



PUBLIC PETITION NO.

PE01432

Name of petitioner

Joseph Duncalf and Anthony Duncalf

Petition title

Improving emergency ambulance provision in remote and rural areas

Petition summary

Calling on the Scottish Parliament to urge the Scottish Government to initiate an urgent review of emergency ambulance provision in Scotland's remote and rural areas, such as the Stewartry area of Dumfries and Galloway, to ensure an improved response to the emergency and urgent care needs of people in remote and rural communities.

Action taken to resolve issues of concern before submitting the petition

- Letter of complaint / concern to the Scottish Ambulance Service – awaiting response.
- Lobbying of local councillors and MSPs. – messages of support from 2 councillors and 2 MSPs, including the advice to lodge a petition with the Scottish Parliament.
- We understand Dalbeattie Community Council has been asking for an ambulance to be stationed in the town for several years. The two members who have responded to our concerns fully support our intention to take matters to the Parliament.
- Currently collecting signatures for a petition to the Cabinet Secretary for Health, Wellbeing & Cities Strategy online at <http://www.change.org/petitions/cabinet-secretary-for-health-improvethe-provision-of-ambulance-services-in-the-dalbeattie-area> and in local shops, which have gained almost 300 signatures in all, in some 2 weeks.

Petition background information

On Monday April 9th, we waited 45 minutes for an ambulance to attend after calling 999 for our 89 year old neighbour who had fallen in her bathroom and was trapped behind the door, making it impossible to gauge the extent of any injuries. The police attending the incident (to help gain entry to the bathroom) shared our concern at the length of time the ambulance took to arrive.

When we began to raise concerns about this, we became aware of numerous accounts of serious delays in the arrival of emergency ambulances in response to 999 calls made in and around the Dalbeattie area, due to the shortage of vehicles and crew within the district. In one of the most serious incidents,

over the Summer of 2011, a gentleman died at Colvend Golf Course after waiting 1 hour and 20 minutes for an ambulance to arrive.

Other accounts include a wait of 2 hours following a fall in the street, and an elderly lady waiting 1½ hours while bleeding from her stomach.

There are currently only two ambulances stationed within the Stewartry district (one in Castle Douglas, one in Gatehouse of Fleet), which covers a very large area, and includes a large section of the A75 (one of the busiest roads in Southern Scotland). When these units are already attending a call or, as was the case when we rang for help, 'off the road' for any reason, we are dependent on crews from Dumfries or even Newton Stewart attending, which would find it impossible to meet a target time of 8 minutes to reach most of the district. A scheme to establish volunteer First Responders in the area was proposed by the ambulance service some years ago, but those expressing an interest in the role were never followed up.

There has been pressure to station an ambulance at Dalbeattie for several years now. As the largest town in the district, with over 4000 residents (swelling considerably over the Summer months due to a number of holiday parks in the area) this would appear a reasonable step towards solving the problem, though possibly not the only option. It is certainly crucial to the health and well-being of local residents and visitors that improvements are urgently made to the level of service provided, ensuring that we can rely on an ambulance arriving on the scene within the government's target response time of between 14 and 21 minutes for 95% of all emergency calls, depending on location/population density.

Emergency and Urgent Response To Remote and Rural Communities
Strategic Options Framework, October 2009

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/193400/0093097.pdf>

Unique web address

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/GettingInvolved/Petitions/PE01432>

Related information for petition

Do you wish your petition to be hosted on the Parliament's website to collect signatures online?

NO

How many signatures have you collected so far?

2

Closing date for collecting signatures online

N/A

Comments to stimulate online discussion

