SPRING 2026 | ISSUE 10

FORDINGBRIDGE SURGERY NEWS

The Fordingbridge Surgery Newsletter - Spring 2026

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



Welcome to the Fordingbridge Surgery Spring Newsletter 2026

This spring edition of our newsletter is a particularly special one, as we celebrate the 25th anniversary of Friends of Fordingbridge Surgery (FoFS) — a remarkable milestone for a group that has contributed so much to our practice and our community over the past quarter of a century.

Since its formation, FoFS has played an invaluable role in supporting the surgery, enhancing the patient experience, and funding improvements that make a real difference to patient care. From new equipment and facilities to staff training, wellbeing initiatives and community events, their impact can be seen throughout the surgery. This anniversary year is an opportunity to reflect on those achievements, say thank you to the many volunteers and supporters past and present, and look ahead to the exciting events planned to mark this special year.

Alongside celebrating FoFS, this newsletter is packed with important updates and helpful information. You'll find guidance on national screening programmes, including cervical and bowel cancer screening, updates on our Healthy Hearts initiative and use of the POD room, and news from Avon Valley Primary Care Network, including the launch of the new Proactive Care Service. We're also sharing details of local wellbeing opportunities, upcoming events, and practical information to help you get the most from our services.

We hope you enjoy this spring edition and join us in celebrating 25 years of dedication, partnership and community spirit from Friends of Fordingbridge Surgery. As always, thank you for being part of our surgery community — and we wish you a healthy and happy spring.

from Practice Manager, Michelle Raymond

CERVICAL SCREENING - ARE YOU UP TO DATE?

Cervical screening (also known as a smear test) is a **quick and painless procedure** that could **save your life**—yet national uptake is declining. We want to encourage all eligible women to attend their screening when invited.



Our Nurses

Pictured here are our lovely friendly nurses Susie and Lynne, and our Nurse Associate Isla Wilson. All our nurses are fully trained and highly accomplished cervical screeners with many years of experience, and can offer an appointment personalised to individual needs.

Who is Eligible?

Cervical screening is part of the **national screening programme**, and invitations are sent via a notification in your NHS App or by letter to your home address.

- **Ages 24.5 to 64** – Screening every **5 years**

What to Expect During the Appointment

Your nurse will ask a few simple questions, including:

Are you taking any hormones (e.g., contraception, HRT, thyroxine)?
What was the first day of your last period?
Would you like a **chaperone** (an additional nurse present for support and reassurance)?

The Procedure

You will be given privacy behind a curtain to remove clothing from the lower half of your body.
You'll then **lie down on the exam couch**, and a paper sheet will be provided for dignity.
The nurse will **gently insert a speculum** into your vagina to locate your cervix.
A **small, soft brush** is used to collect a few cells from the cervix.
The nurse will then remove the brush and speculum, and you can get dressed

The whole procedure **only takes a few minutes**.

When Will I Get My Results?

Results are usually **sent by notification in your NHS App or letter within 4 weeks**. If you don't receive yours, please **contact the surgery** so we can follow up with the lab.

If You Feel Nervous About Attending

We understand that some patients find cervical screening difficult or stressful. Here are some ways we can help:

Bring a friend or family member for support.
Listen to music on headphones during the procedure.
Book a longer appointment (40 minutes) so you don't feel rushed.
Arrange a pre-appointment chat with a nurse to discuss your concerns.
Take paracetamol or ibuprofen beforehand to reduce discomfort.
If attending the surgery feels too difficult, we can refer you to Salisbury Hospital, where any abnormalities can be treated immediately if necessary.

If you have any concerns or would like to discuss how we can make the experience easier for you, please get in touch. Our friendly nurses are happy to help!

AVON VALLEY PCN NEWS



NEW FROM APRIL 2026 – PROACTIVE CARE SERVICE

From 1st April 2026 Avon Valley PCN is delighted to announce the launch of our new **Proactive Care Service**, the final part of our future integrated care service for elderly and frail patients. This enhanced primary care service will work alongside existing services such as secondary care, community partners in frailty (urgent/acute care), district nursing teams, adult social services, older persons mental health, voluntary or charitable and community groups.

The principal aim is to join up care in a more **person centred** and **holistic** way, avoiding the duplication that is so often experienced. **Proactive** and **preventative care** forms a critical part of the NHS 10 year long term plan to "left shift" patient care back to the community and create an integrated neighbourhood team. We hope in doing so that unnecessary hospital admission, lengthy stays in hospital and care once discharged, can be coordinated more effectively based on patients' wishes.

You may be aware that your PCN already runs two services to look after this group of patients, in addition to the care already received from your own surgery:

Enhanced Health in Care Homes – any patient resident in one of our aligned Care Homes has a lead GP for continuity of care, receives a weekly Care Home multi-discipline (virtual) ward round, a personalised Care Plan and vaccination programme.

Home Visiting Service – introduced in April 2024, we now have two specialist primary care paramedics who provide an acute on the day home visiting service for urgent (but not life-threatening) conditions. This service is for patients who, if not visited rapidly at home, are at risk of an inappropriate admission to hospital. Doctors now describe this as a service they couldn't manage without, "their eyes and ears" getting a timely report back, so care can be planned appropriately. GPs may still visit patients at home depending on the patient's records and presenting information on the day.

What is the new Proactive Care Service?

The need for a new approach is driven by an ageing population with increasing frailty, complex conditions and rising emergency demand. Hampshire & Isle of Wight's population is ageing, with the 90+ age group expected to increase by 93% by 2043.

AVON VALLEY PCN NEWS



PROACTIVE CARE SERVICE - CONTINUED

The new service has two levels:

Standard Proactive Care – you may previously have had contact from a team of Care Navigators (employed through a third party).

We have now brought "in house" a new team (non-clinical, but all with nursing backgrounds) who will support patients and care givers and signpost to appropriate non-medical support for example falls prevention classes, befriending schemes to reduce loneliness, benefits or housing advice, fire and rescue "Safe and Well" home checks, and carer support organisations.

Enhanced Proactive Care – using data, we have identified the 500 most frail patients in Avon Valley PCN who would benefit from more specialised care.

Over the coming year each patient will have an **enhanced appointment with a named GP** which will include a comprehensive geriatric assessment (clinical, social, psychological, etc), an opportunity to discuss future care and wishes (called advanced care planning and end of life) and a structured medication review. **A carer/relative will be invited to attend as appropriate**. If a doctor (or other healthcare professional) feels somebody not on the list should receive this enhanced service, then they will be added.

Those already on an end-of-life or palliative care register will continue to be managed by palliative services (though the proactive care team will coordinate to ensure advance plans are in place up to that transition).

In summary the GP remains central to this service. Our aim is to keep people healthier and independent for longer, reducing crisis-driven care, and ensuring equitable support for vulnerable populations. It answers the call for personalised, preventative care that improves patient experience.

We welcome any feedback as we develop this service. You can feedback via our website, or in writing for the attention of Penny Skypala, care of Fordingbridge Surgery.

BOWEL CANCER AWARENESS

If you're aged 50 to 74, you should receive an NHS bowel screening (FIT) kit through the post every two years. The NHS sends this automatically to everyone in that age group.

Your FIT kit could be the most important post you'll receive. Bowel screening can detect cancer at an early stage – and sometimes before cancer develops – making treatment more effective and helping to save lives.

The test is quick and simple to do at home and only requires a small sample of poo to check for signs of cancer.

April is Bowel Cancer Awareness Month, making it a great time to complete your kit. If yours is tucked away in a drawer, dig it out – or keep an eye out for your next kit arriving in the post.

Don't put it off. Complete your FIT kit and send it back.
Find out more https://www.nhs.uk/tests-and-treatments/bowel-cancer-screening/

FALLS FRIENDS

Falls Friends

Would you like to know more about reducing the risk of falling?

Falls Friends talks explain the causes of falls and how to reduce your risk of falling (or the risk for someone you care for). To make it easier and more comfortable for you, the programme is delivered online, so you can join from the comfort of your own home. If you don't have the internet, you can also call in to the session via your telephone.

Who should attend? Anyone interested in helping to prevent someone from falling, including how to reduce their own risk of falling.

How long is the session? One hour

Who runs the session? Hampshire and Isle of Wight Health Care NHS Foundation Trust, Hampshire County Council and Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service have worked in partnership to develop the Falls Friends programme.

When are the Falls Friends' talks?

All talks run from 10.30 am to 11.30 am on the third Friday of each month:

- 20th March 2026 10.30 am-11.30 am
- 17th April 2026 10.30 am-11.30 am
- 15th May 2026 10.30 am-11.30 am
- 19th June 2026 10.30 am-11.30 am
- 17th July 2026 10.30 am-11.30 am
- 18th September 2026 10.30 am-11.30 am
- 16th October 2026 10.30 am-11.30 am
- 20th November 2026 10.30 am-11.30 am

How do I book a place? Contact the Specialist Falls Prevention Team on 0238 311657 or email: HIOWH.specialistfallsteam@nhs.net. You will then receive an email with instructions on how to join the Microsoft Team Meeting. We can also provide a face-to-face talk on request.

Hampshire County Council | Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service | NHS Hampshire and Isle of Wight Healthcare

WAITING TIMES FOR HOSPITAL APPOINTMENTS

We are often asked how long patients may need to wait for a hospital appointment.

Unfortunately, GP practices do not have direct access to hospital computer systems, so we are unable to check individual waiting times on your behalf.

However, the NHS now provides an online service that allows patients to view anticipated waiting times by hospital and specialty. You can access this here:
www.myplannedcare.nhs.uk

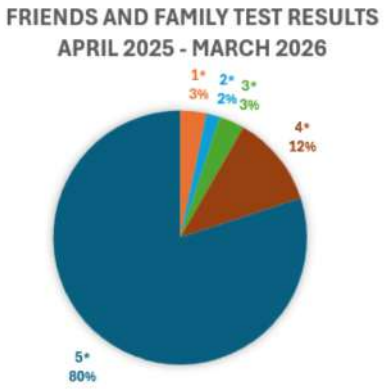
On the website, you can filter results by hospital and department. For guidance:

- Salisbury and Bournemouth Hospitals are listed under the South West Region
- Southampton Hospitals are listed under the South East Region

Please note that this service only provides information for secondary care providers (hospitals). It does not include community services, such as podiatry or district nursing. For these services, patients will need to contact the relevant provider directly to enquire about waiting times.

PATIENT REVIEWS

Every week we send an invitation to a random selection of patients who have visited the surgery to complete a 'Friends and Family' test. We are overwhelmed by the outstandingly positive reviews we receive and the kind words from our patients. Here are some of the lovely words we received last month, and the overall figures for the last 12 months

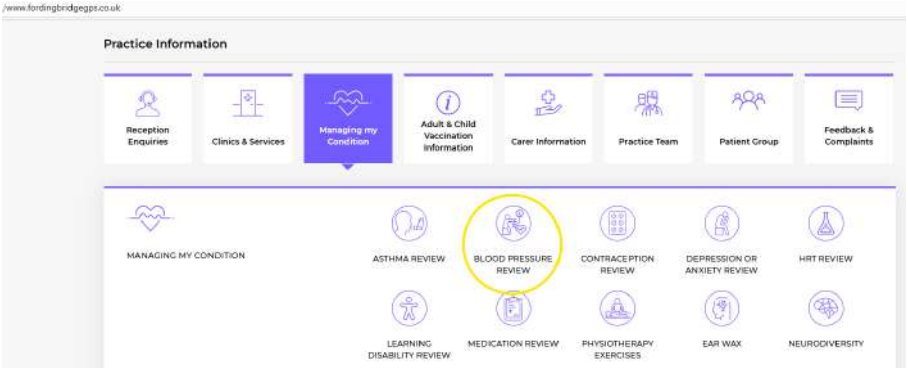




ANNUAL BLOOD PRESSURE REVIEWS

If you know you have high blood pressure, or a condition that requires good blood pressure control like heart disease, you will know that we like you to check and report your blood pressure annually.

From April, we will start to send reminder messages for you to submit your readings. There's no need to wait for your message - submit your readings via the website fordingbridgegps/bpmonitoringform
Or book an appointment via NHS App to use the Surgery POD!



LOCAL HEALTHY WALKS

Healthy Walks are the perfect place to start if you are looking for a simple way to boost your wellbeing, meet new people, and enjoy the beautiful local area.

Why join?

- Great for physical and mental wellbeing
- A chance to connect with others in the community
- Enjoy local green spaces
- No special equipment needed — just comfortable shoes

Walks are led by trained volunteers who make sure everyone feels included and able to go at their own pace.

For more information about locally organised walks, please see the following websites:

www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/w/eastern-dorset-health-walks for walks in Verwood, Moors Valley Country Park and Avon Heath Country Park, and

www.cfirst.org.uk/wellbeing/new-forest-healthy-walks/ for walks in Fordingbridge and Blashford Lakes.

DELIVERY SERVICE

Did You Know We Offer a Free Medication Delivery Service?

If you are a **dispensing** patient and find it difficult to leave your home, Fordingbridge Surgery can deliver your **repeat medication** free of charge, four days a week.

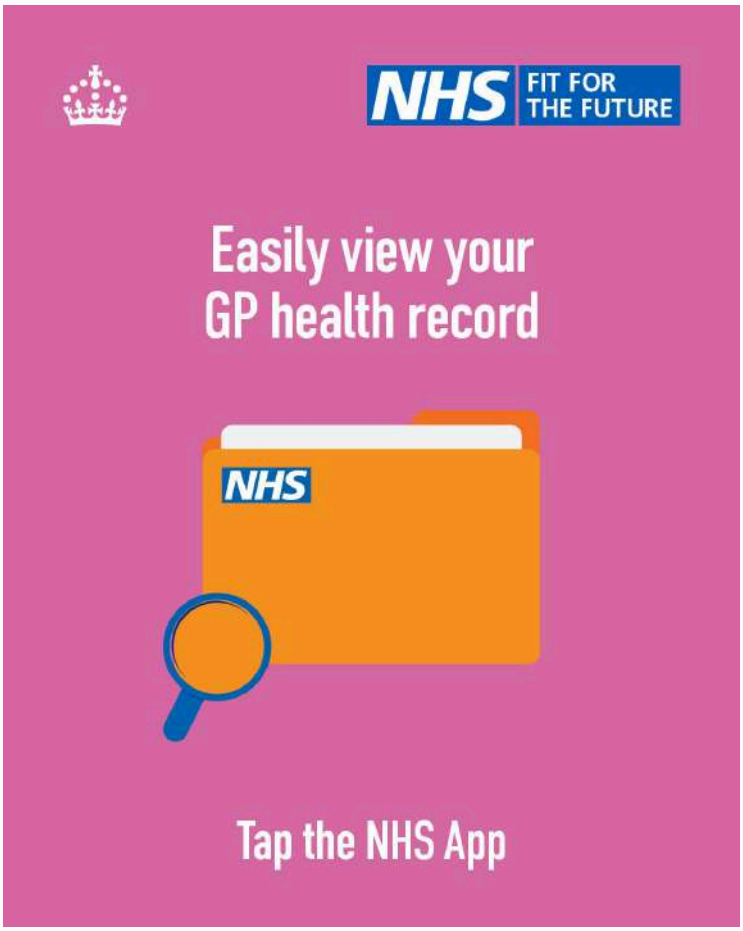
This service is available to patients in our surrounding villages who are permanently or temporarily housebound.

Could this make life easier for you—or perhaps for a friend, neighbour, or family member?

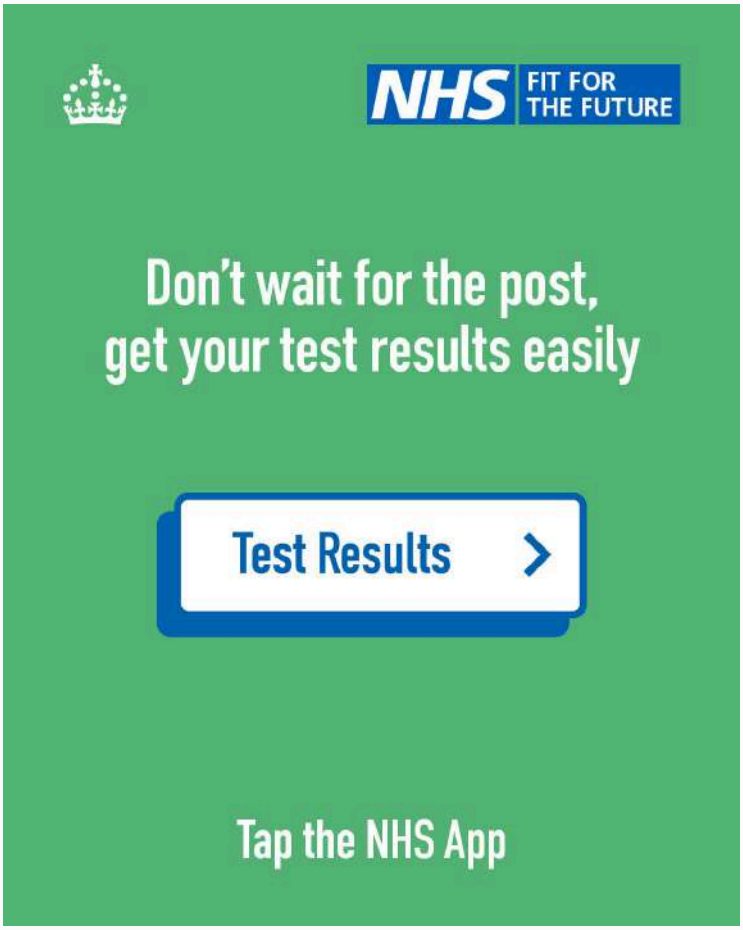
If you think you or someone you know might benefit, please get in touch with our Dispensary Team, who will be happy to provide more information.

DOWNLOAD THE NHS APP!

You can do more with the NHS App than you realise. Discover what else you can do today.









Tap the NHS App

FRIENDS OF FORDINGBRIDGE SURGERY - PATIENT PARTICIPATION GROUP CHAIRMAN'S NEWSLETTER SPRING 2026

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

Dear Friends,

It is unbelievable that we are now in the middle of March and it's time for an article for the Spring Newsletter. As you will see FoFS has been busy planning a number of events and, of course, the grand draw. Money raised will go to replace/refurbish the main reception entry doors and to purchase a video entry system with audio/visual function. This is to safe guard staff during the late opening hours.

Back in November the Trustees agreed to support front facing staff with specialist training to help them help you, the patients, and to offer an improved patient experience. The training was presented on the two Target Days held in November and February.

Everyone at FoFS/PPG is delighted that the health pod and pod room are such a great success with patients, supporting them in maintaining a healthy heart.

There will be a covid vaccination clinic on 18th April 2026. FoFS plan to be at the surgery to sell the grand draw tickets and to encourage those patients, who kindly donate to us, to fill in gift aid forms to enable us to claim a further 25% in gift aid.

FoFS/PPG AGM was on 15th April 2026. Sadly, this will be my last AGM as chairman. I have thoroughly enjoyed my time and have met some wonderful people, but the time has come to introduce some new blood with different ideas, in particular moving the Patient Participation Group forward. The summary of the AGM can be found later in the newsletter.

It is with great sadness that we share the news that Andy Wilson, Ruth Croker, Carol Ann Carmichael and Margaret Bellingham have decided not to seek re-election as Trustees. Ruth, Andy, Carol Ann and Margaret have been integral members of FoFS and the PPG, giving their time, energy and wisdom generously over the past several years. They will be greatly missed.

We would also like to thank our Secretary, Judy Poore, who is stepping down from her role after three years of dedicated service. Judy has made a tremendous contribution to FoFS and to the wider surgery community. We are incredibly grateful for all that they have done.

As we look ahead, we are keen to welcome new members to our committee to help continue the important work of FoFS — supporting the surgery, enhancing patient experience, and bringing tangible benefits to people registered with our fantastic Fordingbridge Surgery.

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

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

Could this be you? **We are looking for people who:**

- Care about improving services for patients
- Enjoy working collaboratively with others
- Have ideas, energy and a willingness to contribute to their local community
- You don't need prior experience — just an interest in helping make a positive difference.

If you would like to find out more about joining the FoFS / PPG committee, we would be delighted to hear from you.

Please contact us at fofs.ppg@gmail.com for further information or an informal conversation.

Together we can continue to strengthen the support and benefits that FoFS brings to our surgery and our community.
With best wishes,

Jane Chairman FoFS/PPG

Introduction to Cheryl Trestrail, Committee Member and Deputy Chair

I have lived in Alderholt for nearly twenty years and have been registered with Fordingbridge Surgery throughout that time. Over the past year I have been pleased to serve as a member of the Friends of Fordingbridge Surgery (FOFS) and Patient Participation Group (PPG) Committee, where I have particularly enjoyed getting involved in the group's fundraising activities and supporting the work of the practice.

I have lived experience dealing with health conditions, for myself and members of my family. My professional background is in nursing, so I can relate to the needs of people. I worked for many years as a specialist cardiac nurse in both hospital and community settings, including roles at Southampton and Salisbury Hospitals. I am still a registered nurse but I currently work as a senior manager within the local NHS, where I continue to work closely with healthcare services and partner organisations across the region. I feel I can help ensure we understand and promote NHS initiative for the benefit of local people and our practice team.

I was saddened to hear that Jane has decided to step back from the Chair role, and I feel very honoured to be considered as the incoming Chair for FOFS and the PPG. If appointed, I am keen to help develop our membership, encourage greater involvement from patients, and explore new ways to reach and engage with the wider Fordingbridge community.

Through my experience in the NHS, I hope to bring insight into how the health service operates locally and how services are commissioned across Hampshire and the Isle of Wight. I am particularly interested in helping ensure that our community continues to receive fair and equitable access to healthcare services. Just as importantly, I am very keen to hear from patients about how they are accessing and experiencing local healthcare, so that the PPG can help represent those voices and support ongoing improvements.

FRIENDS OF FORDINGBRIDGE SURGERY - PATIENT PARTICIPATION GROUP AGM SUMMARY
DATE: 15 APRIL 2026
LOCATION: FORDINGBRIDGE SURGERY

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

Overview
The AGM opened with a welcome from Jane Marlow and a note on the updated FOFS/PPG logo. Jane, the outgoing Chair, presented the annual review, highlighting achievements, finances, and future plans as FOFS enters its 25th anniversary year.

Key Achievements 2025–2026
- Active involvement in community events including the Christmas lights switch-on, car boot sale, coffee mornings, and school Christmas card project.
- Opening of the new Pod Room on 1 October 2026, funded by a £12,000 Town Council grant and FOFS contributions.
- Support for pharmacy communication training and purchase of clinical equipment (examination light, touch screens, noise-cancelling headsets).
- Continued volunteer support for COVID and flu vaccination clinics, raising £4,458.22 through clinic donations.
- Ongoing funding for the bereavement counselling service (31 people supported) and Red Cross mobility equipment loans.

Financial Summary
- Donations: £2,694.80
- Event income: £7,930.21
- Clinic collections: £4,458.22
- Grant received: £12,000
- Expenditure covered equipment, training, software, maintenance, event costs, and insurance.

25th Anniversary Objectives (2026)
- Strengthen communication between patients and the practice.
- Support service improvements and patient access.
- Promote health awareness and engagement.
- Maintain strong fundraising and encourage Gift Aid.
- Deliver the 25th Anniversary Gala Dinner and Grand Draw.

Upcoming Events
- 9 May – Quiz Night
- 20 June – Coffee Morning at Hyde War Memorial Hall
- 18 July – Alderholt Market at the village hall
- 15 August – Charity Day at Folds Farm
- 18 September – 25th Anniversary Gala Dinner & Grand Draw

Elections
- New Chair: Cheryl Trestrail
- Continuing Trustees: Michelle Raymond, Dr Toby Wallis, Judy Poore (Treasurer), Stephen Darke, Jane Marlow
- New Trustees: Geoff Stokes, Kelvin Hinton, Henri Vale, Pat Burdon
- Jane steps down as Chair but remains on the committee to lead fundraising.

Surgery Update
Dr Wallis reported improvements in digital access, online consultations, and the enhanced phone system. The Healthy Hearts programme has increased blood pressure control from 92% to 97%, supported by the new Pod Room. Concerns were raised about new national contract changes, particularly mandatory Advice & Guidance before referrals.

Proactive Care Programme
The PCN team presented the new proactive care model, supporting frail and high-risk patients through multidisciplinary assessment, home visiting, and personalised care planning.

Friends of Fordingbridge Surgery & Patient Participation Group

Supporting with care, compassion and consideration

Grand Draw

Tickets £1 each

kindly sponsored by Anna Seymour Beauty Therapy

Available for purchase at FOFS events

Winners to be drawn at the Gala Dinner on Friday 18th September

Prizes

1st Prize £500.00

sponsored by Adrian Dowding Estate Agent and Kiteleys Solicitors

2nd Prize £200.00

sponsored by Earlcoate Construction and Plant Hire

3rd Prize £100.00

sponsored by Jonathan Rust Family Funeral Directors and Herrington Coaches

Other prizes include:

Away Resorts, Sandy Balls £150.00 voucher for food and drink at Sandy Balls
No 1 Shaftesbury Street Pizza meal for 2, with drinks, up to £30
Studio KDF £20 voucher from Tina's
A J Bass Opticians Free Eye Test and £50 voucher towards a pair of glasses
Poole Harbour & Islands Cruise Voucher for 4 people
Haynes Motor Museum Voucher for 2 adults and 2 children
Boulder Shack 2 people
New Forest Cycling £50 voucher for cycling
Mottisfont Estate Tickets for 2 adults and 4 children
Roberts Jewellers, Ringwood £100 voucher
Stewarts Nursery £20 voucher
Bournemouth Aviation Museum Tickets for 2 adults and 2 children
Moors Valley Golf Course Complimentary Round of Golf
Swanage Railway Family Freedom Ticket return between Swanage and Norden
Cholderton Farm Rare Breeds Family Ticket
Paula Bancroft - 60 minute Reflexology
Fordingbridge Post Office Stationery

FOFS Patron:
Mr Ian Newman

fofs.ppg@gmail.com

Registered Charity Number 1094882

THE FORDINGBRIDGE SURGERY – DR P DOWNES & PARTNERS

MAY BANK HOLIDAYS

THE SURGERY WILL BE **CLOSED** ON THE

MONDAY 04 MAY 2026
MONDAY 25 MAY 2026

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

Out of Hours Service - 111

Or

In an emergency please dial - 999

When dropping off or collecting prescriptions please check the collection dates carefully
Please give the dispensary at least 5 working days when reordering medicines

Thank You



THE FORDINGBRIDGE SURGERY – DR P DOWNES & PARTNERS

TARGET

TIME FOR AUDIT
RESEARCH GOVERNANCE
EDUCATION TRAINING

The surgery will be closed on
Wednesday 29 April 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)

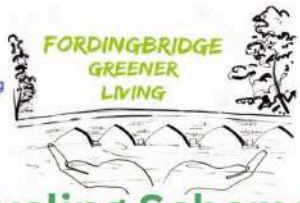
If you are unwell during this time and would like medical advice, please contact
Out of Hours Service on **111**.

If you have an emergency, please dial **999**
The surgery will re-open on

Thursday 30 April 2026

at 8:00am

SbPuRT social blister pack recycling team
www.spurt.uk



Blister Pack Recycling Scheme

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

Our 2026 events will be on

Saturday 18th April 2026
Saturday 16th May 2026
Saturday 20th June 2026
Saturday 18th July 2026
No collection in August
Saturday 19th September
Saturday 17th October
Saturday 21st 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 100 packs.
Your help is much appreciated.

Repair Café

fofs Friends of Fordingbridge Surgery

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