking to address," he said.

The issue of alternative access from Flambard Way on to the site is being discussed with Surrey County Council to see whether it is a possibility.

The exhibition follows a long period of turmoil over the future of the site, culminating in the borough council's refusal of an application made by Flambard Developments, whose plans included an eight-storey tower block and space for shops and offices.

The new application is expected to contain an element of affordable family housing much more in context with the surrounding buildings.

It is hoped this will be submitted by Christmas, allowing for a 16-week application process involving an environ-

mental and impact assessment. Applying by the end of the year would also provide an alternative site plan ahead of Flambard Development's last date to appeal their refused application, giving the council something to consider it against.

D&M's spokesman said that while the firm did not expect 'massive changes' following the exhibition, it would not want to make any changes that planning officers were not keen on.

However, he added: "It's all changed with the emphasis on localism and the need to engage people.

"It's part and parcel of the planning process, to have a meaningful conversation and not have it after the application has been made.

"There are such time constraints anyway, it's better to have it before than after."

Angus Palmer, of the Godalming Trust, said he hoped people would visit the exhibition and encouraged them to do so. He said: "We suggested the site should, if possible, include some affordable housing, and that the development should enhance architecture in the town, not detract from it."

He added that he hoped some of their concerns had been acted on in the proposals.



The Widders Border Morris entertained visitors at Weyfest 2011. Picture: Steve Porter. (Ref: SA114318)

Widders' warm welcome at Weyfest

A SCARY looking bunch of Morris dancers who first got together at GuilFest 2001 were back at Weyfest 2011 by popular demand last weekend.

The Widders Border Morris, who are named after the 'Black Widows' mob of hapless bikers

in the Clint Eastwood film *Every Which Way But Loose*, were also giving workshops.

The popular annual festival of new and vintage rock and roots music at Tilford Rural Life Centre kicked off with a party on Friday night and concluded

with a grand finale on Sunday night, and has been described as 'the best yet'.

Many fans set up camp and made a weekend of it so as not to miss the action-packed programme, which featured performances by more than 60

acts on three different stages, plus fun in the Sci-Fi Zone, a trip on the Old Kiln Light Railway, a classic car show and the opportunity to admire the exhibits at the museum.

See pages 16 and 17 for our picture spread.

Social Policy Oscar nomination for busy CAB branch

WAVERLEY Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) has another reason to celebrate after being shortlisted for a national award, just weeks after being praised for its excellent services.

Following an independent audit in July, which gave the charity top marks for quality, the group is now in the running for a campaigning award.

The announcement follows the release of a report written

by a volunteer advisor in Waverley, which highlighted problems with free health care.

It focused on the problem of gaps in information available from the Department of Work and Pensions on availability of free health care to benefits claimants.

Phil Davies, district manager, said: "We are very proud to have been shortlisted for this award. Not everyone recognises

that as well as providing one-to-one help and advice, Citizens Advice is also a very successful campaigning organisation.

"Because so many people use our service, we are in a unique position to collect vital evidence of failures in policies and services. We use this to press for improvements both at a local and national level. "We estimate that nationally,

this work improves the lives of nearly seven million people each year."

He added that the social policy work that the CAB often carried out made more of a difference to people's lives than their day to day work.

"The report that was written shows there are people who are being excluded from free health benefits because of the particular type of benefits they

claim. It's not to do with the fact that they're any less worthy, but more to do with glitches in the system.

"If we can bring possible unintentional injustices to their attention then that's what we aim to do."

On a regional level, Waverley CAB worked with more than 7,000 people last year, almost one third of whom were helped at the Godalming branch alone.

The branches in Cranleigh, Haslemere and Farnham saw around 5,000 people.

The nomination for the award - known as the Social Policy Oscars - comes at the end of a year in which money has been tight as demand on the service has grown.

The biggest problems seen by volunteers, particularly during a recession, are debt, unemployment, relationship

breakdowns and housing issues.

The winner will be announced at the charity's annual conference in York next week, pitting Waverley against two other bureaux whose reports have been shortlisted.

More than 1,000 delegates from bureaux across the country will attend for meetings and networking events.



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