

Citizens' jury 'lobbied' by Save Chase Farm campaigners as

Giving voice to those who matter

By Henry Ellis

A THROG of campaigners staged a protest outside the hotel where a citizens' jury met last Friday to pore over plans for the future of Chase Farm Hospital.

The 100 jurors, selected at random from the areas affected by proposed service cuts, spent the day discussing the four remaining options for Enfield's hospitals.

Senior executive staff and clinicians also took questions from the 20 tables of residents at the Novotel in Euston Road, Euston.

Under one of the options, services will essentially remain the same. But the other three would see maternity and childcare services and A&E seriously cut back at Chase Farm Hospital, in The Ridgeway, Enfield, leaving Barnet Hospital and The North Middlesex University Hospital, in Sterling Way, Edmonston, to take in extra patients.

The final options will be put to a public vote in January.

Veteran campaigner John Arend, 74, from Winchmore Hill, says he would have died if ambulance crews had not been able to take him to Chase Farm.

Mr Arend, a key player in the fight to save Bart's Hospital in 1992, was outside the Novotel.

He told the Advertiser: "This is a complete sham.

"We've already told them that we cannot lose the services but it just falls on deaf ears.

"I've lived in Enfield for 40 years and I have had three kids and we've spent many hours in A&E with various scrapes and cuts. Losing the service would be a disaster.

"Two years ago I was rushed to hospital for major heart surgery. I was able to get there within the magic seven minutes. I would not be alive today if it wasn't for Chase Farm A&E."

Led by campaign group Save Chase Farm and Conservative party parliamentary spokesman Nick de Bois, about 100 protesters shared a megaphone to try to sway jurors as they arrived.

A spokesman for the clinical strategy board that organised the event said: "This event is about allowing ordinary people to have their say.

"They're not the ones who shout the loudest but their views are very important to the process."

henryellis@trinitysouth.co.uk



Fury: Protesters outside the jury's hotel

TELL US WHAT YOU THINK

- Write to Letters to the Editor, The Enfield Advertiser, 3rd floor, Refuge House, 9-10 River Front, Enfield, EN1 3SZ
- E-mail lettersenfield@trinitysouth.co.uk
- Fax 020 8366 9376