Badgerswood & Forest News

Newsletter of the Patient Participation Group

Autumn 2026

Hello and welcome

Welcome to the Badgerswood and Forest Surgery Autumn newsletter.

This newsletter is available on the Surgery website (www.bordondoctors.com) and a small number will be left in each surgery reception area. We very much hope you enjoy reading it.

The Winter newsletter is due out in early December so please send us your articles or suggestions by 20th November. Thank you.

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Thursday 8th October AGM 7.00pm

Forest Surgery
Forest Road, Bordon GU35 0BP

Come and listen to a speaker from the **Hampshire & Isle of Wight Air Ambulance service** and enjoy some **free refreshments**.

The Badgerswood and Forest's Patient Participation Group's Annual General meeting is your chance to vote for your representative on the PPG committee.

BADGERSWOOD SURGERY
Mill Lane, Headley, Bordon
GU35 8LH
Tel: 01428 770004

FOREST SURGERY
60 Forest Road, Bordon
GU35 0BP
Tel: 01420 477111

Surgery hours

Monday - Friday
8.00am to 6.30pm

If you need help outside our office hours and its not a life threatening emergency, call NHS 111. In an emergency call 999.

www.bordondoctors.com

From the Chair



Hello and welcome to our Autumn newsletter. I hope you enjoy it.

We are having our AGM on **Thursday 8th October at 7.00pm in Forest Surgery**. I very much hope you come along to take part and listen to a speaker from the **Hampshire & Isle of Wight Air Ambulance service** and enjoy some **free refreshments**.

There are some posters in the surgeries for the Annual General Meeting.

Don't forget your bookings for the Flu and Covid jabs. Also, please remember the doctors can only help with one health issue per appointment. If you have more than one health concern, please book another appointment. At times, due to annual lave or sickness, both surgeries can be short staffed. Please be patient if there is a longer wait than usual either on the telephone or going to the reception desk. Many thanks for your understanding.

Best wishes
Yvonne Parker-Smith

Pharmacy First

In the Summer edition of our newsletter, we told you about the seven conditions that can be treated through Pharmacy First, giving you access to treatment directly from your local pharmacy without needing to see a GP.

These were:

- sinusitis
- sore throat
- earache
- infected insect bites
- impetigo
- shingles, and
- uncomplicated urinary tract infections in women.

From this Autumn you will be able to use Chase and Headley Pharmacies to get help with five new conditions. These are:

- acne
- migraines
- scabies
- ear infections
- and rhinitis

Smoking is the biggest cause of preventable illness and death, and quitting is one of the best things you can do for your health and for your family.

STOPTOBER

The good news is that if you stop smoking for 28 days, you're five times more likely to quit for good.

When you quit smoking, you'll begin to see almost immediate improvements to your health. Its never too late to quit, millions of people have succeeded with Stoptober.

Where to get help

It's much easier to stop smoking when you get the right help, and there's a wide range of free quit smoking support available, including the NHS Quit Smoking app, Personal Quit Plan and expert help from local stop smoking services.

Smokefree Hampshire

Phone: 01264 563039 or
Text: QUIT to 80011
www.smokefreehampshire.co.uk

Better Health - Quit Smoking

www.nhs.uk/better-health/quit-smoking

You can also download the free NHS Quit Smoking app at the Apple Apps Store and at Google Play.

From the Surgery

Dear Patients,

We are delighted to welcome you to the second edition of our Patient Participation Group (PPG) Newsletter. We hope you have enjoyed receiving our first edition and have found the information useful and interesting. Our newsletter is a great way for us to share important surgery news, health information, helpful advice and updates about our services with our patients.

Dr Fiona Heaton

We are pleased to let you know that Dr Fiona Heaton has started working an additional day at the surgery. This extra clinical time will help us to continue providing care and support to you.

Meet Andi – Our New AI Receptionist

We have also introduced “Andi”, our new AI receptionist. Andi is here to help make contacting the surgery easier. You can read more about Andi on page 6 of our newsletter.

New website

Our brand new Badgerswood and Forest Surgery website will be launched very soon. We are very excited about this. Read all about it on page 6.





NHS Friends & Family Test



The NHS Friends and Family Test is an important tool to to help people who use NHS services have the opportunity to provide feedback on their experience.

The test is used by most NHS services, including community care, hospitals, mental health services, maternity services, GP and dental practices, emergency care, and patient transport.

Results

Badgerswood and Forest Surgery did very well. When asked 'How was your experience of our Service?' This is what you said:

92.3%

Good

3.7%

Poor

The results were based on a sample of 465 patients between 1st August to 31st August 2026. We'll keep you posted on future results. Thank you for your positive feedback!



OCTOBER

BREAST CANCER AWARENESS MONTH

Breast cancer happens when breast cells mutate and multiply uncontrollably.

Around 59,000 women and 420 men are diagnosed yearly in the UK. At least 1 in 4 breast cancers can be prevented.

Checking your breasts for any unusual changes can help discover breast cancer early. It's important to recognise when something's not right. If you find changes in your breast that are not normal for you, it's best to see a GP as soon as possible.

See your GP if:

- you have a lump or swelling in your breast, chest or armpit
- you have any changes in your breasts or nipples that are not normal for you
- you have pain in your breast or armpit, and there are other people in your family who've had breast cancer or ovarian cancer

www.nhs.uk/conditions/breast-cancer-in-women/

www.breastcanceruk.org.uk/about-breast-cancer/

REMINDER

Please tell the Surgery ASAP if you cannot attend your appointment or if you no longer need it. If you are registered for online services, you can cancel your appointment directly. If not, please phone us on 01428 770004 (Badgerswood Surgery) or 01420 477111 (Forest Surgery). Thank you.

Protect yourself this winter



Why COVID-19 and Flu Vaccinations Matter

As we move into the colder months, respiratory viruses such as COVID-19 and influenza (flu) become more common. Vaccination remains one of the most effective ways to protect yourself, your loved ones, and your community from serious illness.

Why get vaccinated?

Both COVID-19 and flu can cause mild to severe illness. For some people -particularly older adults, pregnant women, young children, and those with long-term health conditions -these infections can lead to complications, hospitalisation, or even death.

Vaccines help your immune system recognise and fight these viruses before they can cause severe illness. While no vaccine can guarantee complete protection, they significantly reduce the risk of serious disease, hospital admission, and complications.

Why have both vaccines?

COVID-19 and flu are caused by different viruses, so protection against one does not protect you from the other. Receiving both vaccines gives you the best defence during the respiratory virus season. If you are eligible, you may even be able to receive both vaccines during the same appointment, saving you an extra visit.

Are the vaccines safe?

Yes. COVID-19 and flu vaccines used in the UK undergo rigorous testing and safety monitoring. Millions of people have safely received these vaccines, and serious side effects are very rare. Most people experience only mild, short-lived side effects, such as soreness at the injection site, tiredness, or a mild fever.

Who is eligible?

The NHS offers free seasonal vaccinations to eligible patients. In Autumn 2026, the **COVID-19 vaccine** is available to:

- adults aged 75 years and over
- residents in older adult care homes
- people aged 6 months and over who are severely immunosuppressed (people who have a weakened immune system that cannot fight off infections and diseases very well).

The **flu vaccine** is available to:

- adults aged 65 years and over
- pregnant women
- people with certain long-term health conditions
- carers
- eligible social care workers
- residents of long-stay care homes
- close household contacts of immunocompromised individuals (people who have a weakened immune system that cannot fight off germs, viruses, and bacteria as well as a healthy body can).
- eligible children

If you are unsure if you qualify, please contact the practice and our team will be happy to help.

Book your vaccination

You can book appointments for your free COVID-19 and flu vaccinations now. Clinics start on Saturday 3rd October at Forest Surgery, Bordon. You can either book using the link in your invitation or by calling reception after 1:00 pm on weekdays. Please book early to make sure you are protected before the winter.

A conversation with Doctor Helen Sherrell



Early years

I grew up on Dartmoor where my siblings and I plus 4 local children roamed the moors on foot or bikes. We didn't have to worry about mobile phones, traffic, personal violence, social media. The only phone in the house was a rotary phone – it didn't matter it was so slow as usually numbers were only 4 digits long!!!!

I wanted to be a nurse or a teacher and after a brief spell as a nursery school assistant, I went to St Bartholomew's to train as a Registered General Nurse. I loved nursing but hated running the ward: back then there were not as many specialist roles as there are today and so after qualifying as an RGN you ran the ward.

Medical School

I moved into intensive care at The Middlesex Hospital and really enjoyed the work but again, after a while, you had to run the unit – not my forte at all! So, I did a 6 month cramming course in Biology and Chemistry A Level before embarking on a 5 year Medical training programme at University College and Middlesex School of Medicine.

I met my husband to be on the first day in the Uni shop. Do you believe in love at first sight? Well I knew I wanted to marry him then..... and we did marry ....6 years later.

Becoming a GP

Anaesthetics or general practice were my only options really. I wanted children and thought the anaesthetic gasses may have been a problem if I wanted to have children so after qualifying I did a total of 3 years in hospital and 1 year in general practice as a trainee before becoming a fully fledged GP.

One of the best thing about general practice is trying to fix problems - trying to piece things together a story has always been a real interest to me. However, the quote "Cure sometimes, treat often, comfort always" by Hippocrates is humbling. So now, after 33 years in general practice I want to be a good allrounder and want to be available to my patients. I would like to do the journey of part/all of their lives

Why Badgerswood Surgery?

After a brief spell in New Zealand and then out of hours work, I worked at Woolmer and Riverside Surgeries for 4 years before joining Badgerswood Surgery in 2014. I was struck by how helpful the staff were, the bright building, the lovely garden and the educational talks. One of my most poignant memories was looking out of my window to see a field of red poppies - I felt at home there .

My day

06:30am

Tea. Medicate and feed pets and let out the hens.

07.45am
Get to work to see any early patients, check results, do some admin.

8.00am - 13.00pm
Consulting officially starts at 8:30 and I finish morning surgery at approximately 13:00, after telephone consultations. Then its home visits.

13.30pm - 15.00pm
I grab some lunch while doing emails, checking results, medications, answering queries from reception, going to meetings, doing some Quality and Outcomes Framework work (QOF is a voluntary NHS programme that rewards GP practices in England for delivering high-quality care). Then debrief any trainees.

15.00pm
See extra patients booked in before starting afternoon Surgery.

15.15am -18.00pm
Start afternoon surgery and finish at 18.00 before hitting results, medications and any queries. Given that not all doctors work every day, I check all Badgerswood results to act on urgent ones. More paperwork, for example, insurance forms, gun licence applications, Social Service special requests, emails and texts to patients.

20.00pm
It is interesting how many different ways we have to connect with patients - all good but it is a lot to check up on every day. So I don't usually get home until 20:00. I will often do work form home after this or at weekends to keep up with QOF work, emails medications. I also read a lot and attend educational meetings to keep up with medical change.

Please don't think me a martyr – I like my job and it gives me great satisfaction to be a doctor and be part of the NHS.

My hobbies

My hobbies are gardening, swimming, board games, learning new skills (I can now grout) exercise and ballet - I watch Swan Lake 2-3 times a year.

I love the beach and remote places which is why I will go to the Isles of Scotland to work as a locum when I leave the practice in March 2027.

Something you don't know about me

I love football, have supported Arsenal since was a child and go to watch Aldershot play as they are local.

THE CARERS CIRCLE

Third Monday of each month. 2.30pm - 4.00pm

Are you a carer looking for a well deserved break and to connect with others who understand your experience?

Join us for a relaxed and supportive carers group. Enjoy coffee, cake and good company in our on-site cafe while your loved one takes part in engaging activities with our activities coordinators and other residents. Take some time for yourself,share experiences, and feel supported. You're not alone.

For more information, please contact Lucy:
lucy.vaughan@hartfordcare.co.uk or CALL 07860 682176.
Alton Place Care Home, Winchester Road, Alton, Hampshire GU341UY

Hello - how can I help you?



Meet Andi – our new AI receptionist.

Andi is here to help make contacting the surgery easier and, where possible, reduce the need for you to wait in telephone queues.

From Monday 28th September, when you call the surgery, Andi can take your details, questions and requests and pass them through to our triage team who quickly assess who needs help first.

A member of our team will then review your request and get back to you as appropriate.

This may be by:

- SMS text message
- Email
- Telephone call

Andi is designed to help us manage calls more efficiently, while making it easier for you to get your query to the right team.

You don't have to speak to Andi, he won't be offended. You can talk to one of our staff members if you prefer but Andi is very friendly and helpful so its worth trying him.

- No more waiting on hold
- Your request reaches the right person quickly
- Every request is checked by a clinician
- You can still speak to a receptionist if needed

New Surgery website



More information.
More support.
More self-help.

We are very excited to announce that our new surgery website will be launching soon!

Our new website will make it easier for you to find useful information, advice and support - all in one place.

Keep an eye out for the launch!

Your health. Your information. Your surgery.



Every fourth Tuesday of the month.

2.30-4.00pm
Bordon Library,
Bordon
GU35 0TN



Bereavement Cafe

A friendly place to talk, reflect and find comfort. Meet others walking their own path through loss.

Come along to our welcoming peer support group, guided by the GP social prescriber.

£1 for refreshments. All welcome, no need to book - just come as you are.

Enquiries: **Kylie on 07546 319239**



Don't miss your annual review



If you live with diabetes, your annual diabetes review is an important part of looking after your health.

Why is it important?

Your annual review gives our healthcare team the opportunity to check your overall health, spot any potential problems early and make sure you are getting the right support.

Your review may include checks on your:

- Blood sugar (HbA1c)
- Blood pressure & cholesterol
- Kidneys
- Feet
- Eyes
- Medication and general wellbeing

It's also your opportunity to talk to us. If you have concerns about your diabetes, medication, diet, lifestyle or anything else, please tell us. There is no such thing as a silly question!

Regular checks can help reduce the risk of diabetes-related complications and keep you healthier for longer.

If you have diabetes and haven't had your annual review, or you're unsure when it's due, please contact the practice team.

Your diabetes. Your health.
Your annual review.

Newsletter

We'd Love to Hear From You! This newsletter is for you, our patients, so your feedback really matters to us. We would love to hear your thoughts on:

- What you would like to see included in future editions
- Topics or health information you would find useful
- What surgery updates you would like us to share
- How you would prefer to receive the newsletter

Would you prefer to:

- Receive it by email?
- Collect a copy from the surgery?
- Read it online?



Please let us know what works best for you. Your feedback will help us make the newsletter better!

If you have any suggestions or ideas, please speak to a member of our Reception Team or share your feedback at:

badgerswood.ppg@mail.com

You can also, complete an online survey:

https://forms.gle/KeETTpzmVtUBdKwe8

Thank you for taking the time to read our newsletter and for helping us to make it useful, informative and relevant. From everyone at the surgery and the Patient Participation Group —