

# Cinque Port Town of New Romney



Mrs C. Newcombe  
Town Clerk

Town Clerk's Office  
Town Hall  
New Romney  
Kent TN28 8BT

Tel: New Romney 01797 362348

Ref: CN/3005

12<sup>th</sup> August 2025

Dear Councillor / Committee Member,

## Meeting of the Health & Wellbeing Committee

A Meeting of the Health & Wellbeing Committee will be held in the **Assembly Rooms, Church Approach, New Romney** on **Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2025** commencing at **10.00am**. The favour of your attendance is requested.

Yours sincerely,

*C. Newcombe*

Mrs. C Newcombe – Town Clerk

Email: [town.clerk@newromney-tc.gov.uk](mailto:town.clerk@newromney-tc.gov.uk)

***The afore-mentioned meeting will commence at 10.00am.***

***Members of Public are welcome to join this meeting. However, a number of matters discussed by the Health & Wellbeing Committee are likely to be discussed in private and confidential session due to their sensitive, legal or contractual nature. Members of Public and Press and Council Members who are not Members of the Health & Wellbeing Committee will be required to leave the meeting at that time.***

***PLEASE NOTE: New Romney Town Hall and New Romney Assembly Rooms all have restricted access for people with limited mobility; please enquire for details.***

## **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AT TOWN COUNCIL MEETINGS**

### **1. Who can participate in this New Romney Town Council meeting?**

All Members of the Public may attend this meeting, except at such times as certain sensitive, legal or contractual matters may be considered in private and confidential session, when Members of the Public will be required to leave the meeting.

Agendas and reports for meetings will be available at least 3 working days and usually 7 weekdays before the date of the meeting on the Town Council website. Any supplementary sheets will be available the day before the meeting and can be viewed at [www.newromney-tc.gov.uk](http://www.newromney-tc.gov.uk)

## **THE LAWS OF LIBEL AND SLANDER**

- These laws are very strict.
- If, in public, you say something about a person that is not true, even if you believe it to be true, you may be sued and have to pay compensation. Therefore, you need to be very careful about any criticism you wish to make of people in any written submission to the Council.
- Councillors are able to speak more freely and bluntly while in Council or Committee meetings than members of the public.
- You, as a member of the public, do not have the same protection.

**NEW ROMNEY TOWN COUNCIL  
HEALTH & WELLBEING COMMITTEE MEETING  
TUESDAY 2<sup>ND</sup> SEPTEMBER 2025 AT 10.00AM**

**AGENDA**

Welcome and Introductions.

**1. APOLOGIES:**

To receive and note the apologies of councillors / committee members unable to attend.

**2. DISPENSATION TO PARTICIPATE:**

To receive and note any applications granted by the Town Clerk, on behalf of the Town Council, for dispensation to participate in Meetings of New Romney Town Council.

**3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:**

Councillors to declare any Disclosable Pecuniary Interests or Other Significant or Personal Interests they may have in items on the agenda for this meeting.

**4. MINUTES (Encs\*):**

To approve the minutes of the **Health & Wellbeing Committee Meeting** held on 20<sup>th</sup> May 2025.

**5. NEW ROMNEY NHS PROVISION:**

To consider local needs for future NHS provision in New Romney and the wider Romney Marsh and make any such recommendations to Full Council as deemed appropriate thereon.

**6. LOCAL HEALTH & WELLBEING NEEDS AND ISSUES (Encs\*):**

(i) To further discuss and identify local health & wellbeing needs and issues, as appropriate, including:

1. To discuss rationale document for the proposed new medical centre (attached hereto\*).
2. To consider the associated press releases (attached hereto\*).

(ii) Noting the afore-mentioned rationale document and press releases, to make any such recommendations to (i) New Romney Town Council and / or (ii) NHS Primary Care Network / Local Health & Wellbeing Providers or other organisations as may be deemed appropriate.

(iii) To consider the next steps required to move forward with the Medical Centre campaign (attached hereto\*).

**7. EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS:**

To consider exclusion of public and press in accordance with Standing Order No.34 (a), which states that *‘in view of the special and confidential nature of the business about to be transacted, it is advisable in the public interest that the public and press be temporarily excluded [from the meeting] and they are instructed to withdraw’* due to the fact that elements of the agenda items as listed above may relate to matters of a sensitive, legal or contractual nature.

**8. CONCLUSION OF PRIVATE SESSION:**

To consider concluding private session, if applicable.

**Mrs. C Newcombe - Town Clerk**

Copied to Health & Wellbeing Committee Members and to all other Councillors for information only.

**MINUTES**  
**Of**  
**A Meeting of New Romney Town Council's**  
**Health & Wellbeing Committee**  
**Held in the Assembly Rooms, New Romney**  
**on Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> May 2025**  
**Commencing at 10.00am**

**PRESENT:** Councillors J Rivers, J Hiscock, J Davies, P Coe, P THomas  
S Hodges  
NHS Representatives: 5

**In the Chair:** Councillor J Rivers

**In Attendance:** Town Clerk - Mrs C Newcombe

017/2025-26 **ELECTION OF COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN**

It was:

**PROPOSED BY:** Councillor Coe  
**SECONDED BY:** Councillor Hodges

**RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY – that Councillor Rivers be hereby appointed as Chairman of the Health & Wellbeing Committee for the 2025-26 civic year.**

018/2025-26 **ELECTION OF COMMITTEE VICE-CHAIRMAN**

It was:

**PROPOSED BY:** Councillor Rivers  
**SECONDED BY:** Councillor Thomas

**RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY – that Councillor Davies be hereby appointed as Vice-Chairman of the Health & Wellbeing Committee for the 2025-26 civic year.**

019/2025-26 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received and noted, as follows:

|                                   |                        |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------|
| Dr N Poplett (NHS Representative) | - For personal reasons |
| Councillor P Carey                | - For personal reasons |
| Councillor Rev Cn S McLachlan     | - For personal reasons |

020/2025-26 **CO-OPTION OF COMMITTEE MEMBER**

Having duly considered a request to co-opt the Folkestone, Hythe & Rural Social Care Senior Practitioner onto the Health and Wellbeing Committee, it was:

**PROPOSED BY:** Councillor Thomas

**SECONDED BY:** Councillor Hiscock

**RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY – that the Folkestone, Hythe & Rural Social Care Senior Practitioner be hereby co-opted onto the Health and Wellbeing Committee.**

021/2025-26 **DISPENSATION TO PARTICIPATE**

No new requests for Dispensation to Participate had been processed by the Town Clerk.

022/2025-26 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None.

023/2025-26 **MINUTES**

The Chairman presented the minutes of the Health & Wellbeing Committee meeting held on 11<sup>th</sup> February 2025, which were duly received and noted and it was:

**PROPOSED BY:** Councillor Coe

**SECONDED BY:** Councillor Davies

**RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY – that the minutes of the Health & Wellbeing Committee meeting held on 11<sup>th</sup> February 2025 be hereby approved as a true and correct record.**

024/2025-26 **NEW ROMNEY NHS PROVISION**

It was reported that Oak Hall Surgery had recently appointed a GP, providing additional GP services equivalent to 2 full days per week. It was also reported that diabetes support funding had been withdrawn for services provided at the Romney Marsh Community Hub as well as local GP surgeries.

It was noted that the Invicta group were currently promoting a Winter Impact Scheme that was designed to help reduce hospital admissions.

025/2025-26 **LOCAL HEALTH & WELLBEING ISSUES**

(i) An extract from the Folkestone & Hythe District Council Infrastructure Statement was duly received and noted and it was noted that a year ago provision for a new medical hub in New Romney to serve Romney Marsh had been identified as essential but that, since then, the population had been steadily growing with on-going new

residential developments, so it was right to assume that the priority for a new medical hub must also be increasing and, therefore, now even more essential. Local GP surgeries' representatives advised that they would ideally still want to take on more GPs and multi-disciplinary practitioners to better meet local healthcare needs but that they simply do not have the physical space to do so.

A draft press release was also presented for discussion and its content was duly considered and commented on. It was the general consensus that all communications should reinforce the point that whilst a New Romney site has been identified for a new medical hub, such a facility would be provided to serve the Romney Marsh as a whole.

It was noted that other smaller local Councils, including Lydd, Dymchurch and At Mary in the Marsh all have s106 monies allocated for health provision as well as New Romney and that there is a need to change the local mindset so that all of the communities of Romney Marsh recognise the point that any new medical hub would serve the whole of Romney Marsh and that any CIL funding that has been ring-fenced for health provision in respect of any Romney Marsh Parish will be required to contribute to the project.

It was noted that it was important to understand exactly how much physical space would be required to accommodate all of New Romney's GP services as well as additional multi-disciplinary and minor injuries services for the whole of Romney Marsh and the representatives of the local GP surgeries were requested to discuss this with some urgency at their PCN meetings so that this information could be brought back to the Health & Wellbeing Committee for discussion at its next meeting in order that the detail of any new facility / provision could be developed.

(ii) It was:

**PROPOSED BY:** Councillor Thomas

**SECONDED BY:** Councillor Coe

**RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY – that Councillor Thomas, in consultation with the Town Clerk, be authorised to amend the terms of the Folkestone & Hythe District Council Infrastructure Statement extract to reflect the current status of need and present it to the District Council with a request that it be formally amended.**

It was noted by those present that, at the next meeting of the Health & Wellbeing Committee, its Members would be required to:

- Further discuss and develop the draft press release presented at this meeting with a view to approving a final draft for publication
- Discuss next steps in respect of the campaign for a new Medical Hub
- Discuss the scope of requirements for a new Medical Hub with a view to developing a clear scope for required provision of the new facility

026/2025-26 **EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS:**

Not applicable

027/2025-26 **CONCLUSION OF PRIVATE SESSION:**

Not applicable

The Chairman thanked those present for their attendance and the meeting concluded **@11.06AM**

NB: All documents referred to herein are available for perusal on request, except for those documents of a sensitive / legal nature discussed in private session, including documents relating to staff matters which remain Private and Confidential in accordance with Data Protection legislation.

Minutes prepared by the Town Clerk



## Report Re- Published for Information:

### **Proposal for Establishing a New Medical Hub in New Romney. Councillor John Rivers**

#### **Executive Summary**

New Romney faces critical challenges in delivering quality healthcare, including a shortage of General Practitioners (GPs), limited access to services, and an over reliance on distant facilities such as Ashford A&E. These issues are worsened by population growth, leading to longer waiting times and overstretched resources.

To address these challenges, we propose the establishment of a **comprehensive medical hub** in New Romney. This hub will provide high-quality, accessible healthcare services tailored to the needs of a growing population, reduce transport dependency, and align with government priorities for sustainable and localised healthcare.

#### **1. Current Healthcare Challenges in New Romney**

New Romney's healthcare system is under significant strain:

- **Difficulty Attracting GPs:** Many GPs are reluctant to practice in rural areas with limited career growth opportunities, resulting in a depleted number of full-time practitioners.
- **Overburdened GP Practices:** Existing GPs have higher-than-average patient lists, making appointments scarce and leading to long waits for care.
- **Limited Services:** Residents must often travel to Ashford A&E or other distant facilities for services not available locally, such as minor injury treatments.
- **Transport Barriers:** Poor public transport links and the inflated cost of private travel make accessing distant healthcare facilities challenging for many, particularly the elderly and low-income families.

#### **2. Impact of Population Growth on Healthcare Demand**

New Romney has seen steady population growth, further straining its healthcare resources.

- **Increased Demand for Appointments:** The rising number of residents has outpaced the capacity of local healthcare providers.

- **Overstretched GPs:** A higher-than-average patient-to-GP ratio means less time per patient and an increased risk of burnout among practitioners.
- **Insufficient Infrastructure:** Current facilities are not equipped to handle the growing and diverse needs of the community.

### 3. Benefits of Establishing a Medical Hub

A medical hub in New Romney would provide multiple benefits:

- **Attracting and Retaining Healthcare Professionals:**
  - A hub offering varied services beyond traditional GP practice, such as mental health clinics and minor injuries units, would appeal to professionals seeking diverse career opportunities.
  - Improved facilities and professional development opportunities would encourage practitioners to stay long-term.
- **Reducing Travel Dependency:**
  - By providing essential services locally, the hub would cut the need for residents to travel to Ashford or other towns for basic healthcare needs.
  - This is particularly crucial given New Romney's limited transport options.
- **Comprehensive Care for the Community:**
  - The hub would offer integrated services, including GP consultations, mental health support, ultrasound scanning, phlebotomy, physiotherapy, and a baby clinic.
  - A minor injuries unit would provide immediate care, reducing pressure on distant A&E departments.
- **Improved Health Outcomes and Cost Savings:**
  - Preventive care services would help residents stay healthier, reducing hospital admissions and long-term NHS expenses.
  - Elderly and vulnerable populations would receive the support needed to avoid prolonged hospital stays.

### 4. Proposed Services for the Medical Hub

The medical hub should offer a wide range of services tailored to the needs of the community, such as:

- **General Practitioners (GPs)**
- **Mental Health Clinic**
- **Ultrasound Scanning**

- **Phlebotomy Services**
- **Physiotherapy**
- **Balance Support Services**
- **Baby Clinic**
- **Minor Injuries Unit**

These services represent a modern, holistic approach to healthcare, ensuring that residents of New Romney and the Romney Marsh have access to the care they need, when they need it.

## **5. Community and Governmental Benefits**

- **Supporting Local Communities:**
  - The hub would empower residents to maintain their health and reach their full working potential, contributing to the local economy.
  - Elderly and sick individuals would receive timely care, reducing the risk of prolonged hospital stays and dependency on expensive medical interventions.
- **Aligning with Government Goals:**
  - The hub supports the NHS's commitment to preventive care and community-based healthcare solutions.
  - It addresses rural healthcare disparities, a key priority for policymakers.

## **Conclusion and Call to Action**

The establishment of a medical hub in New Romney is a vital step toward ensuring fair healthcare access for a growing population. By addressing GP shortages, reducing travel barriers, and offering a comprehensive range of services, the hub will transform healthcare delivery in the region.

**We urge government officials and healthcare organisations to approve and invest in this initiative. Together, we can create a sustainable, high-quality healthcare system that meets the needs of Romney Marsh's residents and serves as a model for rural healthcare innovation.**

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## **Examples:**

Establishing a medical hub in New Romney can draw valuable insights from successful UK case studies that have addressed similar rural healthcare challenges. Here are some pertinent examples:

### **1. Health and Wellbeing Hubs: Delivering Local Services Under One Roof**

Several councils, in partnership with the NHS and local entities, have developed Health and Wellbeing Hubs to provide preventive services directly within communities. These hubs integrate health, social care, housing, employment, education, and social services, offering a comprehensive approach to wellness. This model has effectively reduced health inequalities by making services more accessible and tailored to local needs.

### **2. Community Health and Wellbeing Hub Model in Fife**

NHS Fife implemented a Community Hub model delivering integrated health and social care services. This approach has been particularly beneficial in rural areas, ensuring that residents receive timely and coordinated care. The model emphasises community engagement and has been instrumental in addressing healthcare access challenges in dispersed populations.

### **3. Emergency Medical Retrieval Service (EMRS) in Scotland**

The EMRS provides critical care retrieval services across rural Scotland, ensuring that patients in remote areas receive timely medical attention. By deploying specialised teams to rural hospitals and communities, the service has improved outcomes for patients requiring urgent care, demonstrating the importance of adaptable healthcare delivery models in rural settings.

### **4. Rural General Hospitals in Scotland**

NHS Scotland's Rural General Hospitals are designed to deliver healthcare services in remote areas, overcoming challenges related to sparsity and rurality. These hospitals provide consultant-led general surgical services and are equipped to handle both planned and emergency procedures, ensuring that rural populations have access to comprehensive healthcare without the need to travel long distances.

### **5. Polyclinics in England**

Polyclinics offer a range of services, including general practice, specialist consultations, and diagnostic services, all under one roof. This model aims to provide more services in the community, closer to home, and at more convenient

times, which is particularly beneficial in rural areas where access to healthcare can be limited.

These case studies highlight the effectiveness of integrated healthcare models in rural settings, emphasising the importance of accessibility, comprehensive service provision, and community engagement. Implementing a similar medical hub in New Romney could address current healthcare challenges by providing localised, integrated services that meet the specific needs of the community.

## **Best Practice Example for New Romney and the Marsh:**

The **Whitstable Estuary View Medical Hub** exemplifies an integrated approach to rural healthcare, addressing key challenges such as accessibility, specialist care provision, and cost-effectiveness.

### **Facilities**

The hub encompasses a range of services designed to meet diverse patient needs:

- **Integrated Community Health Centre:** Features 101 en-suite rooms, communal areas, and ancillary facilities, including assisted bathrooms, treatment rooms, and nurse stations.
- **Day Care Centre:** Provides care for approximately 20 individuals, offering a supportive environment for day patients.
- **Community Hub Operational Centre (CHOC):** Facilitates coordination of community health services, enhancing operational efficiency.
- **Urgent Treatment Centre (UTC):** Operates daily from 8 am to 8 pm, treating minor illnesses and injuries, with an on-site X-ray facility available Monday to Saturday.

### **Operational Model**

The hub operates on a collaborative model, integrating various healthcare services to streamline patient care:

- **Co-location of Services:** By housing primary care, urgent treatment, and specialist services under one roof, the hub reduces the need for patients to travel to multiple locations.
- **Extended Hours:** The UTC's operation from 8 am to 8 pm, seven days a week, ensures that urgent care is accessible beyond standard working hours, catering to the community's needs.
- **Interoperable Systems:** Collaboration with technology providers has enabled the creation of interoperable solutions, allowing seamless patient assessment and treatment across services.

## Impact on the Community

The establishment of the Estuary View Medical Hub has significantly benefited the local population:

- **Improved Accessibility:** The centralisation of services within the hub ensures that residents have convenient access to a wide range of healthcare services, reducing travel burdens, especially for those with limited mobility.
- **Enhanced Specialist Care:** The availability of consultant-led outpatient clinics and specialist services within the community setting allows patients to receive expert care without the need to visit distant hospitals.
- **Cost-Effectiveness:** By providing comprehensive services locally, the hub reduces the strain on hospital resources and minimises patient travel expenses, leading to overall cost savings for both the healthcare system and the community.

**In summary, the Whitstable Estuary View Medical Hub serves as a model facility, proving how integrated healthcare services can effectively address the unique challenges faced by rural communities, such as the Romney Marsh.**

**We urge government officials and healthcare organisations to approve and invest in this initiative. Together, we can create a sustainable, high-quality healthcare system that meets the needs of Romney Marsh's residents and serves as a model for rural healthcare innovation.**

Councillor John Rivers  
Chairman  
Health and Wellbeing Committee  
New Romney Town Council

07-12-2024

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# **Making the Case for a New Romney** **Medical Centre** **(serving the whole Romney Marsh)**

## **Executive Summary**

The UK Government's new 10-Year Health Plan commits to moving care out of hospitals and into neighbourhoods, delivered by multidisciplinary Neighbourhood Health Services operating from Neighbourhood Health Centres that are open extended hours and bring diagnostics, rehabilitation, mental health and community nursing "under one roof." A modern, integrated medical centre in New Romney, serving residents, workers and visitors across the whole Romney Marsh, is exactly the kind of scheme the Government wants systems to back. It aligns with national policy, Kent & Medway's primary care strategy and the NHS programme to expand Community Diagnostic Centres (CDCs) and out-of-hours access.

**Why here, why now:** Romney Marsh is a rural/coastal area with significant health needs, an older age profile, transport barriers and workforce challenges, issues highlighted by the Chief Medical Officer and Kent Public Health. A local, integrated centre reduces avoidable travel, tackles inequalities, improves same-day access and supports prevention. It also relieves pressure on William Harvey Hospital (Ashford) and the Folkestone Urgent Treatment Centre.

**What to build:** A Neighbourhood Health Centre in New Romney providing: modern GP facilities (with digital telephony and same-day access), Pharmacy First integration, urgent-same-day care stream, community mental health, rehabilitation, community nursing, health visiting, social prescribing, VCSE partners, and a CDC "spoke" for checks/tests/scans with extended evening/weekend provision. This mirrors the Government model and the NHS's expansion of CDCs now operating 12 hours a day, 7 days a week.

**Recommendation:** Kent & Medway ICB should place a New Romney Medical Centre on the capital pipeline and progress it as the Romney Marsh Neighbourhood Health Centre, a flagship for coastal/rural care and a tangible delivery of the national plan in East Kent.

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## 1) National Policy: Direct Alignment

- **Government direction (2025):** The PM and DHSC launched a “*new era for the NHS*” with a Neighbourhood Health Service and Neighbourhood Health Centres that co-locate services (diagnostics, mental health, rehab, nursing), with extended opening (moving outpatient care out of hospital by 2035).
- **10-Year Health Plan (CP 1350):** Rewires the NHS via three shifts
  - hospital → community
  - analogue → digital
  - sickness → prevention
  - and explicitly backs neighbourhood models and local centres.
- **Fuller Stocktake (NHSE):** Calls for integrated neighbourhood teams delivering joined-up primary/community care. This is the operating model for these centres.
- **Primary Care Access Recovery Plan:** Requires modern access (digital telephony, online booking, records access) which a new-build centre can hard-wire in from day one.
- **Community Diagnostic Centres:** National programme accelerating diagnostics closer to home; 100 CDCs now open out-of-hours (12h/day, 7 days/week). A Romney Marsh “spoke” supports this shift.

**Conclusion:** A New Romney centre is a textbook delivery vehicle for the Government’s plan, bringing multiple services under one roof, with digital-first access and prevention embedded.

## 2) Local Strategy Fit (Kent & Medway)

- **ICB Primary Care Strategy (2024–29):** Prioritises access, proactive care and prevention, and stresses that fit-for-purpose estates are *critical* to workforce and patient needs, exactly what this centre provides.
- **ICB Capital Planning:** Kent & Medway’s capital plans already reference local CDC capacity across places; a Romney Marsh centre can align with that estates pipeline and CDC rollout.

**Conclusion:** The scheme fits the ICB’s published strategy and capital approach and should be advanced as an estates priority for East Kent.



### 3) Need & Inequalities on Romney Marsh

- **Coastal/rural inequality:** The CMO's landmark report shows a persistent "*coastal excess*" of poor health beyond age and deprivation alone. Kent's own Public Health analysis echoes transport barriers and workforce recruitment issues in coastal communities.
- **Core20PLUS5:** NHS England's inequalities framework formally prioritises tackling gaps in access/outcomes, relevant to Romney Marsh populations.
- **Access & travel:** Nearest UTC is in **Folkestone (Royal Victoria Hospital)**, open 8am–8pm. Public transport to **William Harvey Hospital** typically takes about an hour; driving is 13 to 17 miles depending on start point. A local centre with urgent-same-day capacity reduces avoidable travel.

**Conclusion:** A New Romney hub directly targets known coastal/rural inequities identified by national and Kent evidence.

### 4) Proposed Service Model (what goes in the building)

**Core components (co-located and digitally integrated):**

1. **Modern General Practice (\*2):** Multi-disciplinary teams, digital telephony, online triage/booking, continuity and proactive long-term-conditions (LTC) care.
2. **Urgent-same-day primary care stream** (8am–8pm; weekends as demand grows), relieving ED/UTC.
3. **Pharmacy First** suite and prescribing rooms (common conditions, blood-pressure checks, contraception, etc.), integrating with GP and diagnostics pathways.
4. **CDC "spoke" diagnostics:** Phlebotomy, plain X-ray, ultrasound, lung function, ECG/echo and selected pathway tests, with early evening/weekend sessions linked to regional CDC hubs.
5. **Community & rehabilitation:** Physio/OT, post-op and falls clinics, community nursing, palliative care coordination; space for group programmes (cardiac rehab, diabetes education, smoking cessation, weight management).
6. **Mental health & wellbeing:** IAPT/talking therapies, CAMHS/young person's sessions, social prescribing, VCSE partners, debt/employment advice (as envisaged nationally).
7. **Digital-by-default backbone:** NHS App-enabled records access/booking, remote monitoring for LTCs, virtual MDT rooms; accessible alternatives for digitally excluded patients.

**Operating model:** A **Neighbourhood Health Centre** open **12 hours/day, 6 days/week** as the plan scales nationally; with activity data used to step up to 7-day provision in diagnostics and urgent-same-day slots as demand evidence grows.

## 5) Benefits & Outcomes

- **Access & convenience:** Fewer long journeys; more evening/weekend options for tests and urgent primary care.
- **Hospital relief & productivity:** Community management of LTCs and post-op care reduces avoidable admissions and outpatient loads, which are explicit Government goals.
- **Health inequalities:** Targeted provision in a coastal/rural setting advances Core20PLUS5 goals.
- **Workforce & training:** Attractive, modern estate supports recruitment/retention and full MDT deployment (ARRS-style roles / neighbourhood teams).
- **Economic & civic value:** Co-location with VCSE partners (advice, employment support) addresses wider determinants and keeps spend local.

## 6) Sites & Phasing (outline)

- **Available site:** New Romney Town Council owns land near the centre of town, with bus connections and which can integrate a large car park on site (subject to planning approval).

The anticipated number of rooms both current Surgeries require comes to 45 rooms, excluding those required for other facilities. Therefore, assessment options, such as expansion/re-use of existing **New Romney Clinic** footprint versus new build on public estate, needs to be carried out. A new build seems preferable and matches Government goals.

- **Phasing:**
  - **Phase 1:** Same day/urgent primary care, modern GP access, Pharmacy First, phlebotomy; enable remote diagnostics links.
  - **Phase 2:** On-site imaging/diagnostics “spoke” with extended hours; expand rehab and mental health suites.
  - **Phase 3:** Additional services (e.g., dental rooms) subject to ICB commissioning and workforce.

## 7) Funding & Approvals: realistic routes

- **ICB Estates Pipeline & Primary Care Estates Strategy:** Secure an in-principle ICB decision to progress to Strategic Outline Case, aligning with the **ICB Primary Care Strategy** estates priorities.
- **CDC capital programme:** Bid to host a **CDC spoke** function in the Romney Marsh neighbourhood centre, tied to the national push for out-of-hours diagnostics.
- **Neighbourhood/cross-government levers:** Use DLUHC's **Plan for Neighbourhoods** where eligible (for co-located non-clinical services like employment/debt advice), complementing DHSC capital.

**Governance:** Co-sponsor with Kent Community Health NHS FT, EKHUFT, PCN(s), and Folkestone & Hythe District Council; formal patient/public involvement via the ICS approach.

## 8) Risks & Mitigations

- **Workforce availability:** Design for MDT working (nurses, AHPs, pharmacists, paramedics), flexible estates and digital tools to enhance productivity; leverage national GP expansion and digital scribe initiatives outlined by DHSC.
- **Capital envelope constraints:** Phase build; maximise modular/Net-Zero estate standards; sequence CDC capability to available kit/staff; explore mixed funding for non-clinical areas.
- **Transport & inclusion:** Co-design with local VCSE and parishes; embed outreach and home/virtual offers for housebound patients; ensure accessible design for older residents.

## 9) What Councillors and the MP Can Do Now

### Immediate Asks

1. **To DHSC & NHSE:** Endorse New Romney as an early Neighbourhood Health Centre site for Romney Marsh, with CDC “spoke” capacity and extended hours.
2. **To Kent & Medway ICB:** Place New Romney Medical Centre on the 2025/26–2028/29 estates programme, authorise a Strategic Outline Case and options appraisal this year.
3. **To DLUHC (where eligible):** Align with Plan for Neighbourhoods funding to co-locate wider determinants services (employment, debt, smoking cessation).

### Key Campaign Messages (evidence-based)

- “This is exactly what the Government’s 10-Year Plan is for: care closer to home in a Neighbourhood Health Centre.”
- “Diagnostics are now moving out-of-hours into communities; Romney Marsh should not be left behind.”
- “Coastal/rural health inequalities are documented by the CMO and Kent Public Health: New Romney is the right place to act.”
- “A modern estate is critical to access, workforce and quality, as our ICB strategy recognises.”

## 10) Data Pack the ICB will expect (to assemble locally)

- Population and age profile for Romney Marsh; LTC prevalence (CVD, COPD, diabetes); emergency conveyance rates; avoidable admissions; GP access/continuity metrics; patient travel times and bus timetables.
- Estates condition survey for current premises; growth and housing trajectories; seasonal visitor impact.

(Source pointers: OHID Fingertips, Kent Public Health JSNA, ICB analytics.)

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## Appendices

### A) Draft Council Resolution (for New Romney TC / F&H DC)

“New Romney Town Council resolves to support the creation of the Romney Marsh Neighbourhood Health Centre in New Romney, and calls on Kent & Medway ICB to include the scheme on its estates capital pipeline in 2025/26, with a CDC diagnostic spoke and extended evening/weekend access, in line with the Government’s 10-Year Health Plan for neighbourhood health services.”

### B) Template Letter to the MP / ICB Chair (key points)

- Endorsement of New Romney as a priority **Neighbourhood Health Centre** location for Romney Marsh.
- Request to commence a **Strategic Outline Case** and site options appraisal.
- Ask to integrate a **CDC spoke** with extended hours and to commission urgent-same-day primary care, Pharmacy First suites, rehab and mental health space.
- Commitment to co-design with patients, PCN(s), KCHFT, EKHUFT, VCSE and parishes.

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## Why Government Should Back It

“Backed by the Government’s **10-Year Health Plan**, the New Romney Medical Centre will deliver the promised **Neighbourhood Health Service** for a **coastal/rural community with evidenced health inequalities**. It co-locates primary, community and diagnostic services with **extended hours**, aligns with Kent & Medway’s **Primary Care Strategy** and the national **CDC** programme, and will cut avoidable hospital use, reduce travel, and improve access for residents, workers and visitors across Romney Marsh.”

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### Sources (key policy and local evidence)

- DHSC & No.10 press release on **Neighbourhood Health Service / Centres** (2 July 2025).
- **10-Year Health Plan for England (CP 1350)** – GOV.UK executive summary and policy page.
- **Fuller Stocktake** – Integrating Primary Care into neighbourhood teams (NHS England).
- **Delivery Plan for Recovering Access to Primary Care** (digital telephony/online access).
- **Community Diagnostic Centres** (national programme) & **extended hours** announcement (Aug 2025).
- **Kent & Medway ICB Primary Care Strategy** – estates criticality and access focus.
- **CMO Coastal Communities report & Kent Public Health (coastal communities) report**.
- **Local access**: Folkestone Urgent Treatment Centre details (KCHFT) and typical public-transport journey time to William Harvey Hospital.

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Cllr. John Rivers.  
Chairman  
New Romney Town Council

August 2025

## Press Release **DRAFT**

### **Call for New Romney Medical Centre to Serve the Romney Marsh**

New Romney Town Council is calling on the Government and NHS to back a brand-new Medical Centre in New Romney, to serve the whole of Romney Marsh.

The proposed centre would bring together GP services, urgent same-day care, diagnostics, mental health, rehabilitation, and pharmacy services all under one roof – making healthcare more accessible for residents, workers, and visitors from across the Marsh.

#### **Mayor of New Romney, Cllr. John Rivers, said:**

“Our community faces long journeys for routine care and urgent treatment. A modern health centre in New Romney would deliver fair access to services, reduce pressure on hospitals, and give local people the care they deserve – closer to home.”

The plan matches the Government’s new 10-Year Health Plan, which promises to move care into local neighbourhoods through modern Neighbourhood Health Centres.

Councillors believe New Romney, as the natural hub of the Marsh, is the right location, and have also found land on which the centre can be built upon. With good transport links and a growing population, the centre would also help meet the needs of seasonal visitors and the local workforce.

**“This is a once-in-a-generation chance for Romney Marsh,” added Cllr. Rivers. “We need Government support now to make it happen.”**

September 2025

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**DRAFT ONLY**

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## **PRESS RELEASE**

For Immediate Release

### **Call for Government Backing of a New Romney Medical Centre to Serve the Whole Romney Marsh**

New Romney Town Council, together with local councillors and community leaders, is calling for urgent Government support to establish a new Neighbourhood Health Centre in New Romney, serving residents, workers, and visitors across the Romney Marsh.

The proposal comes at a time when the Government has set out a 10-Year Health Plan to move care closer to home, through Neighbourhood Health Centres that bring GPs, diagnostics, mental health, rehabilitation, and community services together under one roof.

#### **Cllr. John Rivers, Mayor of New Romney, said:**

“Romney Marsh faces some of the greatest health inequalities in Kent. Our residents have to travel long distances for urgent care and routine tests. A modern, integrated medical centre in New Romney would transform access, reduce hospital pressures, and deliver exactly what the Government’s new health plan promises – care close to home, when people need it.”

#### **The proposed centre would provide:**

- Modern GP facilities with same-day access and digital booking.
- Urgent primary care available into evenings and weekends.
- A Community Diagnostic Centre spoke, offering local scans, tests and checks.
- Mental health, rehabilitation, pharmacy and community nursing services co-located in one accessible building.
- Space for voluntary and community groups offering wellbeing, advice, and prevention programmes.

Local councillors emphasise that New Romney is the natural hub for the Marsh, with strong transport links and capacity to support patients from surrounding villages, and with land already set aside for the building of such a medical centre. The centre would also benefit the seasonal visitor population and local workforce.

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**Cllr. Rivers added:**

“This is a once-in-a-generation opportunity. We are asking the Government and the Kent & Medway NHS to put New Romney on the map as a priority site for a Neighbourhood Health Centre. Our community deserves fair access to healthcare, and this campaign will make sure our voice is heard.”

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**Notes to Editors**

- The UK Government’s 10-Year Health Plan (2025) commits to establishing Neighbourhood Health Centres, open extended hours and offering diagnostics and joined-up community care.
- Kent & Medway NHS’s Primary Care Strategy (2024–29) highlights the need for modern estates and improved access, particularly in rural and coastal areas.
- Romney Marsh has an older age profile, higher prevalence of long-term conditions, and significant travel barriers to hospitals and urgent care centres, making it a priority area for investment.

For further information, please contact:

New Romney Town Council

[Insert contact details / email / phone]

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## **Potential Headlines for Medical Centre Campaign**

Here are some headline-friendly campaign slogan options that can be used across press releases, posters, leaflets, and social media:

1. "Healthcare on the Marsh – Close to Home"
2. "A Medical Centre for New Romney – Serving the Whole Marsh"
3. "Care Where It's Needed: Romney Marsh Deserves Better"
4. "Bringing Health Back to the Heart of the Marsh"
5. "Local Care for Local People – Back New Romney Medical Centre"
6. "One Marsh, One Medical Centre, One Future"
7. "Cut the Travel, Keep the Care – Support New Romney Health Hub"
8. "Stronger, Healthier Romney Marsh – Starting in New Romney"

👉 Of these, "Healthcare on the Marsh – Close to Home" is simple, positive, and newspaper-headline ready.

👉 "One Marsh, One Medical Centre, One Future" is more campaign-style and works well on banners, petitions, and rallies.

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Cllr. John Rivers  
Chairman  
New Romney Town Council

August 2025

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