

Statement from University Hospital Southampton Foundation NHS Trust regarding the temporary closure of the New Forest Birth Centre

The decision to temporarily close the New Forest Birth Centre has been taken to ensure we can continue to provide the safest possible care for our families.

Having reviewed our current and projected staffing levels over the next few months, we have concluded that we would not be able to adequately staff the Centre.

The safety of our staff is also paramount and, owing to the COVID-19 pandemic, a number of our colleagues have been unable to return to their substantive roles, meaning fewer midwives and support staff are available.

As a result the decision, which will be reviewed regularly, has been taken to close the Centre until January 2021. There will then be a further review of staff levels to decide whether it can safely reopen.

Our staff have been informed and will transfer to the Princess Anne Hospital in Southampton and our home birth services.

Expectant mums who call the labour line will be able to discuss the options for Broadlands birth centre or labour ward at Princess Anne Hospital or opt for a home birth.

This change does not affect antenatal and post-natal services which will continue to run at the New Forest Birth Centre.