

Newsletter

Spring 2025

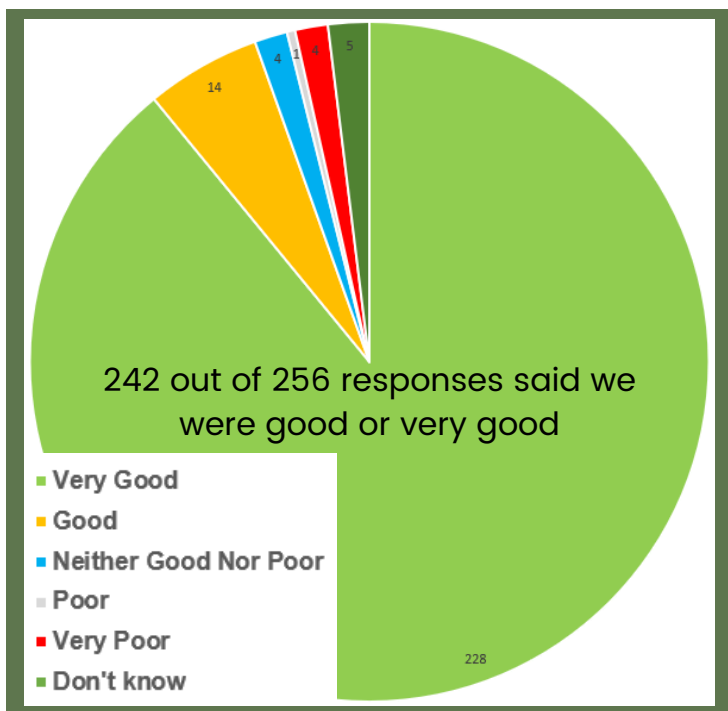


Team Update

We are delighted to welcome a number of new staff to the Wallingbrook team:

- Dr Kate Richardson – Salaried GP
- Dr Adham Abdelaziz – Trainee GP
- Dr Oludare Dada – Trainee GP
- Jan Hole – Joint Practice Nurse Lead
- Lorraine Phillips – Patient Services Advisor
- Cate Godly – Patient Care Coordinator
- Jo Govier – Trainee Dispenser
- Jenny Kennedy – Patient Services Advisor

We have also introduced the new role of Duty Team Care Co-ordinator (DTCC). We welcome Sabrina Marsh and Violet McKenzie-Pegg into these positions. The purpose of this role is to work alongside our clinical on-the-day team in order to improve the efficiency of our triage system. The DTCCs assist the clinicians with patient communications and administrative tasks allowing the clinicians more time for direct patient care.



Family and Friends Test February 2025

In February 2025 we received 256 responses to our Family and Friends Test. 95% of these said we were good or very good! Thank you to all our patients who completed our survey. This is a hugely valuable tool for us to check how we are doing.

You can also feedback to us by completing a comments slip in the waiting room, speaking to our Patient Services Team or emailing us at: d-icb.wallingbrookbsc@nhs.net

Winkleigh Surgery Refurbishment Complete

October saw the successful completion of the extension and refurbishment of our Winkleigh branch surgery.



The project has significantly improved our facilities, with the number of consulting rooms increasing from two to four. This expansion allows us to offer a wider variety and greater number of clinics in Winkleigh, improving access to healthcare for our patients.



The surgery now boasts a larger and more welcoming reception area, creating a more comfortable experience for patients. We have also improved our medication storage, making it easier and more efficient for patients to collect their prescriptions.

We are extremely pleased with the results of the project.

The new building is bright, spacious, and more energy-efficient. It provides a modern and purpose-built facility for both our patients and staff. Allowing us to better serve our growing community.

We would like to extend our sincere thanks to the community for their patience and understanding during the building work. We have received excellent feedback from patients on the new facilities. We look forward to continuing to provide high-quality healthcare in Winkleigh.

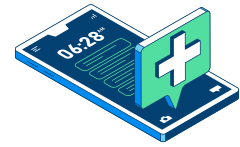


Thanks to Hazel Pike & Family

This project would not have been possible without the enormous generosity of Hazel Pike. Hazel was a Winkleigh resident who left a substantial gift to the practice in her will. Wallingbrook Partnership, in consultation with Hazel's daughter-in-law, Queenie Pidgeon, decided to use the donation to totally transform the services at Winkleigh Surgery, where Hazel was a patient.

We would like to extend our heartfelt gratitude to Hazel and her family on behalf of both Wallingbrook Health Group and the community.

Online Booking Links



We have introduced a new system for inviting you to certain appointments. We will send you a link via SMS or email inviting you to:

- Book online: Choose a time that suits you and book instantly
- Complete a questionnaire: For some appointments, you may be asked to complete a questionnaire. This is reviewed and followed up by our clinical team

The option remains to call the surgery and speak to one of our receptionists should you prefer to so.

We're currently using this system for:

- Annual health checks (known as month of birth recalls)
- Regular monitoring appointments

Over 30% of eligible patients have already used the online links, proving its popularity.

This makes it quick and easy to book your appointment at a time that suits you.

We're always looking for ways to improve your experience, and this system offers greater flexibility and convenience.

Voluntary Car Services



Do you struggle getting to and from your medical appointments? There are voluntary car services in our area that can help:

Lapford Voluntary Car Association (LVCA)

LVCA is a charity with a team of 12 volunteer drivers. Covering Lapford and Nymet Rowland parishes. They provide transport to medical related appointments as well as a medication collection service from pharmacies.

The cost of this service is £5 return to Crediton, Bow, Chulmleigh or Winkleigh and £3 to Morchard Bishop.

To arrange a booking contact Grace Hill on 01363 83178. LVCA ask for at least 2 working days notice for a booking.

Winkleigh Volunteer Service

Volunteers take people to hospital and other medical appointments, collect shopping, take people to the shops, care homes and other essential journeys.

Volunteers give their time for nothing but we do charge 50p per mile.

To arrange a journey please contact Angie on 01837 682616 if you do not receive a response within 24 hours please ring or text 07455 365144.

Please give as much notice as possible.

South Molton Voluntary Car Service

South Molton and District Volunteer Bureau is a volunteer car service for anyone who cannot provide their own transport to attend appointments for any medically-related reason, including hospital, GP, dental, chiropractor, and podiatry appointments. They cover a number of villages within the Wallingbrook area, including Chulmleigh and Chawleigh. They can provide transport to hospitals throughout Devon.

The cost is 45p per mile plus a £3 admin surcharge.

For full details visit <https://www.smbv.org.uk/> or call 01769 573167 and leave your name, phone number and a short message about your appointment to book.

Chawleigh & Chulmleigh Community Car Service

Chawleigh & Chulmleigh Community Car Service provides transport to Wallingbrook Health Centre and Chulmleigh Dental Practice from surrounding areas including Wembworthy, Cheldon and Kings Nympton. Volunteers will take you to your appointment, wait for you and transport you home.

The cost ranges, depending on location, from £2 for Chawleigh to £5 for Wembworthy.

To arrange this service from Chawleigh call 01769 581234 or 01769 580440. Or from Chulmleigh call 01769 581114 or 01769 581746. Please try to give at least one week's notice where possible.

Can you help?

These groups are always in need of new volunteers to keep these vital services running. South Molton Voluntary Car Service, who require drivers from Chulmleigh, and Winkleigh Volunteer Service are particularly in need of anyone who would be able to give their time to help take patients make these vital journeys.

If you feel you would be able to offer your time, please contact:
 Steve Wilkinson on 01769 573167 for South Molton Voluntary Car Service
 Angela Fidlay on 01837 682616 for Winkleigh

Patient Transport in Devon



Planning a journey to an NHS medical appointment?

You may be eligible for patient transport assistance, if you....

- are currently too unwell to use a car or public or community transport
- need skilled help to leave your home
- will require extra support on the journey



Patient Transport Advice Service

 **0345 155 1009***

*Local rate call charges apply and are included in mobile bundles

Vaccinations

There are a number of initiatives ongoing at the moment to ensure that patients are up-to-date with vaccinations to best protect themselves. Please contact the surgery for information on booking your vaccinations.



Shingles

Shingles is a common condition that causes a painful rash. It can sometimes lead to serious problems such as long-lasting pain, hearing loss or blindness.

You are more likely to get shingles, and it is more likely to cause serious problems, as you get older or if you have a severely weakened immune system.

The shingles vaccine helps:

- Reduce your chances of getting shingles
- Reduce your chances of getting serious problems if you do get shingles

You are eligible for the shingles vaccine if:

- You are aged 70 to 79
- You turned 65 on or after 1 September 2022
- You are 50 or over with a severely weakened immune system

More information about the Shingles vaccine can be found at:

<https://www.nhs.uk/vaccinations/shingles-vaccine/>

Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV)

RSV is a virus that is a common cause of coughs and colds. Most people get it several times during their life.

It usually gets better by itself, but in some people (especially babies and older adults) it can cause more serious illness. These illnesses can cause serious breathing problems. They may need to be treated in hospital and can be life-threatening.

The RSV vaccine reduces the risk of serious breathing problems like pneumonia and bronchiolitis.

You are eligible for the RSV vaccine if:

- You are pregnant – the vaccine is recommended during every pregnancy (from 28 weeks onwards) to help protect your baby after they are born
- You are aged 75 to 79
- Patients who turned 80 after 1 September 2024 are eligible for the RSV vaccine up until 31 August 2025.

More information about the RSV vaccine can be found at:

<https://www.nhs.uk/vaccinations/rsv-vaccine/>

Pneumococcal

The pneumococcal vaccine helps protect against serious illnesses like pneumonia and meningitis. It's recommended for people at higher risk of these illnesses, such as babies and adults aged 65 and over. You are eligible for the Pneumococcal vaccine if:

- You are 65 or over and have not previously had a pneumococcal vaccination
- You are clinically at risk

More information about the Pneumococcal vaccine can be found at:

<https://www.nhs.uk/vaccinations/pneumococcal-vaccine/>

Spring Covid Vaccinations

Our spring Covid vaccination clinics for eligible patients will begin in April. If you are eligible, you will receive an invite via text message, email, or letter from the practice.

We will contact you if you are:

- Aged 75 years or over
- Live in a care home for older adults
- Are aged 6 months or over and have a weakened immune system



Is the way that you are feeling affecting your daily life? Are you struggling to cope, feeling low, anxious or overwhelmed by your thoughts and feelings? Are you living with a long term health condition that is making you feel tired, frustrated and worried? You are not alone and TALKWORKS can help.

TALKWORKS are Devon's NHS Talking Therapies Service. A free, confidential, service, part of NHS Talking Therapies, for people aged 18+ in Devon (excluding Plymouth), helping you to feel better and giving you the tools and techniques to improve your mental and physical wellbeing.

You can self-refer directly to TALKWORKS for support. Once they have received your referral, a member of their team will be in touch to arrange an initial appointment.

TALKWORKS offer options based on Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) and a choice of help - individually, in groups or you can take part in their online CBT programme. They can offer flexible appointments, including evening slots, either face to face or over the telephone. Waiting times are short with them aiming to offer you your first appointment within six weeks.

You can self-refer by calling 0300 555 3344 or for more information visit <https://www.talkworks.dpt.nhs.uk/>

Westbank Health Walks

Westbank's Health Walks offer regular short walks each week across various locations across Devon, including Chulmleigh. Walks are graded by difficulty and length to help you choose the best for your ability. Anyone can turn up and join in – it's free, fun and friendly. Explore the outdoors, get to know the local area and meet new friends too. Full details can be found at <https://www.westbank.org.uk/healthwalks>

The Chulmleigh walk meet at The Pavilion car park, EX18 7JL fortnightly from 8 April at 9.30am. The walk is 3 miles through woods and farmland, taking in spectacular views. Dogs on leads are welcome. For more information on the Chulmleigh Health Walk contact 01769 580819.



If you are aged 40 to 74, and do not have certain pre-existing health conditions, you are eligible for an NHS health check every 5 years. The NHS Health Check is a free check-up of your overall health. It can tell you whether you're at higher risk of getting certain health problems, such as: heart disease, diabetes, kidney disease and stroke.

Your NHS Health Check will be done by a healthcare professional and will take about 20 to 30 minutes. It usually includes: measuring your height, weight and waist, blood pressure test, a cholesterol test and possible a blood sugar level test. Your healthcare professional will ask you some questions about your health and lifestyle.

To book your free, NHS Health Check contact Wallingbrook Health Group.

Meet your Patient Participation Group (PPG)

Our PPG consists of voluntary patient representatives who are actively involved in the planning and development of new and existing health services provided by Wallingbrook Health Group. The PPG meet regularly with practice staff to consider improvements in healthcare service provision supplied by the practice to patients.

Our PPG members are always keen to receive feedback and hear patient experiences. You can contact the PPG at wallingbrookppg@gmail.com or speak to members within your community.



Shelley Sherman (Chair) - Chulmleigh

Shelley enjoys fitness classes, walks in the countryside and various crafts to keep her happy and healthy. Shelley has a background as a Coastguard Rescue Officer and Firefighter.

Jack Earnshaw - Burrington

Jack joined the PPG as a result of his interest in how services are delivered and the use of IT systems. He enjoyed a career in Aerospace and Financial Services and has been involved a number of in charities and public services.

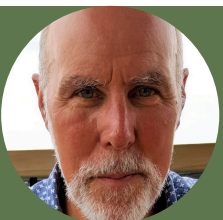


Bill Graham - Lapford

In addition to the PPG, Bill is a member of Lapford Parish Council, the PCC of the Parish Church, as well as other village committees. He had a career in technical disciplines in theatre, conferences and major events.

Mary Bavidge - Chulmleigh

Mary had a career in nursing, including psychiatric nursing. She managed nursing homes, caring for patients suffering with dementia. Mary has three children, two stepchildren, many grandchildren and one great grandson!



Andrew Warner - Winkleigh

Andrew's time on the Parish council along with an understanding of the pressures of the medical profession led him to volunteer for the PPG. Andrew was a Veterinary Surgeon and has lived in Winkleigh since 1980.

Maggie Samuel - Chulmleigh

Maggie is an advocate for an active retirement. She lives in Chulmleigh and participates in a wide variety of activities including keep fit, walking groups and being a local walk leader.

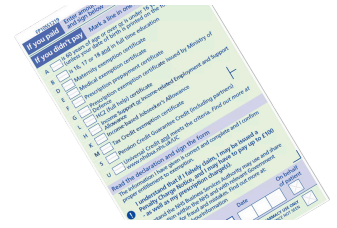


Rosemary Rives-Roberts - Chulmleigh

Rosemary has a background as a teacher, charity outreach worker and civil servant. All of which have proved useful experience for her work with the PPG. She is married with two adult children who live locally.

Prescription Penalty Charges

Following changes to the way the reverse of FP10s (your prescriptions) are checked, more patients have received fines from the NHS Business Services Authority where the incorrect box has been selected by patients or their representatives when collecting their prescriptions.



Whilst our team are happy to give general advice regarding payment exemptions, they would not know if a patient is exempt. This check is undertaken by the Business Services Authority.

Please be aware that it is the patient's responsibility to make sure the correct box is marked on the back of their prescription claim form. This is the case regardless of whether it is marked by:

- the patient
- someone on the patient's behalf
- dispensary staff

Please ensure that your exemption is valid and you have selected the correct exemption category or fully completed the 'if you pay' part on the back of the prescription to avoid a fine.

To check if you are eligible for free prescriptions visit:

<https://www.nhs.uk/nhs-services/prescriptions/check-if-you-can-get-free-prescriptions/>

For more information on saving money with a prescription prepayment certificate, visit:

<https://www.nhs.uk/nhs-services/prescriptions/save-money-with-a-prescription-prepayment-certificate-ppc/>

Open the bag



We can all play a part to stop prescription waste.

The Open The Bag Campaign aims to highlight the cost to the NHS of unused medicines and reduce wastage.

You can help by:

- Opening the bag and checking that you have only the medication you need before leaving the dispensary
- Only order the medication that you need
- Return unwanted and expired medicines to the dispensary

Here are three things you can do

to reduce medicines waste.

We want you to benefit from all of your medicines. If you don't need them or can't use them, let us know.



Open the bag before you leave.

Medicines that leave the pharmacy have to be discarded.



Only order what you need.

Medicines you don't take away this time, will be available in the future.



Return unwanted and expired medicines to us.

This protects the local waterways, wildlife and the environment.

Help us to improve your care, NHS finances and protect the environment by reducing medicines waste.

Monthly Wallingbrook Dispensary Closures

To accommodate training for all our dispensary team the dispensary will close for one hour a month. This takes place in the second week of each month, alternating between a Monday and Friday, from 1pm until 2pm. For a full list of closure days and times please visit:

<https://www.wallingbrook.co.uk/opening-hours>



Follow us on Facebook to stay up-to-date with Practice news and latest health information:

<https://www.facebook.com/WallingbrookHealthGroup>

Practice Training Afternoons

2025 Practice Training afternoons are on:

- Wednesday 11 June 2025
- Thursday 2 October 2025

On the above dates we will be closed from 1pm. Reopening as usual the next day.

If you have an urgent medical need during a training afternoon, please continue to ring the usual telephone number for the practice and you will be put through to the duty service.

We ask that you please do not ring for routine appointments and queries during that afternoon.

For more information on closures and where to access medical assistance when we are closed, please visit:

<https://www.wallingbrook.co.uk/opening-hours>

For immediate, life-threatening emergencies, continue to call 999.

Wallingbrook Health Group Contact Details

Phone - 01769 580295

Website - www.wallingbrook.co.uk

For health advice outside of practice opening hours please dial 111