



## Congratulations! Twenty Years!

Congratulations to Dr Burnham who has been at Puddletown Surgery for twenty years.

In his time here at the surgery he has been instrumental in organising and overseeing the building of the new surgery here at Athelhampton Road.

He has also been responsible for training fourteen new GPs alongside running an extremely successful practice, during some extremely challenging times.

We are all in agreement that Puddletown Surgery would not be what it is without him.



## Repeat Prescriptions



The weeks preceding Christmas are the busiest for our dispensary team. This December please can we ask that you are mindful that your prescription may take a little longer to process. Please see our noticeboard or Facebook page for medication collection dates.

The Dispensers would like to thank all the patients who have made the change to ordering their medication online, this has helped the dispensary workload enormously.

Thank you.

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### Christmas Opening Hours

The surgery will be closed on **Wednesday 25th December and Thursday 26th December**, opening as normal on **Friday 27th December**.

**Over New Year the surgery will be closed on Wednesday 1st January 2025.**

**If you are unwell while the surgery is closed, always ring 111.**

**This is the NHS number for all urgent calls**

# News from the PPG

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**Interview with Richard Burden  
(chairman) and Angie Benford  
(secretary)**

## **What is the PPG currently working on?**

Puddletown Patient Participation Group decided to raise funds to buy something which would help patients, promote self-help, wellness and support patients to **Know Your Numbers**, in the words of the recent NHS promotion. The PPG have been selling raffle tickets during our Winter vaccination clinics to try and raise the money to buy a Blood Pressure machine for the waiting room.

The surgery and the PPG would like to thank everyone for their generous donations towards this project. The initial target was to reach £1600 and this has now been exceeded which means there should be enough left for annual maintenance and calibration, paying for consumables (paper roll) and for a stool that patients can sit on whilst having their blood pressure measured. The machine should be in the waiting room early in 2025 so keep your eyes peeled.

## **Why did you join the PPG?**

**AB:** I had worked in a GP surgery setting for many years and understand how a general practice works. Puddletown Surgery gives so much to patients and I felt it was my turn to give back without adding extra work for staff here. The PPG is now making progress as a group and I feel we are making a difference with this project. We have had assistance from The Rotary Club who helped with calculating how many books of raffle tickets we would need to reach our target.

**RB:** Having been a patient here for many years and benefitted from excellent care, I received a text when the PPG was trying to recruit members and especially a new chairman. The practice has been good to me and like AB I wanted to give something back. Using my experience from my work life I gave a presentation along with four other PPG members at the meeting in September 2023. The rest of the group voted on who they wanted as chairperson and I have been in post since the 20th December 2023. This is usually a two-year term.

## **Moving forward what are you hoping to achieve?**

The PPG has achieved more in the last six months than previously, this is mainly due to effective communications and keeping things moving by having regular meetings with the whole group and interim core group meetings with the secretary (AB), chair (RB) and vice chair (Anthony Felstead) and Clare Stickland, Practice Manager. RB commented that AB is vital to this as she keeps the momentum moving.

The PPG is a voice for patients and hope they empower patients to say something. Currently the group aims to keep the committee membership to twenty people but has a wider forum of volunteers which they would like to expand. The group also would like to have some younger representation, not necessarily to come to the meetings but to receive communications and give feedback by email. If you are interested please email the PPG.



**Waiting Room Blood Pressure Monitor**

One of the essential ways the PPG helps the practice is by having volunteers at the Winter vaccination clinics to keep the queue moving and help patients with information sheets and directions. This is a huge help to the practice as it saves on staffing costs.

In order to help patients with their experience of the practice it is necessary for the PPG to know what patients want.

If you would like to contact the PPG please email:

**[PuddletownPPG@outlook.com](mailto:PuddletownPPG@outlook.com)**

# Patient Wellbeing

Our Social Prescriber can help with a variety of health and wellbeing issues such as stress, bereavement, loneliness, housing or financial issues or maybe you are just feeling a lack of motivation and don't know who to turn to. Social prescribing can connect you to a wide range of resources including social groups, community and voluntary services as well as practical support such as energy advice services or financial advice.

Our Social Prescribers have helped people find someone to walk their dog when they no longer could, connected people to chess, art and book groups. They have helped people connect with condition specific support such as stroke services and dementia support, issued food bank vouchers and linked people with grants for surviving winter and so much more. If there is something you are facing and you would like to know if/how social prescribing could help please contact the surgery **01305 848333**.

## Safe and Well visits

Dorset and Wiltshire Fire and rescue service offer a completely free safe and well visit to eligible individuals. It includes a room by room check to provide you with appropriate advice and support to keep your household safe from the risk of fire. The Safe and Well discussion will cover topics such as:

- Using electricity safely
- Cooking safely
- Making an escape plan
- What to do if there is a fire
- Keeping children safe
- Good practice – night time routine and other points relevant to you
- Identifying and discussing any further support you may need if necessary

To see if you are eligible for a Safe and Well Visit, please visit [www.dwfire.org.uk/safe-and-well-visits/](http://www.dwfire.org.uk/safe-and-well-visits/) or alternatively, call **0800 038 2323** and speak to a member of the Prevention Administration Team. If you do not

qualify for a Safe and Well Visit, you will be sent safety information via email or letter.

## Money Matters

Dorset Council estimate that 5000 people are missing out on money they are entitled to. Thousands of people who are over State Pension age are missing out on financial support that could mean they are £75 a week better off.

Pension Credit is extra financial help to assist with living costs if you are of State Pension age (66+) and on a low income. It can help with general housing costs and bills and give you extra support that you are entitled to.

It is separate from the state pension, which means that you could still be entitled to Pension Credit even if you have other income, savings or own your own home, if you fall within the criteria.

It is easy to check whether you are eligible by using the Pension Credit calculator online at [www.gov.uk/pension-credit](http://www.gov.uk/pension-credit), call and book an appointment with **Citizens Advice** at the surgery.

## Let it Snow!



The recent snow has highlighted the issues we face as a rural practice with some of the staff unable to get to work, especially as schools closed and roads became impassable.

If we get more snow and you want to rearrange your appointment then please phone the surgery, we are lucky in that we do have members of the reception team who live locally and should be able to make it into the surgery or staff may be answering the phones from home. Obviously we may need to rearrange appointments and restrict the opening times according to the levels of disruption. We will try and update our Facebook page and website as required.

Some people are more vulnerable to the effects of cold weather. These include:

- people aged 65 and older
- babies and children under the age of 5
- people on a low income (so cannot afford heating)
- people who have a long-term health condition
- people with a disability
- pregnant women
- people who have a mental health condition

If members of your family or neighbours are vulnerable when there is snow please check in on them to ensure they are safe and warm.





**Puddletown Surgery**  
**2A Athelhampton Road**  
**Puddletown**  
**Dorchester DT2 8FY**

**01305 848333**



Have you checked out our new website? There is lots of information and links to other NHS services. <https://www.puddletownsurgery.co.uk>



The staff at Puddletown Surgery enjoying some Christmas merriment!

The  
Doctors,  
Nurses and all  
the team would  
like to wish  
everyone a very  
Merry Christmas  
and a Happy  
New Year

## Staff News



Sue

Sadly we have said goodbye to nurse Sue who has moved on to work closer to home in Weymouth.

Also Nicky, our HCA, is moving on to expand her exercise classes and is leaving us at the end of December. They will both be missed.



Nicky

Joining the nurse team in December will be Lucy our new Health Care Assistant. Lucy has recently moved to Dorset and has many years experience, nine years in A&E and two years at a GP Practice in Uckfield in East Sussex.

In January the nurse team will be joined by Sophie, registered nurse. She has recently been working with the Dorchester District Nurses team.

We look forward to welcoming both Lucy and Sophie to the team at Puddletown Surgery.



Lucy



Sophie