AUTUMN 2025 | ISSUE 8

FORDINGBRIDGE SURGERY NEWS

The Fordingbridge Surgery Newsletter - Autumn 2025

Working in partnership with all our patients, providing high quality care in a professional, safe and friendly manner



WE'RE EXCITED TO SHARE SOME GREAT NEWS AND UPDATES WITH YOU IN THIS AUTUMN EDITION OF OUR NEWSLETTER!



On Wednesday, 1st October, we were delighted to officially open our brand-new **POD Room** a quiet, confidential space in the main waiting area where patients can check their blood pressure and complete health questionnaires using our new POD machine.

This fantastic addition was made possible thanks to the incredible generosity of our patients, a successful grant application by our **Friends of Fordingbridge Surgery PPG Trustees**, and the support of the **Town Council**. We are deeply grateful to everyone who contributed, this really is a community achievement. You can read more about the POD Room on page 2.

Looking ahead, we're preparing to welcome many of our eligible patients to our '**flu vaccination clinics on Saturday 4th October and Saturday 18th October**. These clinics are always a highlight in our calendar, an opportunity to support our community's health in a friendly and efficient way. Thanks to our fantastic team of nurses, healthcare professionals, receptionists, administrative staff, and our much-valued volunteers, we're confident the clinic will run smoothly with minimal waiting times. **If you've not yet booked your 'flu appointment,** please contact the surgery and the receptionists will be happy to make an appointment for you.

Why choose to have your 'flu jab with us?

✓ **Instant health record updates** – your vaccination is recorded straight away, so your GP team has the most up-to-date information.

✓ **Personalised care** – our clinicians know you and your medical history.

✓ **Holistic health support** – we can offer blood pressure checks, medication reviews, and other vaccines if needed.

✓ **Convenient & safe** – all in your local, trusted surgery environment.

✓ **Support your surgery** – by choosing us, you're helping to keep local services running for everyone.

We hope you enjoy reading this edition of the newsletter. As always, we welcome your thoughts and suggestions – your feedback helps us improve and serve you better.

from Practice Manager, Michelle Raymond

Fordingbridge Surgery POD Room Launch & Healthy Hearts Campaign ❤️💙

We're excited to announce the official launch of our brand-new POD Room, a quiet, confidential space within the surgery where patients can check their blood pressure and complete health questionnaires using our new POD machine.

The launch event was a great success, with over 30 guests from across our local community in attendance. We were honoured to welcome:

- Trustees from Friends of Fordingbridge Surgery Patient Participation Group (FOFS PPG)
- Local dignitaries including Councillors David Millar, Phil Woods and Town Mayor Pete White
- Our amazing volunteers, including those from our bereavement service
- Doctors and staff from the surgery including Dr Phil Downes, Dr Toby Wallis, Practice Manager Michelle Raymond and members of our management team
- And Penny Skypala from Avon Valley Primary Care Network (AVPCN)

We are hugely grateful to our FOFS PPG trustees who applied to the Fordingbridge Town Council for funding and extend our thanks to the Fordingbridge Town Council for awarding FOFS PPG a generous £12,000 Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) grant. We also thank our incredible patients whose kind donations during FOFS PPG fundraising events and 'flu clinics have helped make this POD Room a reality.

After heartfelt speeches from Jane Marlow (FOFS PPG Chair) and Dr Downes, the POD Room was officially opened by Councillor David Millar. During the event, Dr Wallis proudly launched our new Healthy Hearts Campaign, encouraging patients to take control of their heart health by regularly checking their blood pressure.

The POD machine is easy to use and provides a private, accessible way to monitor your health. It also offers a confidential space for patients who would like to speak to a receptionist or dispenser in private.

POD Room appointments will be available to book online soon, more details to follow. If you need any help using the machine, our friendly reception team will be happy to assist you.

We look forward to welcoming you to this new space designed to support your health and wellbeing! ❤️💙





Fordingbridge Surgery POD Room Launch & Healthy Hearts Campaign ❤️💙



The Fordingbridge Surgery

JOIN THE FORDINGBRIDGE HEALTHY HEARTS PROGRAMME

Take control of your blood pressure and protect your future

Why it Matters

Every 5 minutes, someone in the UK has a stroke or heart attack – and in half of those cases, the cause is high blood pressure.

It's often silent. But it's **easy to check** – and we can help you act early to stay well.

Our Mission

We're launching Fordingbridge Healthy Hearts to:

- Prevent strokes and heart attacks
- Help you manage your blood pressure
- Support healthier lifestyles
- Spot problems earlier, and act faster

Quick Facts

- 1 in 3 adults in the UK has high blood pressure
- 6 million people don't even know they have it
- High blood pressure costs the NHS £2.1 billion each year
- We're already supporting 3,000 local patients with high blood pressure or heart risks

NHS Health Checks

Your Free 5-Year Heart MOT

If you're aged 40–74, you're entitled to a free NHS Health Check every 5 years.

This check assesses your risk of:

- Heart disease
- Stroke
- Type 2 diabetes
- Kidney disease

Have you had yours?

See your NHS Health Check history in the NHS App

Just log in and go to 'View your GP health record' to see past health checks and test results.

Not sure? Ask our reception team – we'll be happy to help.

Let's Do This Together

Checking your blood pressure is simple, fast, and life-saving. We're here to support you every step of the way. Let's keep Fordingbridge hearts healthy.

Know your numbers | Take control | Live healthier | Live longer

Fordingbridge Surgery POD Room Launch & Healthy Hearts Campaign ❤️💙

If you know you need to monitor your blood pressure

If you already know you have high blood pressure or a condition that requires good blood pressure control, like diabetes or heart disease, we have an Annual Recall Programme

How the Programme Works

Starting in April, we'll ask every patient with a history of high blood pressure or a condition that requires blood pressure monitoring to share up-to-date blood pressure readings each year.

If you haven't sent us a blood pressure reading in the past year, we will:

- Email or text you with a reminder
- Follow up after 4 weeks
- Phone you if needed
- If you don't respond we'll assume you decline care and will not contact you again for a year

When you've submitted your readings we will contact you if your readings are too high – prioritising those with the highest readings.

Help us to help you

- Send your blood pressure readings in once every year if you know it's due (check the NHS app)- no need to wait to be called
- Keep your contact details up to date
- Respond promptly when asked

This helps us monitor 3,000+ patients efficiently and means that our team can better help all our patients.

Check your blood pressure annually

You can check your BP:

- At home with a personal monitor (most accurate!)
- On the Health Pod in the surgery waiting room
- At your local pharmacy

Need help choosing a monitor?
See the British Heart Foundation's guide.

Submit your readings

You can submit your blood pressures:

- Through our simple online form fordingbridgegps.co.uk/bpmonitoringform
- Drop in your readings to reception

Know your numbers

Safe Blood Pressure levels:

Age Group	Home Reading	Clinic Reading
Under 60	Below 135/85	Below 140/90
80 or over	Below 145/85	Below 150/90

If your readings are regularly above these levels please **contact us**

Make Healthy Changes That Count

You can lower your blood pressure by:

- Eating less salt
- Exercising regularly
- Losing excess weight

Explore tips and support:

- Blood pressure tips – BHF
- Weight support – Hampshire Gloji

Know your numbers | Take control | Live healthier | Live longer

MEDICAL NEWS

FOCUS ON LUNG HEALTH CHECKS

Lung Cancer Screening

Fordingbridge Surgery is participating in the national lung health check program offered by University Hospital Southampton.

These checks are available to individuals aged 55 to 74 who are current smokers, used to smoke and have smoked more than 100 cigarettes in their lifetime.
Lung cancer screenings are being offered to support with the early detection and treatment of lung cancer.



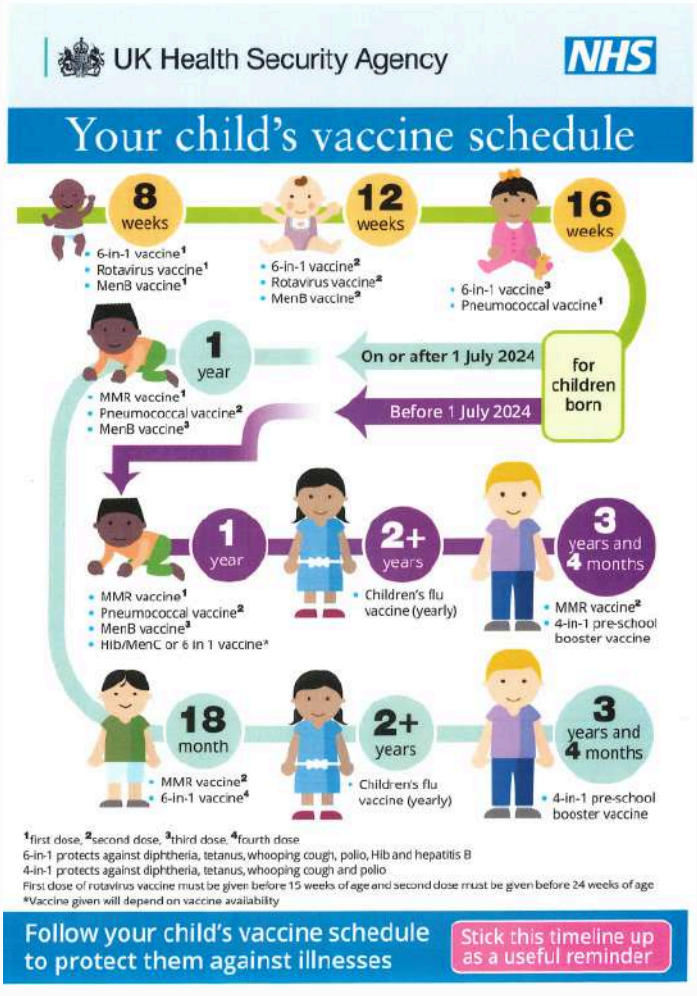
Over the coming months, Southampton will be writing to individuals aged between 55 to 74 to invite them to take part in the screening.

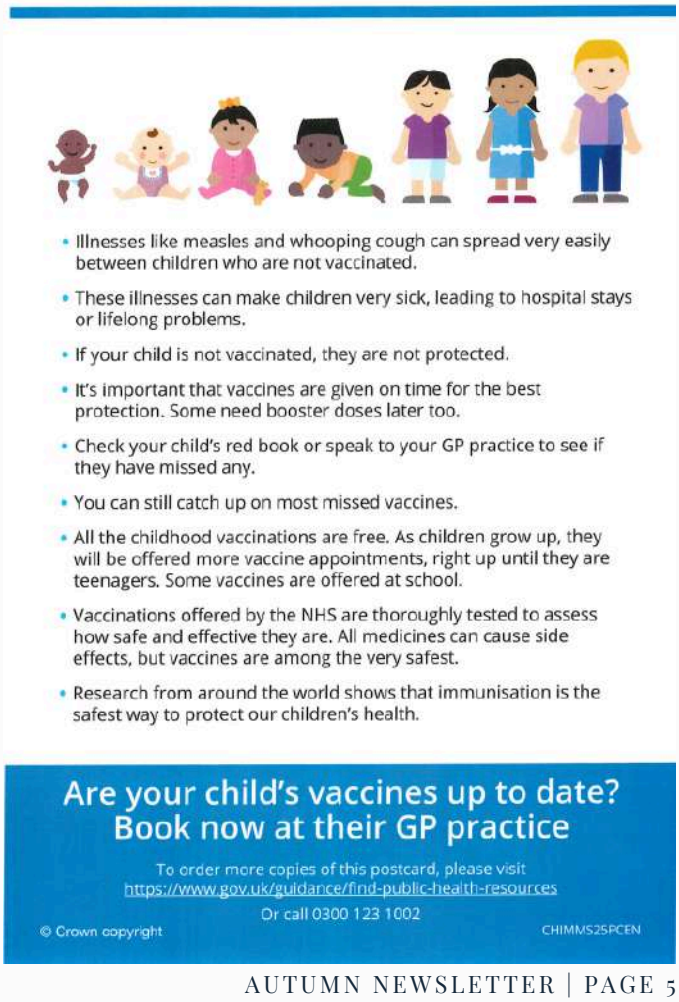
The program aims to identify potential lung issues, including lung cancer early even if individuals feel healthy

Please keep an eye out for your invitation. This will probably arrive as a letter in the post, and it will include information about who you can contact for further questions.

To self-refer yourself for this service please Call UHS on 023 8120 8883
or visit
https://www.uhs.nhs.uk/departments/blood-heart-and-circulation/lung-screening

2025 Childhood immunisation schedule changes







THINK PHARMACY FIRST!



FORDINGBRIDGE SURGERY IS A RESEARCH PRACTICE!

What is a Research Practice?

Fordingbridge Surgery is involved in health research and from time to time you may be approached to take part. Taking part in research is voluntary: you can freely accept or decline, and this will not affect the care that you receive in any way. Even if you agree to take part, you can still withdraw at any time, without having to provide justification. Withdrawing from a study will NOT affect the care we provide for you.

All research projects carried out at Fordingbridge Surgery have been thoroughly checked and approved by the relevant health authorities & ethical committees ensuring it is appropriate and safe to perform. You will always receive clear information about what taking part in a research study would involve and will have the opportunity to ask questions and obtain further details about a study. All projects are fully compliant with all UK laws (including GDPR).

- You may receive a text message, NHS App notification, email or a letter in the post offering you the opportunity to take part in a study (the letter will include some information about the project).
- Your doctor or nurse may also discuss research opportunities during your usual appointment.
- You may also be approached by a member of the study team in the waiting area; be assured that this person and their activity will have been approved by the practice.

What you will be asked to do as part of the research will vary from study to study. The Patient Information Sheet for each project will detail what is expected of you. The study team is also there to answer all questions you may have.

More information is available on our website.
https://www.fordingbridgegps.co.uk/infopage/67ebc511511e0d5dc14b6218



Why does the receptionist need to ask what's wrong with me?



It is not a case of the receptionist being nosey!

The reception staff are valuable members of the practice team and it has been agreed they should ask patients 'why they need to be seen'.
Reception staff are trained to ask particular questions in order to ensure that you receive:

- The most appropriate medical care
- From the most appropriate health professional
- At the most appropriate time

Receptionists are asked to collect brief information from patients:

- To help doctors prioritise patients' needs
- To ensure all patients receive the appropriate level of care
- To direct patients to see the nurse or other health professional rather than a doctor where appropriate

Reception staff, like all members of the team, are bound by confidentiality rules:

- Any information given by you is treated strictly confidentially
- The practice would take any breach of confidentiality very seriously and deal with accordingly
- You can ask to speak to a receptionist in private away from reception

However if you feel an issue is very private and do not wish to say what this is then this will be respected.

Thank you for your support

IMPORTANT REMINDER: FORDINGBRIDGE SURGERY DOES NOT OFFER A WALK-IN SERVICE



At Fordingbridge Surgery, we do not operate a walk-in clinic. Instead, all appointment requests are carefully triaged by our dedicated team of senior doctors to ensure that you receive the most appropriate care for your needs.

anima

How to Request an Appointment: The best way to request an appointment is by fully completing an Anima request for your medical issue. Anima helps us by providing valuable information for our senior doctors to assess your condition accurately. It also offers safety-net advice and guidance on what to do if your symptoms worsen. By using Anima, we can triage your request efficiently, ensuring you receive timely care based on your clinical needs. This process also helps us arrange any necessary tests before your appointment, making the most effective use of the resources available to us.

Accessing the Right Clinician: Sometimes, the best clinician for your issue may not be a doctor. Depending on your symptoms, we may offer you an appointment with other healthcare professionals, such as pharmacists, First Contact Physiotherapists, or other specialists. In some cases, we may be able to refer you directly to support services such as Pharmacy First, Eyecare, or Audiology—without needing to see a doctor first. You can find the full range of self-referral services available on our website: https://www.fordingbridgegps.co.uk/selfreferrals

Urgent Care: For urgent medical issues, the surgery provides an Urgent Care Service. Our experienced clinicians will contact you by phone to assess the priority of your condition and guide you through the next steps. If needed, we may refer you to an alternative provider or back to your hospital provider for post-operative care.

Remember: All appointment requests are triaged. Please do not come to the surgery without an appointment, as we cannot offer a walk-in service. We are committed to offering you the right care at the right time, and our triage process ensures you see the most appropriate professional for your healthcare needs. Thank you for your understanding and cooperation!

STAFF NEWS: INTRODUCING OUR NEW NURSE ASSOCIATE

Over the past two years, I've been training with Solent University to become a Registered Nurse Associate. This journey has involved a mix of academic study, practical placements, coursework, and exams. While it's certainly been challenging at times, it's also been incredibly rewarding. I'm truly grateful for the opportunity and the support I've received throughout.

As part of my training, I stepped away from my usual role at Fordingbridge Surgery to complete four, three-month placements in a variety of healthcare settings. These included community care, nursing homes, end-of-life care, acute hospital wards, and both primary and secondary care environments. Each placement gave me valuable insights and helped me develop a wide range of clinical skills.
Now that I've completed my training and qualified, I'm excited to return to Primary Care and begin this next chapter as a Nurse Associate. You might spot me in a new uniform, this reflects my new role and responsibilities.

What is a Nurse Associate?

A Nurse Associate is a registered healthcare professional who works alongside nurses, doctors, and other members of the healthcare team to provide care and support to patients. The role was introduced by the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) in 2018 to bridge the gap between Healthcare Assistants and Registered Nurses.

What does this mean for you?

For our patients, this means another skilled and knowledgeable member of the team is available to support your care. As a Nurse Associate, I bring both hands-on experience and formal academic training, helping us to deliver high-quality, compassionate, and consistent care. This also allows for more flexibility within the team, which ultimately benefits everyone.

Thank you again for all your encouragement and support during my training. I'm looking forward to continuing to care for you in my new role.

Isla Wilson, Registered Nurse Associate

Practice Manager Michelle congratulates Isla on behalf of the entire team:
The whole practice team extends our heartfelt congratulations to Isla! She has worked tirelessly to achieve the role of Nurse Associate, and this achievement is truly well deserved. We are all incredibly proud of her and look forward to seeing her continue to grow and excel in her career.



MEET YOUR ADVANCED NURSE PRACTITIONERS (ANPS)



Did you know that at Fordingbridge Surgery we have a dedicated team of Advanced Nurse Practitioners (ANPs) working alongside our GPs to ensure you receive timely, high-quality care?

ANPs are highly experienced nurses who have completed advanced training up to Master's level. Their qualifications include additional clinical skills such as prescribing medication, as well as advanced assessment, diagnosis, and treatment of both adults and children.

Whether you're dealing with an acute illness or a long-term condition, ANPs are fully equipped to provide expert care and support.

We're proud to have three ANPs as part of our clinical team. Each brings a unique and complementary set of skills, and together they form a vital part of our Urgent Care Service, seeing patients with the most immediate health concerns.

In addition to providing hands-on care, our ANPs are also actively involved in training the next generation of healthcare professionals, including junior doctors, student nurses, and other clinical staff. Their work helps ensure that everyone in our practice continues to deliver care that meets the highest standards.

ANPs are regulated by the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) and are committed to ongoing professional development to maintain and update their clinical skills.

So, the next time you have an urgent health concern, you may well be seen by one of our expert ANPs, rest assured, you're in safe hands.

Helen, Ali and Kirsten
Advanced Nurse Practitioners

AUTUMN NEWS

PARK RUN

Join Us at the New Fordingbridge Recreation Ground parkrun!

As a proud Parkrun practice affiliated with Moors Valley parkrun, we're excited to now also support the brand-new **Fordingbridge Recreation Ground parkrun!**

Fordingbridge Recreation Ground parkrun is a free, friendly, and fun weekly 5K event open to everyone in the community. Whether you want to walk, jog, run, volunteer, or simply cheer from the sidelines, there's a place for you. No pressure, no entry fee, just a chance to get active and connect with others.

Since launching earlier this year, Fordingbridge parkrun has welcomed locals and visitors alike, with many sharing how much they've enjoyed the experience and the warm community spirit.

Practice Manager Michelle, an enthusiastic runner, recently brought along her 81-year-old mum, Patricia, to her very first parkrun. Together with a friend, they took it at a gentle pace, enjoying a parkwalk rather than a run. Patricia loved the chance to boost her activity, improve her fitness, and meet new people in a friendly, supportive environment.



Whether you're an experienced runner or just starting out, Fordingbridge parkrun offers something for everyone. Why not come along this Saturday and see for yourself? The event runs every Saturday morning starting promptly at 9am at Fordingbridge Recreational Ground. Come and be part of a community that moves together, one step at a time!

https://www.parkrun.org.uk/

Can you help?

Two Bridges are recruiting for additional coordinators and drivers, just a few hours would really help our older or less mobile patients attend appointments.



BLISTER PACK RECYCLING SCHEME

The blister pack recycling initiative, a collaboration between the Friends of Fordingbridge Surgery Patient Participation Group (FOFS PPG) and Fordingbridge Greener Living group, is going from strength to strength!



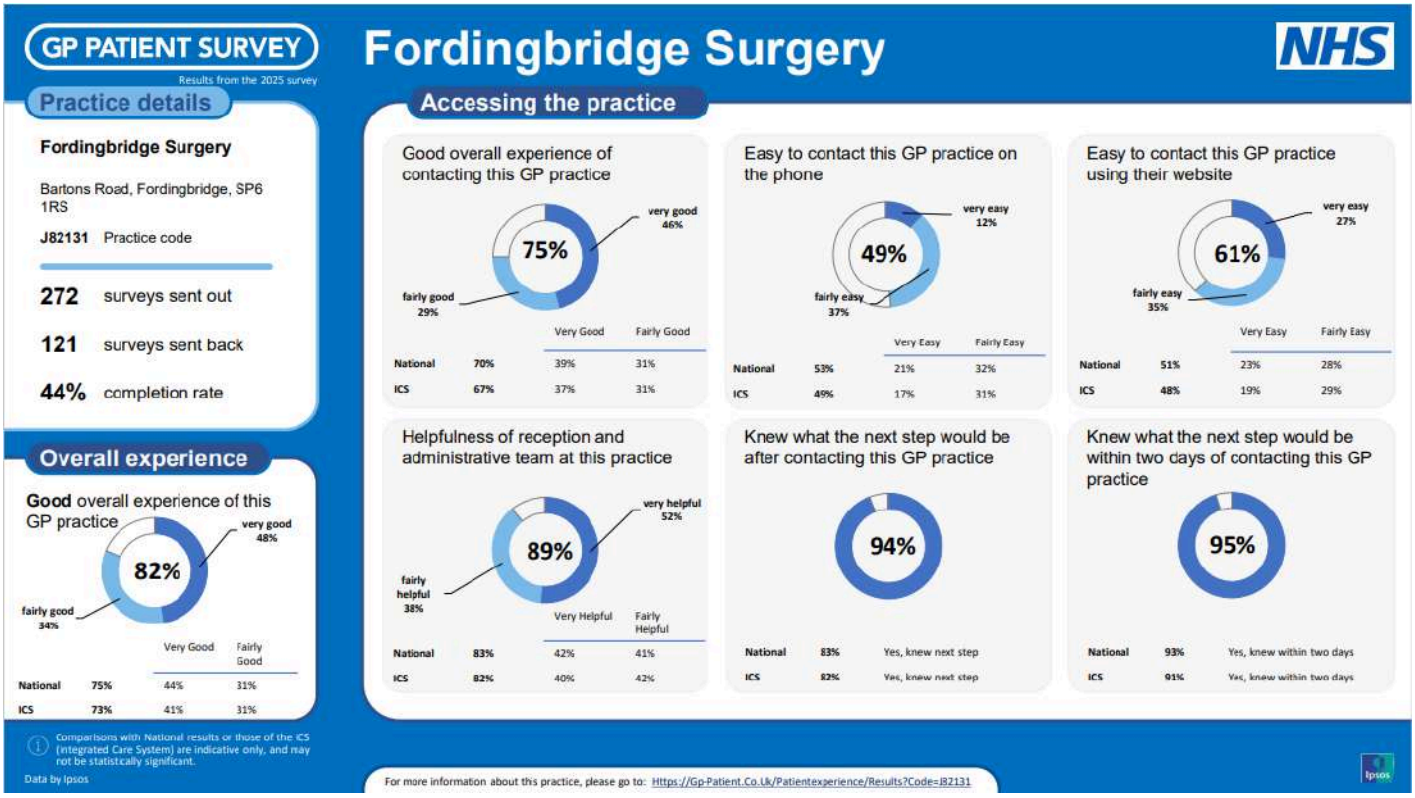
A small group of regular volunteers gather the packs for recycling at each collection event. We are pleased to welcome increasing numbers of recyclers each month, some who bring collections from other community groups. September was our highest ever collection of around 5100 blister packs.

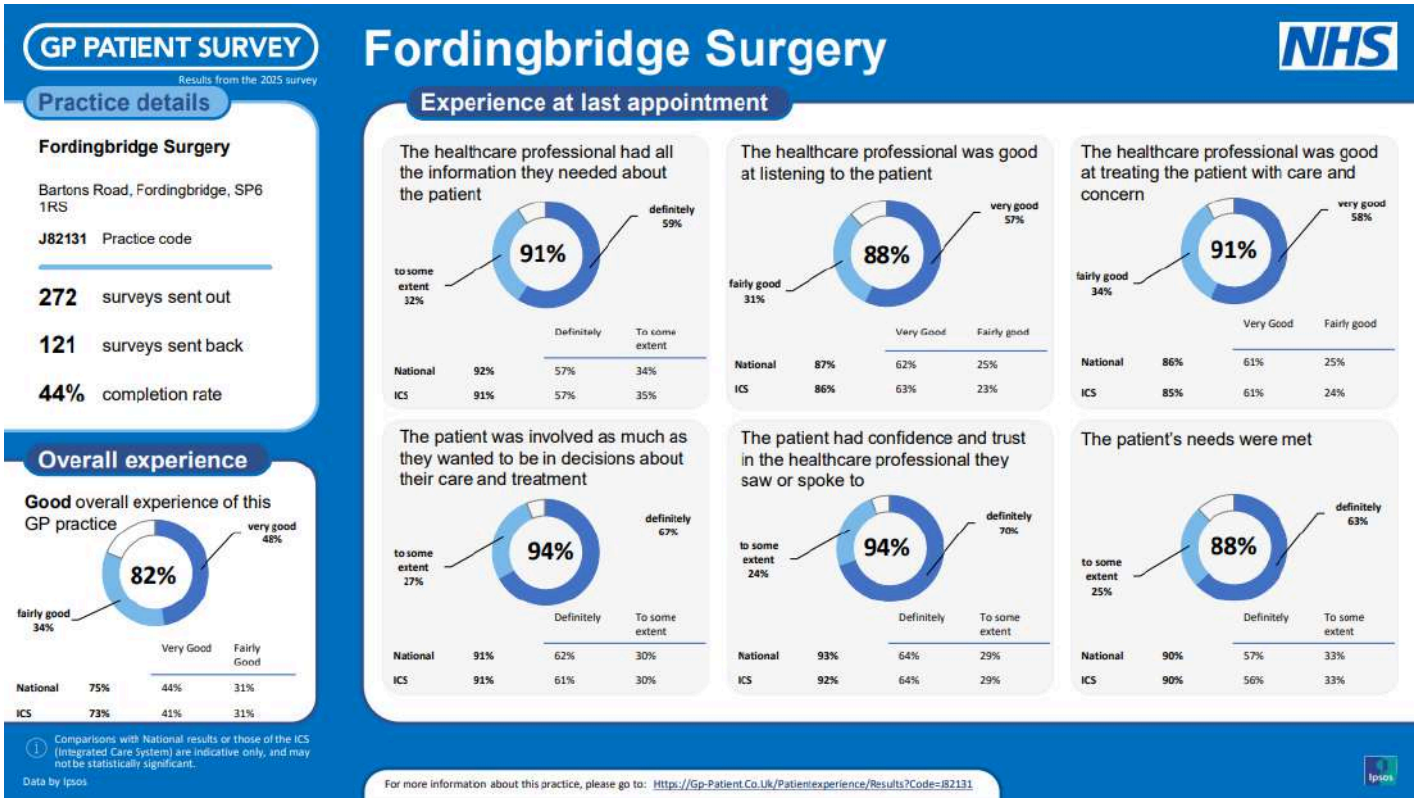
Our first two full boxes were collected in June and sent for recycling with Mygroup, and we are soon to send off two more. In total we have now collected in excess of 22,000 packs!

As we increase in popularity, we would welcome additional volunteers - if you would like to find out more, please come along and have a chat with us at one of our collection events.
Upcoming dates are advertised on the back of the newsletter 💚

GP PATIENT SURVEY

Recently, some of our patients were invited to provide feedback after their GP appointment. The GP Patient Survey is an independent survey run by Ipsos on behalf of NHS England. The survey is sent out to over two million people registered with GP practices in England. The results show how people feel about their GP practice.





FRIENDS OF FORDINGBRIDGE SURGERY - PATIENT PARTICIPATION GROUP CHAIRMAN'S NEWSLETTER SEPTEMBER 2025

Dear Friends,

As I look out of the window today, it's clear that summer has made a quiet exit. The leaves are beginning to turn, and many trees are already heavy with berries, a sure sign that autumn is upon us. Since our Spring Newsletter, the Friends have been busy supporting the surgery and our local community. Here's an update on what we've been up to:

Annual General Meeting – 23rd April 2025

Our AGM was held at the surgery, where I presented a summary of our annual report and accounts via a short slideshow. This year we said goodbye to Trustee John Whitmell, who has retired from the committee. Our sincere thanks go to John for his dedication and contributions over the past two years. We were pleased to welcome Cheryl Trestrail as his successor, welcome, Cheryl!

We also enjoyed presentations from three guest speakers:

Penny Skypala – Avon Valley Primary Care Manager
David Millar – Fordingbridge Park Run
Lee McFarland – Musculoskeletal Manager

Their talks were informative and well received, thank you to each of them for their time and insights.

Fundraising & Community Events

Car Boot Sale – 26th April 2025
Our second car boot sale, held in the surgery car park, wasn't quite as busy as last year, but we still raised a respectable £543.38. Thank you to everyone who participated or stopped by to support us!

Town Council Grant – 1st May 2025
We were invited to present a bid at the Town Council Finance meeting for a contribution towards a Pod Room to house the new Health Pod machine. We're thrilled to report that the Town Council awarded us £12,000, funded through the Community Infrastructure Levy. A huge thank you to the council for recognising the value of this project.
The Pod Room will offer a private space for patients using the Health Pod machine, and also for those needing confidential discussions with reception staff. In line with this, Dr Wallis is preparing a new leaflet, 'Healthy Hearts', to coincide with the official launch on 1st October 2025.

VE Day Celebrations – 10th May 2025
Several Trustees attended the VE Day event at the Recreation Ground, making great use of our new gazebo on what turned out to be a gloriously sunny day. The tombola raised £160, and everyone thoroughly enjoyed the afternoon.

Afternoon Tea at Hyde Hall – 21st June 2025
This was a highlight of the summer—perfect weather, a wonderful turnout of old and new friends, and delicious scones (thank you, Alison Rust!). The event raised an amazing £1,356, thanks to generous donations and matched funding. Huge thanks to all who helped make the day such a success.

Frogham Fair – 28th June 2025
Together with Helen from the surgery, Trustees set up our gazebo at Frogham Fair. We held a small treasure hunt to keep things fun and friendly, raising £81, and more importantly, connecting with local residents.

Fundraising & Community Events - Continued

Michaelmas Group – 19th August 2025
I was kindly invited to afternoon tea with the Michaelmas Group at St Mary's Church Hall. It was a lovely time spent chatting and enjoying refreshments, and I was honoured to receive a £100 donation on behalf of FoFS. Thank you to everyone involved.

Horse and Groom Quizzers
A big thank you to Anthony Swift and all the quizzers at the Horse and Groom pub for their generous £500 donation, your support means a great deal to us.

With Gratitude

We are always so grateful to everyone who supports our work, whether through donations, volunteering, or attending our events. Special thanks to those who help at the 'Flu and Covid clinics, and especially to Mel and Sheila, whose efforts helped raise a remarkable £4,528.40. This kind of support enables us to provide the "nice to have" extras that enhance patient care at the surgery.

Upcoming Event

🧠 **Quiz Night**
📍 **St Mary's Church Hall**
🗓️ **Friday 24th October 2025**
🕖 **7:15 for 7:30pm start**
🎟️ **£10 per ticket (includes Ploughman's Supper) Tickets are available via FoFS.PPG@gmail.com**

It's always a fun night, bring your friends and your best general knowledge!

Looking Ahead – 2026

Next year marks a very special milestone, the 25th Anniversary of Friends of Fordingbridge Surgery. We are planning some exciting events to celebrate. Please keep an eye on future newsletters and updates, we'd love for you to be part of it.

Thank you again for your ongoing support.

With best wishes,
Jane Marlow
Chairman, Friends of Fordingbridge Surgery Patient Participation Group



Frogham Fair


Michaelmas Group afternoon tea

FORDINGBRIDGE SURGERY

CHRISTMAS HOURS 2025/2026

Wednesday 24th December 2025 (Christmas Eve)	Normal Hours
Thursday 25th December 2025 (Christmas Day)	CLOSED
Friday 26th December 2025 (BOXING DAY)	CLOSED
Saturday 27th December 2025	CLOSED
Sunday 28th December 2025	CLOSED
Monday 29th December 2025	Normal Hours
Tuesday 30th December 2025	Normal Hours
Wednesday 31st December 2025	Normal Hours
Thursday 1st January 2026 (NEW YEAR'S DAY)	CLOSED
Friday 2nd January 2026 and onwards	Normal Hours

When the surgery is closed and you need urgent medical advice, please call

111 - Out of Hours Service

or

999 – for a life-threatening problem

When dropping off or collecting prescriptions please check the collection dates carefully

PLEASE GIVE THE DISPENSARY AT LEAST FIVE WORKING DAYS WHEN RE-ORDERING MEDICATION
PLEASE DO NOT RUN OUT JUST BEFORE CHRISTMAS or THE NEW YEAR

QUIZ NIGHT

fofs Friends of Fordingbridge Surgery
Supporting with care, compassion and consideration

SAVE THE DATE!

QUIZ

Quiz Evening with Ploughman's Supper
St. Mary's Church Hall,
Fordingbridge, SP6 1BB
Friday 24th October 2025
7.15pm for 7.30pm start
Teams of up to six people
Tickets £10pp
For further information and tickets email:
fofs.ppg@gmail.com

Raising funds to purchase equipment to benefit the patients of Fordingbridge Surgery

FOFS Patron
Mr Ian Newman

fofs.ppg@gmail.com

Registered Charity
Number 1094882

SbPuRT social blister pack recycling team
www.spurt.uk

FORDINGBRIDGE GREENER LIVING

Blister Pack Recycling Scheme

We are pleased to announce the continuing success of our blister pack collection events!

Our next events will be on
Saturday 20th September
Saturday 18th October
Saturday 15th November
NO COLLECTION IN DECEMBER

in Avonway Annexe, from 10am - 12 Noon alongside the Repair Cafe

A reminder that empty, mixed material (plastic and foil) medication blister packs will be accepted, with a donation of £1 per 50 packs. The recycling scheme costs £112 per box for around 5000 packs. Your help is much appreciated.

Repair Café

fofs Friends of Fordingbridge Surgery

THE FORDINGBRIDGE SURGERY

THE FORDINGBRIDGE SURGERY – DR P DOWNES & PARTNERS

TARGET

TIME FOR AUDIT
RESEARCH GOVERNANCE
EDUCATION TRAINING

The surgery will be closed on
Tuesday 18th November 2025
And
Thursday 12th February 2026
from
12:30pm – 6:30pm

Our GPs and Nurses are attending essential training provided by Hampshire and Isle of Wight Integrated Care Board (ICB)

If you are unwell during this time and would like medical advice, please ring the Out of Hours service on **111**.

If you have an emergency, please dial **999**
This surgery will re-open at normal time on

Wednesday 19th November 2025

And

Friday 13th February 2026

THE FORDINGBRIDGE SURGERY