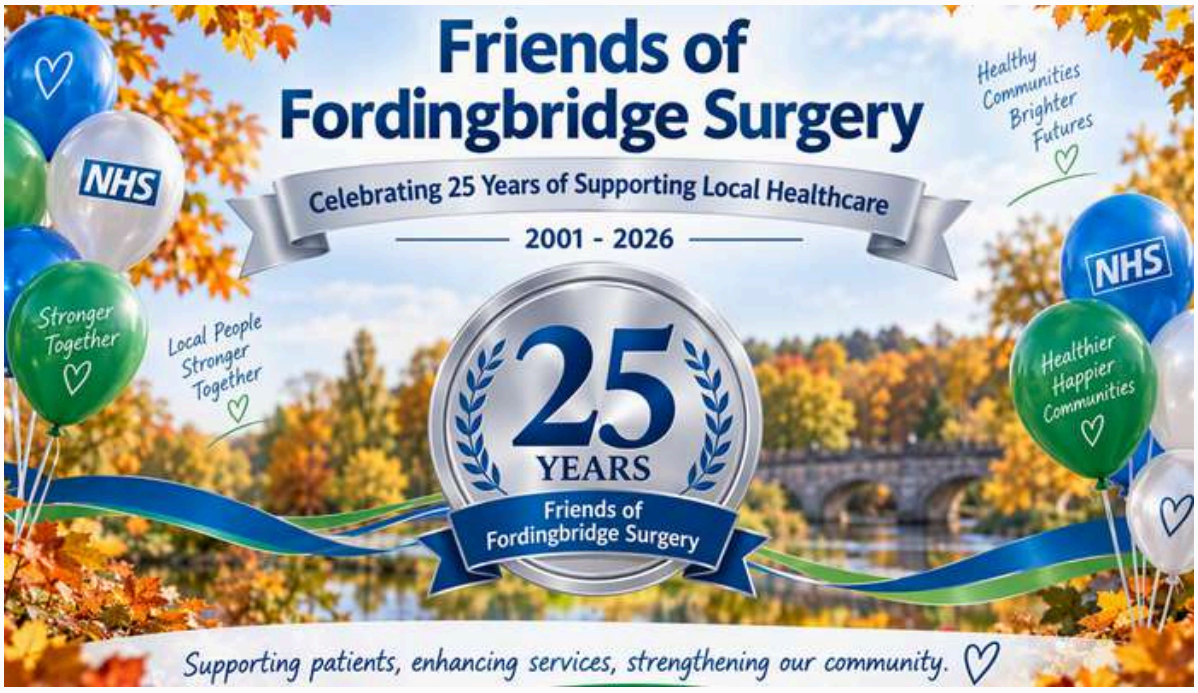
FORDINGBRIDGE SURGERY NEWS

The Fordingbridge Surgery Newsletter - Autumn 2026

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



🌼 Welcome to the Fordingbridge Surgery Autumn Newsletter 2026 🌼

As the seasons change and we head into autumn, we'd like to welcome you to the latest edition of the Fordingbridge Surgery newsletter. This issue is packed with health information, service updates and community news to help you stay well, informed and connected over the coming months.

Inside, you'll find practical advice on preventing falls and staying active as the weather becomes cooler and the days get shorter. We also share important information about vaccinations, including the RSV vaccination programme and the importance of ensuring children are up to date with their MMR vaccinations.

We've included updates on accessing our services, including using the NHS App and Anima, as we continue to look for ways to make it easier for patients to get the care and support they need.

As always, we're proud to highlight the wonderful organisations, charities and volunteers who make such a difference in our local community. In this edition, you'll learn more about the British Red Cross Mobility Aids Service, the newly opened Avon Valley Shed, and we'll celebrate the Friends of Fordingbridge Surgery as they mark an impressive 25 years of supporting patients and helping the practice enhance its services and facilities.

We hope you find something of interest in these pages and that the information provided helps you and your family stay healthy and well throughout the autumn season. Thank you for your continued support and for being part of our practice community.

from Practice Manager, Michelle Raymond

AVON VALLEY PCN PRO ACTIVE CARE TEAM



Stay Steady This Autumn - Simple Steps to Prevent Falls

Why are falls more common in autumn?

Wet pavements, fallen leaves, darker evenings, and carrying shopping can make slips and trips more likely. Falls are not an inevitable part of ageing, and many can be prevented with a few simple precautions. Based on NHS falls-prevention guidance, maintaining strength, checking your surroundings, and addressing health concerns can reduce your risk.



Top Tips for Staying Safe

👟 Wear Safe Footwear

- Choose shoes with a low heel and good grip
- Avoid worn soles, loose slippers, and walking in socks
- Make sure footwear fits properly

🍂 Take Care on Wet Leaves and Pavements

- Walk slowly on slippery surfaces
- Use handrails where available
- Allow extra time for journeys, especially after rain



🛍️ Carry Shopping Safely

- Avoid carrying heavy bags
- Spread shopping between two lighter bags
- Consider a shopping trolley or ask for help with larger purchases

💡 Improve Lighting

- Turn lights on earlier as evenings get darker
- Keep stairs, hallways, and entrances well lit
- Use a bedside light at night



💪 Keep Active

Regular activity helps maintain strength, balance, and confidence. Find local classes later in this article.

- Walking
- Strength and balance exercises
- Local exercise classes for older adults



👓 Look After Your Health

- Have regular eye tests
- Ask your GP or pharmacist to review your medications if you feel dizzy or unsteady
- Seek advice if you have had a recent fall

Stay Steady This Autumn - Simple Steps to Prevent Falls Continued

Make Your Home Safer

✓ Remove clutter from floors
✓ Secure loose carpets and rugs
✓ Clean up spills immediately
✓ Avoid trailing cables
✓ Use handrails where needed
✓ Keep frequently used items within easy reach



If You Do Fall

- Stay calm
- Check for injuries before trying to get up
- Use a phone or personal alarm if available
- Call 999 if you suspect a serious injury or cannot get up safely

Need Advice? Speak to your GP practice if:

- You have fallen recently
- You feel unsteady on your feet
- You are worried about your balance

Find more local advice below:

Live Longer Better | Health and social care | Hampshire County Council
https://www.hants.gov.uk/socialcareandhealth/publichealth/livelongerbetter

Stay Steady | Health and social care | Hampshire County Council
https://www.hants.gov.uk/socialcareandhealth/publichealth/livelongerbetter/staysteady

Local class information

Steady and Strong Class:
Avonway Community Centre, Fordingbridge
Monday 10am - 10.45am and 11am - 11.45pm
Cost £5.00
Call Annie Mitchell 01425 655031 to book

Better Balance Class:
Avonway Community Centre, Fordingbridge
Thursday 11am - 12pm and 1pm – 2pm
Cost £6 per class
Call Julie 07896 994647 to book

Chair exercise Class:
Alderholt Village Hall
6 and 12 week program Monday 10.30am – 12pm
First class free, then £10 per session.
Includes tea and biscuits afterwards
Call 07344 279648 to book

Stay active. Stay confident. Stay steady this autumn. 🍁

Your Proactive Care Team - Jaqui, Nikki, Lorna and Sam

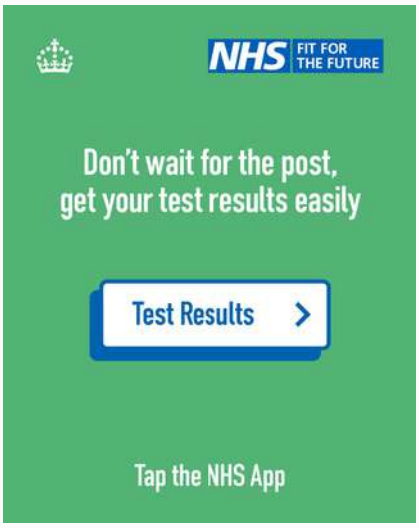
Adapted from NHS falls-prevention guidance and NHS Trust patient information resources.

DOWNLOAD THE NHS APP!

You can do more with the NHS App than you realise - Discover what else you can do today, and remember to turn on notifications to receive your messages.







Tap the NHS App

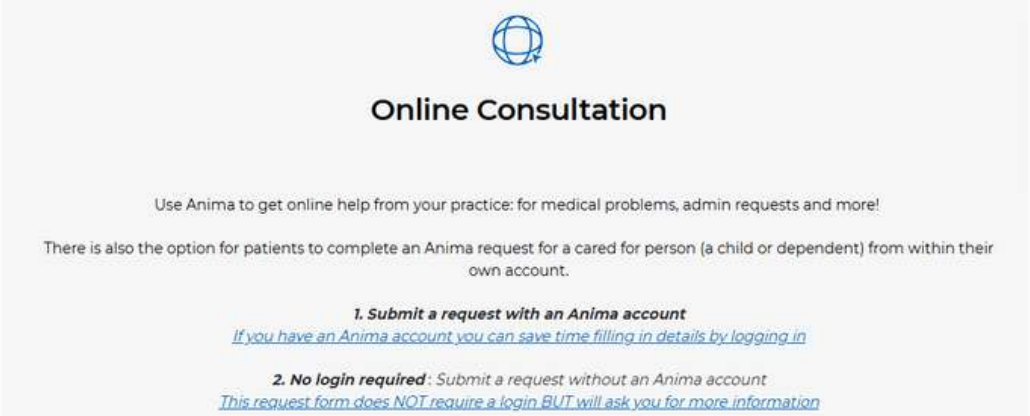
ANIMA Update

anima

Access Anima direct from the Fordingbridge Surgery website www.fordingbridgegps.co.uk



Our online consultation service. Anima , now has an option to **submit a request without logging in.** Submitting a request with an Anima account is quicker, but we understand there are occasions when a request needs to be sent without using an account. Using the No Login required option will ask you for more information, but does not require an Anima account.



Fordingbridge Red Cross Mobility Aids Service

Helping You Stay Independent

Our local, volunteer-led Mobility Aids Service provides short-term loans of essential equipment to support people recovering from illness, injury, surgery, or anyone who may benefit from additional mobility support.

Equipment available includes wheelchairs, walking frames, toilet frames, commodes, and many other items designed to help maintain independence and improve daily living.

There is no charge for the use of our equipment. As a charitable service, however, we rely entirely on donations to continue helping local people. Any contribution, large or small, is greatly appreciated, and wherever possible we encourage Gift Aid donations to help us make an even bigger difference in our community.

Volunteers Always Welcome

We are a small but dedicated team, and our opening hours are limited. We are always looking for enthusiastic volunteers to join us. If you would like to get involved or learn more about volunteering with the British Red Cross, visit https://www.redcross.org.uk/get-involved/volunteer or speak to one of our team members.

Ordering and Returning Equipment

Equipment required from our Eastleigh headquarters is delivered on Tuesdays. To ensure items can be ordered and delivered promptly, requests should be made by Monday morning where possible.

Demand for our equipment is often high, and supplies are limited. We kindly ask that equipment is returned as soon as it is no longer needed so that it can be made available to others in our community. By working together with kindness, openness and honesty, we can help as many people as possible.



Where to Find Us

Red Cross Mobility Aids Centre
Red Cross Portakabin
The Drill Hall
25 Bartons Road
Fordingbridge
SP6 1JD

Opening Hours

- Monday, Tuesday and Thursday: 10.00am to 1.00pm
- Wednesday and Friday: 10.00am to 4.00pm

Telephone: 01425 653273

Feel free to drop in and speak to us. We are always happy to help and answer any questions about our services.

For urgent matters outside local opening hours, an emergency contact number is displayed in the centre window. Support is also available through the Eastleigh office, which operates Monday to Friday, 10.00am to 4.00pm. Emergency contact: 02380 624644.

Community News

Two Bridges celebrates its longest serving team member!

Two Bridges has been on a recruitment campaign for more drivers and coordinators by attending local village fetes (Two Bridges transports people to medical appointments from the Fordingbridge area.)

During the Frogham Fair, Two Bridges celebrated the longest serving member of its team, Derek Ayling. As a complete surprise, Derek was presented with a card and box of wine to thank him for his contribution to the success of the local organisation. Derek has been a volunteer with Two Bridges for 15 years, and has taken many roles in his time with the organisation, he has been a driver, a coordinator, the PR officer, Chairman, Vice-Chairman and a Committee member. He has recently stepped down from being a coordinator, but continues to serve as Vice Chairman on the Committee.

Derek says 'Two Bridges provides a valuable service to the community, and it is hugely satisfying ensuring that clients can have a reliable, friendly service to help them get to their medical appointments. I enjoy being part of this team and will continue to help in any way I can!'

On behalf of the Committee, Ray Bowler is seen thanking Derek and presenting him with a card and gift in the pictures. Thank you, Derek!

Two Bridges continues to actively recruit drivers and coordinators and welcomes enquiries on 07391 804222.



Ray Bowler presenting the award



Derek with his wine!

Community News

Avon Valley Shed Opens Its New Community Hub

We are pleased to share news of the recently opened **Fordingbridge Avon Valley Shed**, a welcoming community group that aims to bring people together, reduce social isolation, and provide opportunities to learn new skills, share interests, and make new friends.

Following months of planning, fundraising, and hard work from volunteers and supporters, the group's new premises at the Recreation Ground in Fordingbridge are now open. The official opening was celebrated with members, local organisations, and community representatives coming together to mark this important milestone.

The Avon Valley Shed offers a range of activities and interest groups, including:

- Music
- Photography
- Genealogy and family history
- Computers and technology
- Electrical projects
- Community engagement activities

With nearly 40 members already involved, the group provides a friendly and supportive environment where people can meet others, develop new interests, and stay connected within the local community. Initiatives such as these can play an important role in supporting wellbeing, helping to combat loneliness, and encouraging people to remain active and engaged.

The Avon Valley Shed welcomes new members and visitors. If you would like to find out more, why not pop along on a Wednesday morning at 9.30am at the Recreation Ground, Fordingbridge Sports Club, beside the river?

For further information about the Avon Valley Shed please contact Derek Ayling directly on 07798 555511 or by email DaddyDelboy44@BTInternet.com

Community groups such as the Avon Valley Shed provide valuable opportunities for friendship, support and social connection, and we are delighted to share details of this local resource with our patients and the wider community.



RSV VACCINE

What is RSV?
Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) is an infectious disease of the airways and lungs.
RSV infection often causes symptoms similar to a cold, including cough, sore throat, sneezing and runny or blocked nose. It can also make you become wheezy or short of breath and lead to pneumonia and other life threatening conditions.

There is no specific treatment, and most infections will get better by themselves. Every year thousands of older adults need hospital care for RSV, and some of them will die.

RSV can be more severe in people with medical conditions such as heart or lung disease or a weakened immune system.

RSV infection is common in young children but is most serious for small babies and for older people.

There are very few individuals who cannot receive an indicated RSV vaccine or immunisation. RSV vaccines should not be given to anyone who has had a confirmed anaphylactic reaction to a previous dose of an RSV vaccine, or any of the excipients in the RSV vaccine.



MMR/MMRV VACCINE

NHS England urges those children aged 1-11 years, unprotected against measles, to come forward for their vaccinations.

Around a million families are being urged to protect their children against the spread of measles and other potentially deadly childhood illnesses, as part of a new NHS vaccination drive from July 2026.

Children aged from **12-months to 11 years** old who have **missed one or both doses** of the vaccine, will be invited as part of the NHS England's campaign which runs until March next year.

In addition to measles, mumps and rubella, children aged under 6 years old will be offered protection against chickenpox (Varicella) with the MMRV vaccine.
Older children will be invited to catch up on missed MMR vaccines.

Contact us via Anima to check if your child has missed any MMR or MMRV vaccines and to request an appointment to catch up.



FRIENDS OF FORDINGBRIDGE SURGERY - PATIENT PARTICIPATION GROUP

CELEBRATING 25 YEARS OF THE FRIENDS OF FORDINGBRIDGE SURGERY

The **Friends of Fordingbridge Surgery** recently marked a very special milestone, celebrating **25 years** of supporting local healthcare and our community.

Speaking at the anniversary dinner, **GP Partner Dr Toby Wallis** thanked the many people who have contributed to the charity's success over the years. He paid tribute to the current Chair, Cheryl, and the committee for organising the celebration and for their continued dedication to the Friends.

Dr Wallis also recognised the leadership and commitment of former Chairs, including Ian Newman, now Patron of the Friends, together with Martin Calver and Jane Marlow, all of whom played an important role in helping the charity grow and flourish. A heartfelt tribute was also paid to Kate Wilson, whose kindness, energy and dedication to both the Friends and the wider community continue to be remembered with great affection.

Over the past 25 years, the Friends have made a remarkable difference to the surgery and its patients. Through fundraising and community support, they have helped provide the re-design and explanation of the patient car park, additional equipment for consulting rooms, medical equipment, staff training and modern digital technology that have enhanced patient care and enabled the practice to expand services locally.

The important contribution of the Friends and local volunteers during the COVID-19 pandemic was also recognised. Dr Wallis gave special thanks to Stephen Darke and the many volunteers who stepped forward to support patients and the practice during an exceptionally challenging time, helping essential services continue safely when they were needed most.

A special mention was also given to Michelle Raymond, one of the founding members of the Friends, in recognition of her vision, commitment and longstanding support of the organisation and the community it serves.

In closing, Dr Wallis thanked every committee member, fundraiser, volunteer and supporter who has played a part in the Friends' journey over the last 25 years. He reflected that the Friends of Fordingbridge Surgery represent the very best of community spirit, bringing people together to support local healthcare and improve the lives of others.

Congratulations and thank you to everyone who has contributed to this wonderful achievement. Here's to the next chapter in the Friends' story.

FRIENDS OF FORDINGBRIDGE SURGERY & PATIENT PARTICIPATION GROUP

CELEBRATING 25 YEARS OF FRIENDS OF FORDINGBRIDGE SURGERY

Friends of Fordingbridge Surgery & Patient Participation Group
Supporting with care, compassion and consideration

This year marked a very special milestone for **Friends of Fordingbridge Surgery Patient Participation Group** (FOFS PPG) as we celebrated our **25th Anniversary**.

To mark the occasion, Trustees, Surgery staff, supporters and friends came together for a celebratory dinner at The Town Hall in Fordingbridge. The evening provided an opportunity not only to look back on what has been achieved over the last quarter of a century, but also to recognise the people whose time, commitment and generosity have enabled FOFS to continue supporting Fordingbridge Surgery and its patients.

One of the highlights of the evening was welcoming Ian Newman, founder of FOFS and our current Patron. It was a pleasure to meet Ian and acknowledge the vision and dedication that helped establish the organisation 25 years ago. What began as an idea to strengthen links between patients and the Surgery has developed into a charity that continues to make a real and lasting difference within our community.

Guests also heard from Dr Toby Wallis, who gave an insightful overview of the challenges facing modern general practice. Over the past 25 years, healthcare has changed enormously, with rising demand, an ageing population, changing patient expectations and advances in technology transforming the way care is delivered. His presentation highlighted the vital role community support organisations such as FOFS continue to play in helping practices enhance local services.

At the heart of FOFS has always been a simple aim: **improving the care and experience of patients registered with Fordingbridge Surgery**. Over the years, the charity has helped fund a wide range of projects and equipment that support both patients and staff. These have included improvements to the waiting room and car park, electronic automatic doors, consulting and treatment room equipment, blood pressure monitors, ECG equipment, telephony improvements and staff training.

More recently, FOFS has supported the development of the Surgery's fully equipped POD room, enabling patients to record measurements such as blood pressure without requiring a face-to-face appointment. The charity continues to identify opportunities where relatively modest investments can have a significant impact on patient care and experience.

Alongside the celebrations, the evening featured several enjoyable fundraising activities. A lively game of Heads and Tails proved popular with guests and raised additional funds for the charity. We were also treated to a fascinating and informative talk by Sally Marsh on the tradition of Commoning in the New Forest, offering a wonderful insight into an important part of our local heritage.





FRIENDS OF FORDINGBRIDGE SURGERY - PATIENT PARTICIPATION GROUP

CELEBRATING 25 YEARS OF FRIENDS OF FORDINGBRIDGE SURGERY CONTINUED





Another highlight of the evening was the **Grand Prize Draw**. Thanks to the dedication of Trustees, Surgery staff and supporters, more than 1,900 tickets were sold. The draw produced 20 prize winners and raised valuable funds that will help FOFS continue supporting future projects and initiatives at the Surgery.

While the evening was a celebration of the past, it was also a reminder of the important role FOFS continues to play today. The charity exists to support patients, enhance services and help the Surgery provide the best possible care for our local community. Whether through fundraising, supporting equipment purchases or strengthening links between patients and the practice, FOFS remains committed to making a positive difference.

On behalf of the Trustees, I would like to thank everyone who made the evening such a success, including The Ship and its team, Dr Toby Wallis, Sally Marsh, all those who donated prizes, our wonderful Surgery staff and fellow Trustees, and everyone who purchased a raffle ticket or supported the event in any way.

Most importantly, thank you to everyone who has supported FOFS over the past 25 years. Reaching this milestone is a testament to the generosity, dedication and community spirit that have underpinned the organisation since its inception. We are proud of what has been achieved and look forward to continuing that work in the years ahead.

Cheryl Trestrail
FOFS PPG Chair







FORDINGBRIDGE SURGERY

CHRISTMAS HOURS 2026/2027

Thursday 24th December 2026 (Christmas Eve)	Normal Hours
Friday 25th December 2026 (CHRISTMAS DAY)	CLOSED
Saturday 26th December 2026 (BOXING DAY)	CLOSED
Sunday 27th December 2026	CLOSED
Monday 28th December 2026	CLOSED
Tuesday 29th December 2026	Normal Hours
Wednesday 30th December 2026	Normal Hours
Thursday 31st December 2026	Normal Hours
Friday 1st January 2027 (NEW YEAR'S DAY)	CLOSED
Monday 4th January 2027 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

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 events!

Our 2026 events will continue on

Saturday 17th October
Saturday 21st November
No collection in December

Our 2027 dates start with

Saturday 16th January 2027
Saturday 20th February 2027
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 100 packs. Your help is much appreciated.

Repair Café

f-o-fs

NHS THE FORDINGBRIDGE SURGERY



TWO BRIDGES

providing transport services for medical appointments

VOLUNTEERS

WE NEED YOU

COORDINATORS WANTED

DRIVERS WANTED

Call: **07391 804222**
E: TwoBridges@fordingbridge.com

AREAS COVERED
ALDERHOLT • DAMERHAM
FORDINGBRIDGE • GODSHILL
MARTIN • SANDLEHEATH