

Dear Rory

My husband T M attends Newent and I would like to add my voice to the current debate about closure.

I refer to Dr. H's e-mail to Ms K where she speaks about "pitting the elderly against each other". I completely agree that this is heartless ; possibly the crux of the matter is that neither Day Centre should close (despite the decision having already been taken).

Perhaps Newent and Hobkirk should unite and fight the cause to keep both open. I am not in a position to argue the need in terms of long term provision for the elderly in the borough, but presumably someone would have access to necessary information to project the needs of an aging population to support such an argument.

My husband made the point that the mix of people with high and lower needs is very valuable in terms of day to day social contact and, if substantial need becomes the benchmark for eligibility ( as in B M's comment at the meeting on 6.3.07) and those with lower needs are moved to the voluntary sector this valuable mix would be lost; not to mention the loss of friendships developed across the levels of need and the increased work load for the staff providing daily care.

As has been said, public opinion can change the council's decision (as in Tudor Drive Library closure) so perhaps a united front is the course to take to persuade the council to look again at their budgetary options

G M