

FRIENDS OF STOW SURGERY

Registered Charity No. 1086648

FOSS Newsletter No.84 Autumn 2025

Surgery News

Dr Helen Jeckel and Dr Polly Wadsworth have joined the practice since the last newsletter. They have settled in well and are enjoying meeting patients.

In November we celebrated Yvette's 20-year anniversary of working at the practice. Yvette is a Clinical Administrator and was thanked by the Partners for her dedication and service to the people of Stow and those in the surrounding villages.

Dates For the Diary 2025 / 2026

Surgery Closure

Thursday 25th December 2025

Friday 26th December 2025

Thursday 1st January 2026

The surgery will be open from 8am – 6.30pm on all other dates over the Christmas period.

When the surgery is closed: -

- Please dial 999, in the event of a life-threatening emergency.
- If you require the services of a doctor or are unsure as to the severity of a problem, please dial 111 or access 111 online (111.nhs.uk) for further information / advice.
- The Minor Injuries Unit at North Cotswolds Hospital in Moreton in Marsh is open from 8am - 8pm every day. If you are suffering from a sprain, cut / wound, skin problem such as a rash, bite, sting or infection, minor eye injury, minor illness, minor fracture or minor head injury then this is the place to go. Please contact 111 to make an appointment.
- If you require the services of a District Nurse, they can be contacted on 0300 421 8942 (please leave a message if necessary and someone will get back to you).

The following website can be used to find local pharmacies and to view opening hours.

<https://www.nhs.uk/service-search/pharmacy/find-a-pharmacy/results/GL54%201AX>.

Staff Training

The surgery has dedicated the following afternoons in 2026 for staff training: -

13th January

17th February

17th March

21st April

19th May

16th June

15th September

20th October

17th November

On these occasions the building may be closed from 12.50pm, reopening at 5pm. If the building is open during these times there may be a skeletal staffing to ensure that as many staff as possible are able to attend the training.

If you require the services of a doctor during the times that the surgery is closed, please call the usual surgery number (01451 830625) and the duty doctor will arrange to speak to you / make you an appointment to be seen.

Pharmacy First

Pharmacy First is an NHS service that enables community pharmacists to assess, treat, and if clinically appropriate, prescribe prescription-only medicines for seven common health conditions, without the need to visit a GP. All pharmacies in Gloucestershire provide this service.

The seven health conditions and age ranges are:

- Sinusitis (aged 12 and over)
- Sore throat (aged 5 and over)
- Shingles (aged 18 and over)
- Earache (children aged 1 to 17)
- Impetigo (aged 1 and over)
- Infected insect bite (aged 1 and over)
- Urinary tract infection (women aged 16 to 64)

People can get treatment for these conditions by walking into a pharmacy, via a referral from their GP surgery or via NHS111. All pharmacies have private consultation rooms so that concerns can be discussed confidentially.

If the pharmacist is unable to treat the illness, they will recommend the most appropriate alternative services. Community pharmacy teams are highly skilled, qualified healthcare professionals and medicinal experts.

Women's Health Hub

Our next Women's Health Hub is on Saturday 3rd January 2026 and there will be a further clinic on Saturday 28th March 2026. These are in addition to our weekday (Thursday afternoon) Sexual Health Clinics.

Coil and contraceptive implant fitting, HRT advice and prescribing, cervical screening and contraception advice is available at these clinics. Please make an appointment at Reception.

Cervical Screening

Cervical screening, which used to be called a smear test, is a test to check the health of the cervix and help prevent cervical cancer. All women aged 25 to 64 are invited for cervical screening every 5 years. Everyone with a cervix should be offered screening.

Steve Russell, Chief Delivery Officer and National Director for Vaccinations and Screening for NHS England, said: "We have set an ambitious target of eliminating cervical cancer within the next two decades – one of the few countries in the world who have committed to this – and we are doing everything we can to achieve our ambition by making it as easy as possible to make appointments and continuing to send invites and reminders to all eligible women.

But in order to make this a reality we need to see more women coming forward for their cervical screening appointments when invited – even if you previously missed your appointment, don't wait around for another invitation before contacting your GP practice – you can still book in now and this could save your life."

At Stow Surgery we have a good uptake of this screening but there are some patients who are significantly overdue. We have approximately 100 patients (16% of the eligible cohort) aged 25-49 years and 45 patients (8% of the eligible cohort) aged 50-64 years whom we would like to encourage to take up the offer of an appointment.

We are keen to hear feedback on how we can improve access for these groups. We currently have some appointments available on Saturday mornings and offer appointments with a range of Practice Nurses. If you have any feedback on how we can encourage more women to attend please drop us an email to L84031.gp@nhs.net.

If there are women who are anxious or who would like to talk through the procedure our practice nurses would be very happy to discuss this at an appointment with no obligation to carry out the test.

<https://www.nhs.uk/tests-and-treatments/cervical-screening/what-happens/>

Staying Well This Winter –

Advice from Alan Collett, Your Advanced Clinical Practitioner at Stow Surgery.

1. Keep Warm and Look After Yourself

Staying warm is essential, particularly for young children, older adults, and those with long-term conditions.

- Aim to keep your living spaces at 18°C or above.
- Wear layers of clothing and warm nightwear.
- Eat regular, nourishing meals, including fruit, vegetables, and sources of protein.
- Keep well-hydrated throughout the day.

Good nutrition and hydration help your immune system work at its best.

2. Prevent Winter Bugs from Spreading

Winter viruses spread incredibly easily, but simple measures can make a big difference.

- Handwashing is one of the most effective ways to reduce the spread of infections. Washing hands thoroughly with soap and warm water for 20 seconds removes viruses picked up from surfaces and prevents them reaching your face, mouth, and others around you.
- Keep tissues handy and follow the “catch it, bin it, kill it” guidance when coughing or sneezing.

- Clean frequently touched surfaces such as door handles and mobile phones.
- Ventilate rooms for short periods to refresh the air and lower viral load.
- If you're unwell, try to rest at home and avoid close contact with others until you feel better.

3. Managing Coughs, Colds, and Sore Throats

Most winter respiratory illnesses are viral and will settle within 1–2 weeks. To ease symptoms at home:

- Rest and keep up your fluid intake.
- Paracetamol or ibuprofen can help with aches, fever, and discomfort.
- Honey and lemon in hot water can soothe a cough (not suitable for under-1s).
- Saline nasal sprays, vapour rubs, or gentle steam inhalation may help with congestion.
- Warm drinks, throat lozenges, and plenty of fluids can ease sore throats.

Your community pharmacist can offer tailored advice if you're unsure what may help.

4. Knowing When to Seek Medical Advice

Please get in touch with Stow Surgery, NHS 111, or your local pharmacist if:

- Your symptoms worsen after 3–5 days
- You have a persistent high temperature
- You feel short of breath, wheezy, or are coughing up blood
- You develop chest pain
- You have a rash with fever
- You're concerned about a child's symptoms or hydration
- You have a long-term condition and feel you're deteriorating

Seek urgent help if someone is very drowsy, confused, extremely breathless, or if symptoms feel severe or unusual.

5. Make Use of Local Support

Your community pharmacy can advise on a wide range of common winter illnesses and provide over-the-counter remedies. Many now offer the Pharmacy First service, allowing assessment and treatment for certain conditions without needing to see a GP.

6. Stay Up to Date with Vaccinations

Vaccination is one of the best ways to protect yourself and those around you. If you are eligible for the flu or COVID-19 vaccines and haven't been vaccinated this Autumn please get in touch as we still have vaccines available.

7. Check in on Friends, Neighbours, and Loved Ones.

Patient Feedback

We are always keen to receive constructive feedback about the services we offer.

Sometimes we are unaware of the adverse effect systems / processes have on patients unless you tell us. Feedback can be provided via our website

<https://www.stowsurgery.co.uk/navigator/nhs-friends-and-family-test/>

Or by responding to the text message sent after each appointment.

Friends News

We continue to be extremely grateful to all our donors who enable us to continue supporting the surgery by supplying equipment and services.

So, thank you to our regular donors and to our donors who prefer to remain anonymous.

The FOSS committee was delighted to receive a cheque for over £3000 from Odditeas. This will be used to purchase a Vascular Doppler Ultrasound.

If you feel you would like to join the FOSS committee, please contact the secretary using the contact email below. We would very much welcome some new faces on the committee.

The doctors and staff at the surgery would like to wish everyone a very Happy Christmas and a healthy New Year.

Newsletters subscribe / unsubscribe

To effect changes, write to us (printed copies) or email us (emailed copies) and as appropriate we will add you to, or delete you from, our lists.

Your present FOSS committee

Officers

Chair Tim Churchward
Secretary Patrick Mattock
Treasurer Paula Evison

Committee Members

Noel Sidgwick
Jeanne Hartley

Our email address: fossc2000@gmail.com

Our postal address: c/o The Surgery, Maugersbury Road, Stow on the Wold. GL54 1AX

Surgery Opening Times

The surgery building is open from 8am to 6.30pm, Monday to Friday (excluding Bank Holidays).

Dispensary

Dispenser available: 9am – 4pm

(Prescriptions can be collected at any time during the building opening hours)

Telephoning the Surgery

Appointment requests, general enquiries and results of blood tests etc - 8am - 6.30pm

Prescription requests – 9am-4pm

Telephone numbers:

All daytime enquiries – 01451 830625 Dispensary – 01451 833482 Out of Hours – 111