

Groombridge and Hartfield Medical Group Newsletter

Issue: 1 August 2025

Introducing Our First Newsletter - A Message from Dr Matt James

Dear patients,

I am delighted to celebrate the launch of our new quarterly practice newsletter.

When I started out as a GP Trainee many years ago, my Trainer told me that *"the only certainty in General Practice is uncertainty."* I had assumed he was taking about the variety, breadth and complexity of the patients and conditions I would encounter over my career, but I now wonder whether he was as much referring to the frequent NHS management restructurings, the various and moveable performance targets, and the seemingly endless rise of administration tasks!

Thankfully another of my Trainer's observations *"in hospitals we treat diseases and the patients come and go, but in General Practice we treat patients and the diseases come and go"* has also proved to stand the test of time (at least in our smallish village practice!)

We are fortunate to have a legacy of excellent primary care, from when Dr Peter Steele and his team first established the Surgery in the 1950's, through the merger of Groombridge and Hartfield Surgeries under the guidance of Dr Andrew Wolfle and his team, to the present Groombridge and Hartfield Medical Group team.

I hope this newsletter will help keep you informed about what's happening at your surgery, offers some insight into the different roles within our team, and gives you the opportunity to celebrate what's going well, or share ideas or feedback on what could be improved. Alongside updates from the practice, we will also include messages from the NHS, local community news, and tips to support your health and wellbeing.

On behalf of the Surgery I wish you all a happy and healthy summer.

Dr Matt James



Local NHS Services

Did you know you can get same day advice and treatment from your local pharmacy for a range of common health concerns through the Pharmacy First service?

Your pharmacist can now treat:

Condition	Age Range
Earache	1 – 17 years
Impetigo	1 year and over
Infected Insect Bite	1 year and over
Sore Throat	5 years and over
Sinusitis	12 year and over
Urinary Tract Infection	Women aged 16 - 64
Shingles	18 years and over

Find out more, nhs.uk/thinkpharmacyfirst

Please make the right choice

Help us
help you
make
the right
choice

NHS
Sussex



Sore throat, cuts and grazes, hangovers, headaches

Treat minor issues at home



Coughs, colds, tummy trouble, rashes, aches and pains

See a pharmacist



Persistent symptoms and long-term conditions

Speak to your GP practice



Not sure where to go or what to do?

Visit 111.nhs.uk or call 111



Sprains, burns and minor fractures

Visit your local MIUs/UTCs



Serious or life-threatening emergencies like chest pain

A&E or 999

Need to talk?
We're here to listen.



Text **SUSSEX to **85258** for free, confidential support, 24/7**

in partnership with

shout

From 1 April 2025, anyone in Sussex who is feeling anxious, stressed, lonely, or struggling with low mood or depression can now access free, confidential mental health support by text.

By texting the word **SUSSEX** to **85258**, people can connect within 15 minutes with a qualified mental health professional for crisis intervention, emotional support and signposting to appropriate services. This service is anonymous and won't show up on a phone bill.

Get Ready for Our 2025 Flu Clinics!



We know it's the middle of summer, but our team is already working hard behind the scenes to organise our 2025 Saturday Flu Clinics, which we aim to begin at the start of October. Eligible patients will be invited in due course, once vaccine deliveries and clinic dates have been confirmed.

In the meantime, please make sure we have your most up-to-date contact information. You can easily update your details through the NHS App or by giving the surgery a call.

Practice Overview

Between April and June 2025:

Total Appointments Booked:



April: 2474

May: 2368

June: 2596

eConsults Submitted:

April: 251

May: 269

June: 280



Save the Date

The surgery will be closed on the following date:

Thursday, 2nd October 2025
from 12:30 pm for mandatory staff training.

Normal opening hours will resume
Friday 3rd October 2025.

Have Your Say Patient Participation Group

Our Patient Participation Group's Annual General Meeting took place on Saturday 7th June 2025 at Hartfield Village Hall. Around 85 patients came to meet members of the practice team, ask questions, and take part in a general Q&A session.

The comments and feedback we received showed how much our patients value the care we provide. As a small practice with around 5,500 patients, this helps us build positive relationships. Hearing such kind words was a proud and humbling moment for all of us.

We'd like to thank the PPG for organising the event and for their continued support in representing the voice of our patients, and a special thanks to Lin Eyre, who has stepped down after 10 years dedication and contribution to the PPG.

If you'd like to learn more about the PPG, or get involved, please visit our website or email gandhppg@outlook.com. All patients are welcome to join and have their say.

NHS APP SUPPORT

Do you need help or support with using or accessing the NHS App?

Drop in at Hartfield Surgery **every Thursday**, or contact Emily for support on Tuesdays and Wednesdays: **01892 863326**

Get help with:

- Signing up
- Booking appointments
- Ordering prescriptions
- Viewing health records
- Viewing test results



**Groombridge
& Hartfield
Medical Group**



Are you looking to feel more confident using online services, ordering repeat prescriptions, or accessing your medical records online?

We now offer NHS App support for all patients registered at Groombridge and Hartfield Medical Group.

With the NHS App you can:

- book and manage appointments
 - order repeat prescriptions
- view test results and your GP medical records
- get health information and advice

If you need help getting started or have any questions, you can just drop into Hartfield Surgery on Thursdays, or contact Emily on Tuesdays and Wednesdays (**01892 863326**) for step-by-step assistance with downloading, setting up, and using the NHS App - all in a relaxed and friendly setting.

Getting to Know Your Practice - Staff News

Updates, introductions, goodbyes and a closer look at the teams that keep the practice running.

Since late last year, there have been a number of updates across Groombridge and Hartfield Medical Group team:

We were delighted to welcome back Dr Melissa Caesar in November. She was previously with us during her final year of GP training, and many patients may have seen her during consultations at that time. After successfully completing her training and qualifying as a GP, she has now returned to the practice and is working one day a week on Thursdays.

We're proud to be supporting Sam Neville-Towle, our phlebotomist, in his training as Healthcare Assistant. This follows Nicola, our previous HCA, passing her exams and qualifying as a nurse last year. We're pleased she has stayed on as part of the team in her new role as a practice nurse.

We've also welcomed back Louise and Courtney to the Patient Services Team following their maternity leave. It's great to have them back at the front desk and phones as they settle back into their roles.

It's been a busy few months since we said goodbye to Dr Hasanen Abdulhameed and Dr Alice Bellan at the end of March and April, and the absence of trainee doctors has definitely been noticeable. From the beginning of August, we'll be welcoming two new doctors:

- Dr Monika Bobek, who will be with us for four months
- Dr Muhammed Khan, who will be with us for one year

Every day brings something new at the practice, and we're proud to have a committed team supporting our patients, welcoming new faces, and working together to provide the best care.

If you're travelling this summer and your repeat medication is due while you're away, please remember to order and collect your prescriptions in advance.

Please allow up to **3 working days** for processing and dispensing to help avoid any last minute delays.

If you're planning to travel outside the UK, you may need to be vaccinated against some diseases found in other parts of the world.

You should see the practice nurse, or attend a private travel clinic at least 6 to 8 weeks before you're due to travel.

Some vaccines need to be given in advance to allow your body to develop immunity, some may involve a number of doses spread over several weeks or months.

NHS
Sussex

Going away this summer?

**Make sure you
order your medicine
in good time**

Order and collect
repeat prescription



Help us
help you
make
the right
choice