



Widcombe Surgery

NEWSLETTER Issue: 4 Winter 2026



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WELCOME TO OUR PRACTICE NEWSLETTER

Happy New Year from Widcombe Surgery!

We're excited to bring you the Winter edition of the Widcombe Surgery Newsletter – your go-to guide for seasonal updates, health advice, and what's new at the practice.

In this issue, we'll share highlights from the past few months, outline our plans for the start of 2026, and give you practical tips to stay healthy during the colder season.

You'll also find information on Winter Health Advice, local health campaigns, and ways to get involved – whether that's joining our Patient Participation Group or simply sharing your feedback to help us improve.

💡 Got an idea or something you'd like to see in the next newsletter? We'd love to hear from you! You can email us at:
bswicb.ppg.widcombesurgery@nhs.net

Mark Little
Practice Manager Partner

Looking at our data

Every quarter, we release what we call our GP infographics, which aim to give you an insight into the goings on at your local Practice. We hope you find this infographics insightful.



Widcombe Surgery

In the 3 months between October and December 2025

- **11482**
Appointments Completed
- **397**
Patients did not attend their appointment
- **234**
New Patient Registrations
- **14804**
Prescriptions Issued
- **4257**
Appointment Requests via our Online Triage system
- **5485**
Calls Answered
- **8957**
Number of Patients registered at the Practice



APPOINTMENTS MISSED IN DECEMBER 2025

- 148** Missed Appointments
- 36** Hours of GP & Nurse Time lost

If you cannot attend your appointment, please let us know so it can be offered to someone else!

Meet our GP Team!



Dr Rebecca Hodson
GP Partner



Dr Louise Abson
GP Partner



Dr Daisy Curling
GP Partner



Dr David Jones
GP Partner



Dr Claudia Hon
GP



Dr Rosie Ellis
GP



Dr Harry Collin
GP



Dr Amanda Chan-Pensley
GP

General Practitioners (GPs) are highly trained doctors who provide expert medical care for patients of all ages. They diagnose and treat a wide range of conditions, manage long-term illnesses, prescribe medications, and coordinate care with hospitals and community services. GPs also offer preventative advice and health checks to help you stay well.

What's the difference between a GP and a GP Partner?

- A GP delivers clinical care and sees patients day-to-day.
- A GP Partner does the same but also owns a share of the practice and helps manage its operations, including decisions about services and future planning.

Our GPs have varied interests and specialisms, such as women's health, diabetes, mental health, musculoskeletal problems, and care for older adults. This diversity means we can offer a broad range of expertise within the practice.

Your Usual GP

Every patient is allocated a "Usual GP" to support continuity of care. However, you are welcome to request an appointment with any GP in the team if you prefer or if your usual GP is unavailable.

Stay Well This Winter

Keep Warm

- Heat rooms you use to at least 18°C
- Wear layers, keep active, close bedroom windows at night
- Look for help with heating costs if needed

Prevent Winter Bugs

- Get your flu & COVID-19 vaccines if you're eligible
- Wash hands, catch coughs and sneezes, ventilate rooms
- Stay home if unwell; consider a mask around others

Mind Your Mood

- Daylight & movement boost energy
- Stay connected with friends and family
- Ask for help if you're feeling low

Long-term Conditions

- Keep meds topped up; book reviews
- Carry inhalers if you have asthma/COPD
- Know your self-care plan & red flags

Need Help Now?

- Pharmacy First: advice & treatment for 7 common conditions
- NHS 111 for urgent advice 24/7
- Use Widcombe online triage or phone the surgery

Useful links

- Winter health & keeping warm: [nhs.uk/live-well/seasonal-health/keep-warm-keep-well](https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/seasonal-health/keep-warm-keep-well)
- Flu vaccine: [nhs.uk/vaccinations/flu-vaccine](https://www.nhs.uk/vaccinations/flu-vaccine)
- COVID-19 vaccine: [nhs.uk/vaccinations/COVID-19-vaccine](https://www.nhs.uk/vaccinations/COVID-19-vaccine)
- Pharmacy First: [england.nhs.uk/primary-care/pharmacy/pharmacy-services/pharmacy-first](https://www.england.nhs.uk/primary-care/pharmacy/pharmacy-services/pharmacy-first)
- When to use NHS 111: [nhs.uk/nhs-services/urgent-and-emergency-care-services/when-to-use-111](https://www.nhs.uk/nhs-services/urgent-and-emergency-care-services/when-to-use-111)

Repeat prescriptions- Only order what you need campaign



Repeat prescriptions - Only order what you need

Did you know that the NHS in Bath, Swindon & Wiltshire spends around £332 million each year on medicines?

A huge £265 million of that goes on repeat prescriptions.



The problem is that many people reorder their regular prescriptions every month without checking what they need and then return unwanted medicines to their pharmacy. Unfortunately returned medicines cannot be reused or recycled. They must be destroyed. This adds up to **£26 million of wasted medicines every year** – money that your local NHS could use for other vital health services.

How You Can Help

If you get repeat prescriptions (this can also include oral nutritional supplements), take a moment each month to check what you really need. Only order the medicines you're running out of – don't worry, you can always order more when you need them later.

Stay Well

- Unused medicines can expire and may not work as well as we want them to.
- Keeping big stocks of medicines at home can make drug shortages worse.



Stay Safe

- Large supplies at home can also be dangerous for children and pets if they are accidentally swallowed.
- Medicines are prescribed just for you – sharing them isn't safe.



Stay Green

- Return unwanted medicines to your pharmacy, not the bin or sink – it's the safest way to dispose of them and helps the environment.
- Once medicines leave the pharmacy, they can't be recycled or reused, so only order what you need.



A simple change makes a big difference. Here's what can you do to help tackle medicines waste...

Only order what you need

- Check what medicines you have at home before you order your repeat prescriptions. If you have enough, only request the medicines you need this time. You will still be able to order others again in future.
- Speak to your pharmacy team if you have any questions about how to change your prescription request.

Open your prescription bag

- Check your prescription bag before leaving the pharmacy to make sure you only have what you need and that there's nothing extra in there. If you return an item before you leave the pharmacy, the medicines can be reused.

Take them with you

- Always keep a list of your medicines, the doses, and how you take them in your wallet or purse. If you know you're going into hospital, take all your medicines with you.
- This gives hospital staff a complete record of what you're taking. The hospital won't need to dispense more of the same medication which can help speed up your care.
- When it's time to go home take the right medicines with you. Before you leave ask if any changes have been made to your medicines and take home everything that's still suitable.

Have a conversation

- Let your pharmacy team know if you've stopped taking any of your medicines or if they're no longer right for you.
- This is not a problem and will help your team improve your healthcare.
- Remember unused or out of date medicines can be returned to your pharmacy for safe disposal.

Check before you order. Stay Well. Stay Safe. Stay Green

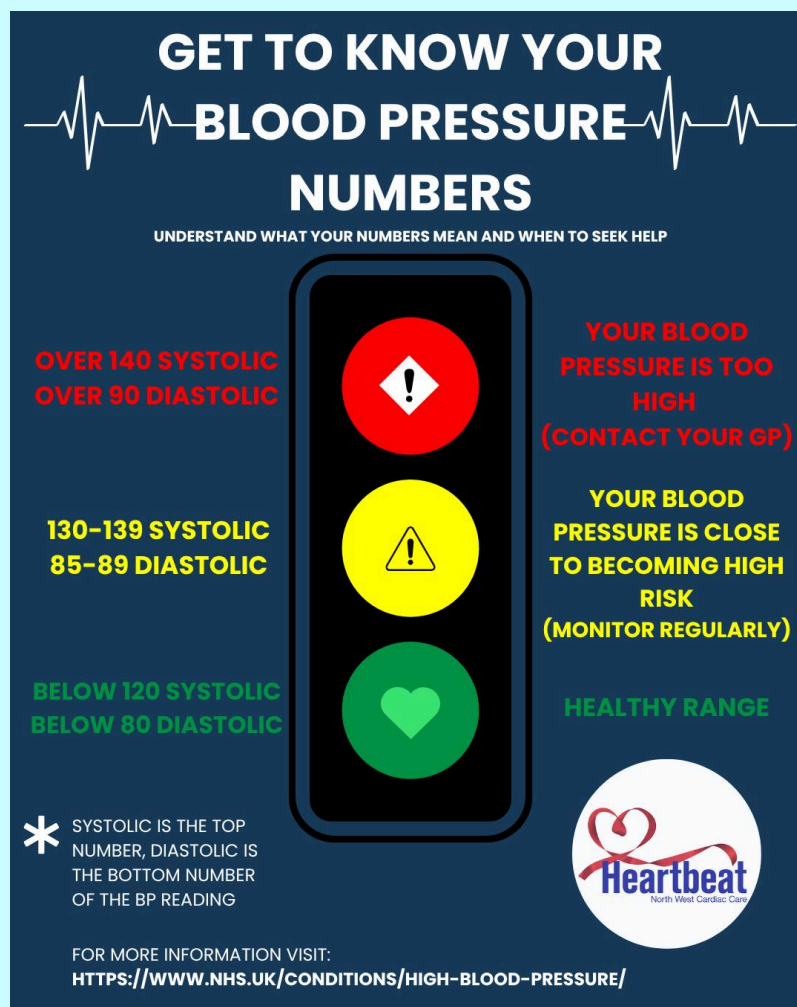
The Importance of Knowing your Blood Pressure

Why is it important?

High blood pressure (hypertension) is a major risk factor for heart disease, stroke, and kidney problems. Regular monitoring helps detect changes early and ensures your treatment is working effectively.

Why might you need to do it?

Home blood pressure monitoring is often recommended because readings taken in a clinical setting can sometimes be higher due to anxiety (known as "white coat effect"). Monitoring at home gives a more accurate picture of your blood pressure during your daily routine. This helps your clinician make better decisions about your treatment and reduces the risk of unnecessary medication changes.



Buying a monitor

You can buy a clinically validated upper-arm blood pressure monitor from:

- Pharmacies (e.g., Boots, Lloyds)
- Online retailers (e.g., Amazon)
- Large supermarkets

Prices typically range from £20–£40. We recommend avoiding wrist monitors as they are less accurate.

Borrowing from the surgery

We have a small supply of monitors available for patients to borrow. To keep this service running, we ask for a £20 deposit, which is refunded when the monitor is returned in good condition. This helps us replace monitors if they are lost or damaged.

Support with the Cost of Living

Help Available Locally in Bath & North East Somerset

We understand that rising living costs are affecting many people. If you're finding things difficult financially, please know that **support is available**, and you're not alone.



Food & Essential Support

- If you're struggling to afford food or essentials, local services can help with:
 - Emergency food parcels
 - Low-cost community pantries
 - Essential household items

BANES Food Finder: www.banesfoodfinder.org.uk • Bath Foodbank • Genesis Trust Bath • Oasis Pantry



Help with Bills & Financial Support

- Energy & household bills
- One-off payments & vouchers

Welfare Support Scheme: www.bathnes.gov.uk/apply-welfare-support

Household Support Fund: www.bathnes.gov.uk/apply-household-support-fund



Help with NHS Costs

- Prescriptions & dental care
- Travel to NHS appointments

NHS Low Income Scheme: www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/nhs-low-income-scheme



Advice & Wellbeing Support

- Benefits & debt advice
- Mental health support



Citizens Advice BANES:

www.citizensadvicebanes.org.uk

- **Bath Mind Directory:** www.bathmind.org.uk



Not Sure Where to Start?

- Visit the websites above
- Talk to [Citizens Advice](#)
- Or ask us to signpost you to local support



Want to make a difference at Widcombe Surgery?

There is still an opportunity to join our Virtual Patient Participation Group (PPG) and we'd love for YOU to get involved!

Our Virtual PPG is a fantastic opportunity for patients to connect with the surgery team online and help shape the future of healthcare in our community. By joining, you can:

- Share your ideas and feedback to improve services
- Help influence how we support our patients
- Be a voice for the community and promote positive change

All communication will take place virtually through email, SMS, and other digital platforms, making it easy to participate from the comfort of your home.

We're looking for enthusiastic and engaged individuals who want to make a difference. Whether you have lots of ideas, or just want to listen and contribute when you can, we'd love to hear from you!

We are seeking people from all backgrounds, to ensure a diverse range of voices are heard. Whether you are a young adult, a parent, a carer, retired, have a long-term condition or come from a minority background – your input is invaluable.

Interested in joining or want to learn more? Register your interest by sending an email to the address below or alternatively, patients can register their interest on our website

Contact us by email at:

bswicb.ppg.widcombesurgery@nhs.net

Register via our website at:

<https://widcombesurgery.nhs.uk/surgery-information/patient-participation-group>

Thank you for taking the time to read our quarterly Practice Newsletter.

We hope you have found the information relevant and useful. If you have any feedback, please let us know.