Shipston Medical Centre
Patient Participation Group (PPG)
Website: https://shipstonmc.warwickshire.nhs.uk/
X: https://x.com/ShipstonGP
Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/ShipstonMC
Instagram: shipstonmedicalcentrenhs
No 33: July 2026

SUMMER EDITION

STAFF UPDATE

We're delighted to welcome several new members to the Shipston Medical Centre team.

Leanne Cripps has recently joined us as our new **Social Prescriber**, taking over the role from **Jacqui Close**. We are pleased to have Leanne on board and look forward to the support she will provide to patients by helping them access local services and community support.

We also extend a warm welcome to **Lisa Jewett** and **Lauren Davis**, who have joined our **Reception Team**. They are settling in well, and we're sure many of you will meet them when you next contact or visit the practice.

Looking ahead, we are excited to welcome **Dr Priya Gill** and **Dr Zac Cannon**, who will be joining us during the first week of August as GP Registrars on training placements. As a teaching practice, we are proud to support the training of the next generation of GPs, and we know they will be a valuable addition to our clinical team.

We wish all our new colleagues every success in their new roles and hope you'll join us in making them feel welcome.

MEDICAL CENTRE REFURBISHMENT - PROGRESS REPORT

Work on our practice refurbishment continues to make excellent progress, and we are excited to share an update with our patients.

The project has included installing new windows and front doors, improving insulation to make the building more energy efficient, creating a dedicated sluice room to support modern healthcare, reconfiguring the reception and dispensary areas to make better use of the available space, providing new patient toilets including an accessible toilet, and enhancing our first-floor office accommodation.

Patients visiting the practice will already have noticed the new windows and front entrance. Once the refurbishment is complete, the reception and dispensary will be directly ahead as you enter the building, while the waiting area will remain in its familiar location, although it will be slightly smaller following the creation of the new toilet facilities.



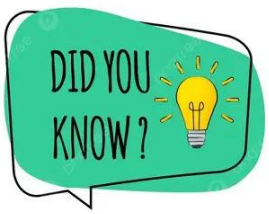
We are pleased that work has progressed so well that we expect to take occupation of the refurbished 1st floor office areas within the next couple of weeks, ahead of the original programme.

As is often the case with the renovation of older buildings, however, some unforeseen issues have been uncovered during the works. Additional ventilation work is now required in one area to meet current Building Control requirements. Our architects and contractors are working closely to finalise the solution, and while this is likely to extend the overall construction programme, we are hopeful that it will have only a limited impact on reopening the building for full patient use.

We would like to thank the NHS and Coventry and Warwickshire ICB for their support in making this refurbishment possible. This project represents an important first phase in improving our facilities. As patients will appreciate, only part of the building has been refurbished through the current funding, and we hope to continue improving the remainder of the premises as future funding opportunities become available.

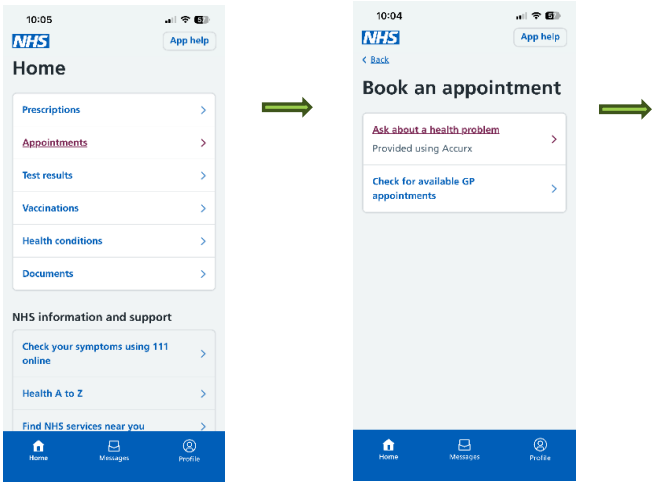
Thank you for your patience and understanding while these improvements are being carried out. We look forward to welcoming you into the refurbished practice very soon.

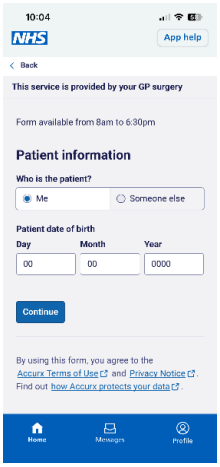
ON-LINE TRIAGE



..that the AccurX on-line triage form which allows you to contact the Practice with a non-urgent medical or admin request can also be accessed via the **NHS App?**

Just log in to your NHS App as usual and follow the appointment link to take you through to the user friendly on-line form:





Experience with the AccurX triage process since February 2024 demonstrates that patients who complete the form themselves provide greater detail about their condition. This allows the duty team to more accurately determine the most effective response for each patient. Receptionists are of course happy to fill in the form for people who are not comfortable using on-line services. We are grateful to the Digital Champions who run regular NHS App training sessions at the EB community hub. They can also show you how to use the App to easily access your health record, order repeat medication or check test results.

If you are interested in attending a Digital Champions session, please call the Medical Centre, selecting option 6 and then option 1 for medical records and we will take your details.

STAYING WELL DURING VERY WARM WEATHER



With several recent days seeing temperatures above **30°C**, we'd like to remind everyone how important it is to take extra care during periods of very hot weather.

Hot weather can affect anyone, but babies and young children, older adults, pregnant women and people with long-term health conditions are at greater risk of becoming unwell.

To help stay safe in the heat:

- **Drink plenty of fluids**, even if you don't feel thirsty. Water is the best choice, and it's important to avoid becoming dehydrated.
- **Stay out of the sun during the hottest part of the day** (usually between 11am and 3pm) where possible.
- **Keep your home cool** by closing curtains or blinds in rooms that face the sun and opening windows when it's cooler outside.
- **Wear loose-fitting, light-coloured clothing** and a wide-brimmed hat if you're outdoors. Don't forget sunscreen with a high SPF.
- **Avoid strenuous activity** during the hottest part of the day and, if you do exercise, try to do so early in the morning or later in the evening when temperatures are lower.
- **Check on family members, friends and neighbours,** particularly anyone who is elderly, vulnerable or living alone.

Be aware of the signs of heat exhaustion, which include headache, dizziness, excessive sweating, muscle cramps, feeling sick, and tiredness. Moving to a cool place, drinking water and resting will usually help. However, if symptoms do not improve within 30 minutes, or someone becomes confused, loses consciousness or has a very high temperature, seek urgent medical advice as this could be a sign of heatstroke.

Many medicines should continue to be taken as prescribed during hot weather, but some can increase the risk of dehydration or make you more sensitive to the heat or the sun. If you have concerns about your medication or your health during periods of hot weather, please speak to a member of our team or your pharmacist.

By taking a few simple precautions, we can all stay healthier and safer during the summer months.

HELP PROTECT YOUR CHILD AGAINST MEASLES – CHECK THEIR MMR VACCINATIONS



This year, the NHS is running a national campaign to help ensure that children are fully protected against **measles, mumps and rubella (MMR)**. The campaign follows a rise in measles cases across the UK and aims to make sure that any children who have missed one or more doses of the vaccine have the opportunity to catch up.

If your child is **aged between 1 and 5 years** and is missing one or more MMR vaccinations, you may receive an invitation from the practice to book an appointment. We will contact eligible families on several occasions to help make it as easy as possible to arrange vaccination.

From **7 July 2026**, NHS England will also be writing directly to the parents and guardians of children aged **6 to 11 years** who are recorded as missing one or both doses of the MMR vaccine. If you receive one of these letters, please contact the practice to arrange an appointment.
If you believe your child has already received both doses of the MMR vaccine elsewhere, please let us know so we can ensure their medical record is up to date.

The MMR vaccine is safe, effective and provides long-lasting protection against three serious infectious diseases. Two doses are needed for the best protection.

If you have any questions or would like to check your child's vaccination status, please contact the practice and our team will be happy to help.

ARE YOU ELIGIBLE FOR AN NHS HEALTH CHECK?



This check is for people who are aged 40 to 74 who do **not** have any of the following pre-existing conditions. You will already be offered regular check-ups if you have already been diagnosed with these:

- Heart disease
- Chronic kidney disease
- Diabetes
- High blood pressure (hypertension)
- Atrial fibrillation
- Transient ischaemic attack
- Familial hypercholesterolaemia (Inherited high cholesterol)
- Heart failure
- Peripheral arterial disease
- Stroke
- Currently being prescribed medicines such as statins to lower cholesterol
- Previous checks have found that you have a 20% or higher risk of getting cardiovascular disease over the next 10 years

If you would like a health check and believe you are eligible, please contact the Practice through the usual routes to make an appointment.

REPORT FROM THE PATIENT MEETING HELD AT THE TOWNSEND HALL, WEDNESDAY 17TH JUNE



In keeping with tradition, the annual Patient Meeting provided patients with an opportunity to hear directly from the SMC Partners and wider health care related teams about updates to staffing, services and ways of working, all designed to improve efficiency, safety and patient experience.
Topics covered this year included updates on the refurbishment of the main medical centre premises and the planned introduction of a service which will streamline clinical processes such as blood test and medication monitoring.
One of the main elements of the meeting, led by Jan Flynn, Frailty Advanced Nurse Practitioner, gave a description of how the SMC Frailty Team and other services such as the District Nursing Team, Shipston Home Nursing, the Stour Health and Wellbeing Partnership and PPG are working together to provide proactive, holistic support to people who are showing signs of frailty or are vulnerable. The following points were covered:

- The **referral pathways** into the service – including direct referral by the patient or a member of their family.

- The **comprehensive assessment process**, including physical health, mental wellbeing, medication reviews, falls prevention, social support, carer needs, and advance care planning.

- Where patients are seen, with an emphasis on **home visits** to better understand their circumstances, alongside clinic appointments and community outreach at venues such as the community hub which takes place at the Ellen Badger Hospital each 3rd Thursday morning of the month.

- How Jan, and colleague Nikki Futers, provide **continuity of care**, supporting patients as their needs change, including any transition into a care home.

Jan also highlighted the team's close collaboration with a wide range of patient services, including other members of the GP practice team, physiotherapy and occupational therapy, adult social care, district nursing, social prescribing, palliative care, hospital frailty teams, memory services, virtual wards, Hospital at Home, the Ellen Badger Medical Unit, Home First/CERT
(Community Emergency Response) teams, voluntary and community organisations

District Nurse Jane Parsons outlined the team's role in providing wound care, catheter care and palliative care, highlighting the strong partnership working with Shipston Medical Centre and the excellent integration of local health services.

Head of Nursing, Shipston Home Nursing, Anna Briggs described their hospice-at-home service, which provides nursing, emotional and wellbeing support and end-of-life care in patients' homes. She emphasised the importance of working closely with patients, families and the practice team.

Kirsty Holder, CEO presented the work of the **Stour Health & Wellbeing Partnership** including falls prevention classes, physical activity sessions, community wellbeing hubs amounting to around 800 activities each year.
She also highlighted collaborative initiatives such as the recent Death Matters Event, promoting conversations about advance planning and end-of-life care.

Chris Hemsley, PPG Committee, confirmed that trained members of the PPG are now making proactive calls to patients who have highlighted to the Practice that they have caring responsibilities. They are able to signpost to local services such as the Carers Champions at SMC, to the Frailty Team and to the Social Prescribing team as appropriate. Also to the Warwickshire Carers Trust which offers carers assessments and a range of resources for carers including access to equipment, benefits and emergency planning. Chris encouraged patients to inform the Practice if they are an unpaid carer so that appropriate support can be offered.

Jan concluded the presentation by emphasising that the work of the Frailty Team has evolved into becoming an integral part of the wider neighbourhood multidisciplinary team, delivering care which supports patients and their families. This in turn helps reduce unnecessary GP and hospital involvement while reassuring patients and maintaining continuity of care.

Patients who attended the meeting also had the opportunity to provide feedback to and ask questions of the SMC Partners and other contributors.

For a full report of the meeting including the audience Q&A, please follow the link here: https://shipstonmc.warwickshire.nhs.uk/docs/M84025/Patient%20Meeting%20June%202026%20-%20Meeting%20Notes.pdf

CHANGE TO DISPENSARY PHONE LINE



Following a recent review, the dispensary phone line will now only be available **between 14.00 and 16:00** on weekdays **from 3rd August 2026**.

The reasons for this are:

- Managing calls all day reduces the time our staff have for safely preparing medications. We note that nearby dispensaries have either removed their dispensary phone line or similarly reduced the window it is available each day.

- Answerphone messages can be difficult to interpret and do not provide an opportunity to clarify information or to carry out the usual identity checks.

- Safer, widely adopted alternative routes now exist – including the NHS App and the on-line triage form.

By concentrating telephone calls into a dedicated period each afternoon, our team will have uninterrupted time to prepare

prescriptions safely and efficiently, helping us to maintain timely dispensing for all patients.

Recommended ways of ordering medication:

- The NHS App
- Online triage form
- Repeat prescription slip
- By visiting the practice and talking to a member of the team

Patients who are not comfortable using on-line services are being contacted individually to ensure they continue to have appropriate access to medication ordering and support.

Automatic ordering:
The dispensary team can also order regular repeat medications on your behalf via our 'Automatic' system. Should you wish to utilise this, please let us know and we will check whether your medication requirements enable us to provide this service.

Dr George Naylor, GP Partner and Dispensary Lead, Shipston Medical Centre

SURGERY CLOSURES
Staff Training
Each month all Warwickshire GP surgeries are closed for one afternoon from 12.30pm for staff training. The next dates are:

Wednesday 23rd September
Thursday 15th October

GOT QUESTIONS ABOUT OUR PRACTICE?
Do you have ideas, feedback, or suggestions about how our services run? Or maybe you'd just like to share something positive with the team but aren't sure who to tell?

Our Patient Participation Group (PPG) is here to help! They can:

- Find answers to your questions
- Pass on your ideas to the right person
- Represent patient views to improve our services

To contact them, email the Chair, Carole Nossiter, on shipstonppg@gmail.com including your contact details and she or one of the team will respond to you.

LOCAL MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES
We sometimes receive requests for information about the availability of local mental health services. We are grateful to Healthwatch Warwickshire for providing the following update:

Kooth - Home - Kooth
Young people can sign up and receive online text-based support. It is a fully safeguarded mental health platform that offers self-help activities, professional counselling and support in one place. The platform allows young people to engage at their own pace with a variety of interventions.

Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) – Referrals can only be made by Health or Education professionals. For mental health referrals- Referrals | CAMHS
Neurodiversity referrals: Making a Referral | CAMHS

Talking Therapies - Home | Coventry, Warks & Solihull Talking Therapies

Over 16s can self-refer for support. Talking therapies are treatments which involve talking to a trained professional about your thoughts, feelings and behaviour. Talking therapies:

- give you a safe time and place to talk to someone who won't judge you
- help you make sense of things and understand yourself better
- help you resolve complicated feelings, or find ways to live with them
- help you recognise unhelpful patterns in the way you think or act, and find ways to change them (if you want to).

Complete the online self-referral form or telephone our referral centre on 02476 671 090 (Monday to Friday, 9am to 4.30pm)

New Hope Counselling - South Warwickshire-based Christian charity offering confidential and low-cost counselling to any who are in need. (Whilst not an NHS service, people are being signposted here when they don't fit the criteria to access NHS mental health services)
07799 015650 **Low-Cost Counselling | Warwickshire | New Hope Counselling**

MIND - **Support in Warwickshire - CWMind**

Wellbeing for Warwickshire - Home - Wellbeing for Warwickshire
0800616171-The mental wellbeing line is open Monday to Friday, 9am–5pm.

Suicide Prevention website - Dear Life : Home

Mental Health Crisis Team – phone 111. The very first question asks if you are calling for physical health (option 1) or mental health (option 2). This is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year.
Call 999 in an emergency – when someone is seriously ill, injured or their life is at risk.

Coventry and Warwickshire Partnership Trust (CWPT) have also provided an update about **SHOUT**, the free 24/7 crisis text support service for people who are struggling to cope and need immediate mental health support. Texting SHOUT 85258 gets a response from trained volunteers.

Texting **CWHOPE to 85258** (which is dedicated to Coventry and Warwickshire residents) gets a response from mental health professionals.

HEARING AID BATTERIES



Batteries can now once again be sourced from the Ellen Badger Hospital – from the SWFT ground floor reception desk. This is generally manned between 8.30am – 4.30pm, weekdays only.

Please note that batteries can only be issued to patients with Audiology Department hearing aids – please bring along the white card which was issued to you along with your hearing aids.

STOUR HEALTH and WELLBEING PARTNERSHIP

What's On This Summer at the Ellen Badger Hospital
Stour Health and Wellbeing Partnership has plenty going on at the Ellen Badger Hospital this summer, with cool, welcoming spaces and something for everyone.

TOY LIBRARY
Running throughout the summer every Tuesday, 9:30 - 11:00, and Thursday, 11:00 - 12:00, in an air-conditioned room. You don't need to be a a member to come along, but if you'd like to borrow toys, annual membership is only £5. We've seen a lovely rise in grandparents joining lately — perfect if you've got grandchildren visiting these holidays and want to keep them entertained without cluttering up the house with new toys.

Community Hub
Our newly named Community Hub offers a cool space, a friendly face, and good refreshments every Monday and Thursday, 10:00 - 12:00 noon.

Parent Carers Support Group
For parents and carers of children with SEND, this group meets once a month on the last Tuesday, 9:30 - 11:00. A chance to connect with others who understand, share experiences, and get a bit of support.

Singing Down Memory Lane
A lovely, informal singing group held on the last Friday of the month, 11:00 - 12:00. All welcome, no experience needed — just come along and enjoy a sing-song.

Bereavement Café and Repair Café
Please note that both the Bereavement Café and Repair Café will be taking a break in August but will return with renewed energy in September. Keep an eye out for dates.

Whatever brings you in this summer, we'd love to see you.

SHIPSTON MEDICAL CENTRE VACANCY



SHARING THE INFORMATION
If you know of patients who aren't on Facebook do let them know that the newsletter is available for collection from the medical centre receptions, the Dispensary and waiting rooms. If they have their medication delivered, they can also ask the delivery driver for a copy.

The PPG distributes hard copies to various locations around Shipston including the community hub at the Ellen Badger Hospital, the library, post office and town council offices.

The newsletter is also published on our website under Patient News, and we alert on Facebook and X when it's published. If you would like an electronic copy of the newsletter emailed to you each time there is a new edition, (every 2 months) please contact reception.