

2020

### **How has your preparation for birth been affected by COVID-19?**

Ante-natal classes all cancelled, Stoke Manderville only option for delivery. Would have liked the option to triage at Wycombe Birthing Centre before making a 35 minute journey to Stoke Manderville.

Unable to use wycombe birth centre or have partner at stressful appointments. 3rd antenatal class cancelled with no explanation and no alternative offered

We changed to a homebirth (rather than WBC) once we realised I was likely to spend at least some time alone (without my birth partner) in hospital. Our privately booked antenatal classes were converted to Zoom online sessions.

Considering home birth after WBC suspension.

Zoom antenatal classes, Wycombe birth Center is not an option, my birth partner cannot come to appointments with me or with me for my induction

Stoke is the nearest hospital but it's 40mins from our house

Local birthing centre not available.

We were going to change to have baby at WBC but they stopped planning for births so went to SMH as originally planned but with greater anxiety.

Appointments by phone, scans alone, birth centre suspended and classes moved on line

I was unable to attend antenatal classes as they were not running and some birth choices I had to change like where I wanted to give birth and who was with me.

Birth centre not an option, antenatal classes cancelled, midwife at my GPs refused to see me, referred to community midwife, saw and spoke to a different midwife each time

Now having to travel to Stoke Mandeville to give birth.

The wycombe birth centre has been closed for births and we are redirected to Stoke Mandeville

### **Q1 2021 Appendix 1 Wycombe Birth centre impact**

Of 128 responses, 12 stated they were severely impacted by the suspension of births at Wycombe Birth Centre, 9 moderately and 5 slightly.

**We asked "If you have been impacted by the changes at Wycombe Birth Centre would you like to share how this has affected you." Below are the responses**

- I gave birth at Stoke Mandeville birth centre which is a 40 minute journey, Wycombe is less than a 10 minute journey for us
- We had to go to SMH which was a long journey from Wycombe. It was extremely stressful as my wife's labour was progressing incredibly quickly.
- Had to travel 30minutes to Stoke mandeville hospital at 3am whilst having strong contractions which would not have had to happen had we been able to stay local.
- I had to instead give birth at Stoke Mandeville which is a 40 minute drive away from High Wycombe where we live.
- Wycombe birth centre is very easily accessible to me, and I had had very positive experiences giving birth there previously. I was disappointed (but understood why) that the

Centre was not available this time; Stoke Mandeville is fantastic but just much further away for us.

- Planned to give birth at Wycombe Birth Centre so had to go to Aylesbury Birth Centre instead.
- I was told it was not available and wouldn't be an option for me
- This would have been my first choice to give birth
- No other option discussed apart from Stoke Mandeville
- I had to give birth in a different trust in order to have a BC experience
- Now I need to travel 45 mins to Stoke Mandeville
- Was hoping to give birth at the Birth Centre. I really hope partners will be allowed to join us for the scans and appointments and I really hope Wycombe Birth Centre will be available by the time I will be due
- I live much closer to the WBC and it would have been my first choice for giving birth. The journey to Stoke Mandeville takes twice as long, and is therefore twice as stressful and uncomfortable during labour. I would have felt happier to stay at home for longer before going into hospital, if the journey time was shorter
- Had hoped to be able to give birth at a freestanding MLU as I am very keen to avoid unnecessary medical interventions. Instead will have to travel a longer distance to Stoke, meaning more difficult decision-making during early labour about when to go in, and more travel for my partner back and forth (in question above about "which of the following options were discussed with you in pregnancy as possible places of birth?") - midwife asked at booking appointment if I had any thoughts, but has not discussed it with me any further than that, except me asking about when Wycombe Birth Centre might be an option

## **Q2 2021 Appendix 1 Wycombe Birth centre impact**

**We asked "If you have been impacted by the changes at Wycombe Birth Centre would you like to share how this has affected you." Below are the responses**

- Travelling to Stoke Mandeville is not ideal when we live in Wycombe and made it so the father couldn't visit much as he had commitments in Wycombe and the travel impacted that too
- I gave birth to my first baby at Wycombe, it was a fantastic experience. I was really disappointed to not have this option for my second birth. This led me to plan for a home birth which was a huge success
- Would have been more convenient and closer to home
- Had Wycombe Birth Centre been an option, I would have chosen to give birth there. I had my first baby there and it was a great experience. Travelling to Aylesbury was less than ideal.
- I ended up with a home birth but would much rather have given birth at Wycombe Birth Centre. My previous birth was 70 min and so this birth I wouldn't have made it to Stoke due to distance.
- It was closer to home, but at the end I was happy I went to Stoke Mandeville
- I was really disappointed I couldn't have my second child here as I had a really good experience with my first. Having to travel to Stoke meant additional stress when deciding when to leave the house and a half hour car journey with contractions. If it had been rush hour we might not have made it despite coming in before my contractions were regular
- I wanted to give birth here but was denied the option. I was very disappointed as this is my only child not born there.
- I was planning on having a baby there but couldn't so opted for home birth instead - best decision ever!
- It would have been my first choice.

## **Q3 2021 Appendix 1 Wycombe Birth centre impact**

**We asked "If you have been impacted by the changes at Wycombe Birth Centre would you like to share how this has affected you." Below are the responses**

- I felt really sad initially I couldn't give birth here. I had my heart set on it as it was only 5 minutes from my house and I was very low risk.
- I wanted to give birth at high Wycombe birth centre as it was the closest facility to my house and wanted a more relaxed environment
- I would have given birth at WBC as this is my closest unit, because of this I chose a homebirth
- I have ticked for the question above but none were discussed with me. I was just told I would be going to Stoke Mandeville hospital as I was 35 years old and therefore old for a first pregnancy. Made me feel bad.
- I wasn't impacted but I think it's such a brilliant space and should be used more.

#### **Q4/Q1 2021/22 Appendix 1 Wycombe Birth centre impact**

**We asked "If you have been impacted by the changes at Wycombe Birth Centre would you like to share how this has affected you." Below are the responses received**

- Having to travel whilst in labour to a Stoke was long and painful. It was also stressful to try and include the journey time into when I left to head into the hospital.
- I would have chosen WBC to give birth.
- Yes, All patient limited other places very busy
- I live within walking distance of the hospital. I had to have extra appointments during to higher risks and so drove to Stoke Mandeville several times a week.
- This would have been my preferred place of birth
- I would have opted for Wycombe if it was available
- Antenatal appointments at Wycombe are good knowing you won't hear people giving birth while you are pregnant!
- It was open for appointments when I needed it but not births. I always intended to give birth at Stoke

#### **Q2 2022 Appendix 1 Wycombe Birth centre impact**

**We asked "If you have been impacted by the changes at Wycombe Birth Centre would you like to share how this has affected you." Below are the responses received**

- This would have been my preference as I live local to the Wycombe Birth Centre.
- travelling was a horrible experience especially when you have children to look after
- For a town the size of Wycombe, it is inconvenient that I cannot give birth to my child in the town I live.
- I would have chosen it had it been available.
- My preference was to give birth at Wycombe
- We live in high Wycombe so would have preferred to have been able to give birth in high Wycombe. It was frustrating going back and forth to Stoke Mandeville especially to go all the way there just to do a covid test or collect a prescription
- Would have been much better to birth in as so much closer than a 35minute drive.

#### **Q3 2022 Appendix 1 Wycombe Birth centre impact**

**We asked "If you have been impacted by the changes at Wycombe Birth Centre would you like to share how this has affected you." Below are the responses received**

- No, would have chosen Stoke anyway

- Less options for a BC
- It would have been our preferred place to give birth
- Yes has impacted me. Wycombe is closer to where we live (Chesham) and we know the area quite well so felt more comfortable going there for scans etc. Stoke is a bit further away. Wycombe would have been our first preference.