



St Stephen's House Surgery Newsletter – Spring 2025

In association with the Patient
Participation Group (PPG)

“Friends of the Surgery in Action”

Welcome.



News from the Practice Manager – Jane White

Dr Al-Bahrani joined the practice as a salaried GP in June last. Prior to this, Dr Al-Bahrani had worked as a locum for a short time with St Stephen's. We are pleased to announce that Dr Al-Bahrani has become a Partner, taking the Partnership to three Partners with Dr Kostuch-Bush and Dr Babajews.

I would also like to make patients aware of a recent scam. It arrives in the form of an email asking you to open a link. It is titled “Action Required: GP Register Update” If received please delete the email from your mailbox.

Appointments are released approximately 4-6 weeks in advance and can be booked via NHS App; Patient Access; phone or by requesting an urgent appointment via our website on Tuesday and Thursday mornings between 8-9 a.m.

We have introduced Patient Triage via our website. Patients can complete a medical form for urgent appointments between 8-9 a.m. Tuesday and Friday. These forms are reviewed by the Duty Doctor who responds via text or telephone by the end of the same day. Patients are either signposted to the relevant health provider or given an appointment either face to face or telephone on the same day or when suitable.

The automatic door has been reinstated although there is an issue with the PUSH button to exit the surgery. We are awaiting costs and date for changing.

We are hopeful that the slope to the exit and the bike rack will be fitted soon now the weather has improved.

This year's flu clinic we anticipate will be around the same time as last year; the first weekend in October. However, we are still awaiting communications from NHSE regarding the roll- out date.

Our web site has information about the support available to carers. Use the link attached to find out more.

[Support available to carers](#)

You can also find information about support in the case of bereavement via this link
[Death and bereavement - St Stephen's House Surgery](#)

Child Health



If you are worried about your child's health why not take a look at the "NHS little orange book" by following this link.

[The Little-Orange-Book.pdf](#)

DR Bernard Li.

My name is Bernard. I am currently in the first year of my three-year GP training programme and will be spending the year at St Stephen's House Surgery, where I will be working under the supervision of Dr Fraser. I completed my medical school at Queen's University Belfast and my foundation training in Nottingham. Since moving to Ashted, I've been genuinely touched by the warmth and friendliness of everyone I've met so far, and I'm excited to meet more of you as I settle into the area and my role at the surgery.



Greetings from the PPG – Sam Wylie. Co-Chair.

Thank you to everyone who participated in our annual PPG patient Survey. We are processing these results and comments have been fed back to the surgery.

The front door is automated again for ease of access.

Martin Riddle has now stepped down from the committee and we welcome Tim Robertson as a new member.

The PPG have funded the purchase of 6 chairs with arms. One for each consultation room. This included all the money raised at the AGM and quiz night last year as well as patient donations. Thank you to everyone who contributed.

This edition of the Newsletter focuses on carers. Keep an eye on our Facebook page for more support for carers in Ashted at a whole of Ashted community level.



Tim Robertson - the latest addition to the PPG Committee.

I have lived in Ashted since 1994, and have very happily raised a family here.

If it was not for the National Health Service neither I nor my children would be alive today. I had a road traffic accident which left me paralysed and required major surgery including titanium plates fixtures in my spine. My twin children were born prematurely.

I now feel it my duty as part of my community to give some of my time back because of the enormous and growing pressures the NHS is under.

I have a science degree, managed two companies and worked in the banking and personal finance industry.

2025 Patient Survey - a brief summary.

The survey was completed online by 551 of the registered patients at the practice. It was open from the 19th January to the 29th February.

It was distributed by email to 800 PPG members and sent via SMS to patients from the surgery. To meet the criteria a patient had to have attended in the last 12 months. It was also posted on a number of social media platforms.

The survey results showed a generally high level of satisfaction with SSHS this year with 98% stating the GP good at involving you with your care and 87% with nurses.

75% of appointments are still made by telephone or in person despite 67% using the website and 88% finding it good/satisfactory. This is disappointing especially as digital methods are available and 85% of patients have the NHS App. This is perhaps explained by how good the telephone reception team are at 88% good/satisfactory, 88% getting an appointment and with 65% within 14 days.

This is a sample of the questions we asked.

Generally, how easy do you find it to contact the surgery by phone

46% answered Good

43% answered Satisfactory

How helpful do you find the Receptionists?

77% answered Good

20% answered Satisfactory

How long did you have to wait for your last appointment?

34% answered under 7 days

31% answered between 7 to 14 days

23% answered between 14 to 21 days

Do you prefer to see your nominated GP

37% answered Yes

63% answered Do Not Mind.

Do you feel that the last GP you saw or spoke to was good at explaining your test results?

91.3% answered Yes

Do you feel that the last GP you saw or spoke to was good at involving you in the decision about your care?

87.7% answered Yes

Do you feel the last nurse you spoke to or saw was good at giving you enough time?

95.7% answered Yes

Do you feel the last nurse you spoke to or saw was good at treating you with care and concern?

93.1% answered Yes

How would you rate your overall experience at this surgery?

70.8% answered Good

Would you recommend this surgery to someone new to the area?

91% answered Yes

24.6% answered Satisfactory

The full results of this survey can be reviewed on our web site under the PPG section or by following this link.

[2025 Full Survey Results](#)

FOCUS ON CARING AND CARERS



The Care Crisis - A Carer's Perspective

By Barbara Wells

PPG Committee member

In recent times the role of unpaid carers has been discussed many times by successive governments for the “invaluable” part they play in Adult Social Care. There is still no improvement in the support carers receive.

It is not easy to explain the challenges or rewards of being a carer. It is an isolating and lonely situation to be in and can be very unpredictable.

The reality is that you become a carer without even realising it, especially when a loved one becomes ill or disabled whether medically, physically or needing mental health support.

How can you describe what it's like to be a carer? It can be a very lonely journey with few opportunities to take a break. It also requires respite support either at home or in a care environment. If you don't have a support network this can be very difficult to facilitate.

There is a need for society to understand Adult Social Care and the challenges it brings. For unpaid carers the current support mechanisms are not enough.

We have an aging population which will continue to grow with no new suitable models of Adult Social Care support available, suitable or fit for purpose. There are some charities/organisations who organise and support local events for Adult Social Carers and provide excellent services but more are needed.

I would like to see improvements both locally and nationally to address the problems and help unpaid carers navigate a very complicated and out of date system.

Unpaid Carers.

by David Izatt

Introduction.

My name is David Izatt and I have lived in Ashted as a registered patient at St Stephen's for the better part of thirty years. Life has led me to have a deep interest in having the voice of unpaid carers, our family and community heroes, whose key role in the health and care services has long been recognised by the NHS.

Over the last ten years I have sought to champion the voice of carers in the shaping and provision of health and care services, first as co-Chair of Family Voice, and then as co-Chair of the Surrey Carers Partnership Board. Since the end of 2023 my activities are limited to attendance at two of the five Place – Based Carers Action Groups in Surrey, including the Surrey Downs Carers Action Group, which is linked to the Surrey Downs Health and Care Partnership, and has an action plan for improving support for unpaid carers in this locality.

Are you an unpaid carer – providing support for a partner, spouse, child, relative or friend? This can be exhausting and overwhelming – physically, emotionally and financially. Is your own health and wellbeing being affected? Are others in your family also affected – such as children that are also providing support – young carers -? **Help is available** – and registration as a carer with your GP is one way to access this.

Too few carers are accessing that help. Registration is at low levels at present – for reasons that are not well understood. We encourage all carers to access the support available and make life a little easier.

Registration is straightforward – the practice has a Carers' Register – a list of patients who are providing unpaid care to someone with a long-term health or neurological condition, disability, mental health, dementia or substance abuse conditions. You can download the form via the practice website by typing 'Support for Carers' in the search box and the form link will show on the page accessed. Alternatively you can complete a [template letter](#) available at Carers UK website and send to the practice.

The Practice will register you as a carer – this will show on your care record and will be known to others authorised to access your record. As well as looking at your health and wellbeing needs your GP can also offer a Personal Health Budget to provide tailored support.

Support available to you from the Practice includes:

- routinely being offered a flu vaccination.
- surgery notes on medical records note you are a carer;

Additionally, your GP can at your request refer you to others for support via the Surrey Carers Prescription, including:

- Action for Carers for a range of free information, advice and support for carers of all ages;
- Crossroads Care Surrey regarding an Emergency Care Planning Service with access to 24- hour support if required through either your own nominated person or they can arrange for free professional care support workers to step in once you have registered with them; a Carers Card and a helpline number to call if an emergency arises; and Carer Replacement Breaks (up to 35 hours) to help you take some time out from the caring role;
- Surrey County Council for carer or young carer assessment

As a registered carer you will be better placed, subject to your cared forms consent, to be more consulted and involved in the planning and delivery of their care and treatment, including entry to and discharge from hospital.

Above all else, please encourage all family members and friends with caring responsibilities to register with us and access the support available.

Registration is through the St Stephen's House Surgery web page.

Additional useful links for carers:

Carers UK

<https://www.carersuk.org/>

Crossroads Caring for Carers:

<https://www.crossroads-caringforcarers.org/>

Action for Carers:

<https://www.actionforcarers.org.uk/>

Their May/June/July newsletter can be found at:

<https://www.actionforcarers.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/ACS-Newsletter-April-May-June-2025-digital-version-1.pdf>

Action for Young Carers

<https://www.actionforcarers.org.uk/who-we-help/young-carers-under-18/>

Focus on support for young and young adult carers:

<https://carers.org/getting-support-if-you-are-a-young-carer-or-young-adult-carer/getting-support-if-you-are-a-young-carer-or-young-adult-carer>

Carers.org coordinates a network of 120 organisations nationally to support Carers:

<https://carers.org/>

Giving Carers a Voice

<https://luminus-cic.uk/services/giving-carers-a-voice-page/>

Surrey County Council for carers:

<https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/adults/carers>

Let St Stephen's House Surgery know you are a carer:

<https://www.st-stephenssurgery.nhs.uk/services/health-service/support-for-carers>

The nominated lead at the surgery is **Fiona Pratt** for any queries. Reception do not deal with this. All requests must be via the carer registration form on our website.

[Carers reg form](#)

Our web site has information about the support available to carers. Use the link attached to find out more.

[Carers information](#)

If you are viewing this newsletter via social media, you could receive future copies via email. To do so email this link.

[PPG email](#)

We hope you have enjoyed this edition of our newsletter.