

PRESS RELEASE

9 December 2024

New MRI opened at Buckland Hospital

A new state-of-the-art MRI unit has been officially opened today at the Community Diagnostic Centre (CDC) at Buckland Hospital.

This unit represents the final phase of NHSE CDC Capital project funding for the Dover site and will be open 7 days a week, increasing diagnostic capacity and reducing patient waits.

Work to expand diagnostic services at Buckland started in 2021, with a new CT scanner, followed by a mobile MRI scanner, and new consultation, changing and waiting rooms. The Trust has also expanded the hospital's existing ultrasound and X-ray services.

Previously patients had to travel to hospitals in Ashford, Canterbury or Margate for CT and MRI scans.

More than 117,678 patients have had diagnostic tests at the Buckland CDC, with 60 per cent of patients seen coming from the local area. Around 7,700 patients have been seen to date by the MRI services, with 1000 patients being seen on the new static scanner, with the CDC representing a 33% increase in Radiology provisions since 2021.

CDC Lead Cara Barlow explained how the new scanner will further benefit the local community. She said: "The MRI, as the final part of this important Community Diagnostic Centre, will increase capacity and speed up diagnosis, and potentially treatment, for patients.

"Providing this fantastic local facility will support our aims to improve access and attendances by residents in coastal regions. Some of these are the highest areas of deprivation so the new scanner will help to reduce local health inequalities, and improve patient experience."



Cathy Wybrow, Deputy Director for Planned Care Improvement, said: “We are really thrilled that the local population will have access to increased diagnostic services available at the Buckland Community Diagnostics Centre (CDC). The combination of all the new scanners and other tests such as blood tests and respiratory tests will significantly improve patient care to the local population.

“As one of 31 sites across NHS England South East, this centre ensures that patients in East Kent have access to the growing regional network of improved, high quality and locally accessible diagnostics services. We look forward to continuing to review feedback from patients and the local population in the coming months and investing in more patient pathways going through this modern facility, including direct access for local GPs to refer their patients into.”

East Kent Hospitals Chief Executive Tracey Fletcher said: “The opening of the new MRI signals the final phase of the Community Diagnostic Centre at Dover - another way to make sure we are providing the right care, in the right place, at the right time.

“This new facility increases capacity, reducing pressure on hospital sites and improving health outcomes for local patients by providing faster diagnoses. We thank NHS England for their support in making this happen.”

ENDS

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Notes to Editors

East Kent Hospitals University NHS Foundation Trust is one of the largest hospital trusts in England, with five hospitals and community clinics serving a local population of around 759,000 people. We also provide some specialist services for a wider population, including renal services in Medway and Maidstone and a cardiac service for all of Kent based at William Harvey Hospital, Ashford.

Our hospitals are:

Buckland Hospital, Dover

Kent and Canterbury Hospital, Canterbury

Queen Elizabeth The Queen Mother Hospital, Margate

Our patients
Our people

Our future

Our sustainability

Our quality and safety

We care

Royal Victoria Hospital, Folkestone
William Harvey Hospital, Ashford.

