

OCTOBER 2025

BRAMBLEHAIES SURGERY



NEWSLETTER

KEEPING YOU UP TO DATE WITH YOUR SURGERY



JOIN THE NATION IN GOING SMOKE-FREE THIS STOPTOBER

Every October, thousands of people across the UK take part in Stoptober – the national campaign to help smokers quit. Research shows that if you can stop smoking for 28 days, you're five times more likely to quit for good.

Our surgery team can support you with:

- Free stop smoking advice and nicotine replacement therapy.
- Local quit-smoking services that offer one-to-one or group support.
- Apps and digital tools to track your progress and manage cravings.

Quitting is one of the best things you can do for your health – you'll notice improvements to your breathing, energy levels and finances within weeks.

Ask at reception or visit www.nhs.uk/stoptober to get started.

STAFFING

A message from Ruth Tucker...

Well after 13 years working with you it is now time for me to say 'goodbye' and start my next adventure – RETIREMENT!

I was first employed at Bramblehaies 2nd May 2012 as a Health Facilitator which was at the time a unique role that was started at College Surgery when I was first employed there in 2008.

I have been involved in various Projects including the Looking After Ourselves Project looking at 'Self Help', The University of Westminster Project looking at my role of a Health Facilitator in helping those with Pre-Diabetes/Diabetes manage their long term condition more effectively, Devon Weight Management Service Tier 1 & 2 to name a few.

The next 'interesting event' we all experienced was the COVID Pandemic! As I was unable to see patients face-to-face I still supported them by telephone/video call and also added 400 patients to my list of contacts who were shielding to ensure their medical and mental health needs were met where possible. During this time I was asked to Co-ordinate the Clinics for the Culm Valley PCN at College Surgery which was the designated Vaccination Centre for the 5 Surgeries in this PCN. This included me coordinating and supporting 100 volunteers who were amazing with the time they gave us some over 30 hours a week!



Although at times it has been challenging it has also been an amazing journey, from being a very innovative role to now 'Social Prescribing' being recognised by the NHS as an important part of encouraging patients to take ownership of their health and helping to show them the way.

I as you all know have a passion for supporting people to improve their health in whatever way that may be. I am proud at what I have achieved over this time and will be forever be grateful for the support I have received particularly in the more challenging times.

My biggest achievement...Social Prescribing being taken forward and recognised and now having sustainable funding. Social Prescribing has always been 'my baby' but I know I am now leaving this in very capable hands with the current Health & Wellbeing Co-ordinators and the New Health Coach!

I have always seen my role as 'helping you, to look after yourself' for whoever is sat in front of me be that family, friends or patients - now I have reached retirement I have to 'tweak' this as now its time to 'help me, to look after myself'. A little scary if I am honest.

But I am looking forward to my next adventure - wherever it may take me and as always will relish the challenge and am looking forward to 'finding me' - whoever that may be!

Ruth



A DAY IN THE LIFE OF OUR PHARMACY TEAM

Behind every safe and effective prescription is a skilled Pharmacy Team working tirelessly to support both patients and clinicians. At our surgery, this team includes our Practice Pharmacist, Gail, and Pharmacy Technician, Louise, two vital roles that ensure medicines are prescribed safely, effectively, and efficiently.

The Pharmacy Team begins their day by reviewing medication queries and prescription requests that have come in overnight. Safety is always their top priority - they check for interactions, duplications, and ensure each prescription is appropriate for the patient's condition.

Our Practice Pharmacist works closely with GPs, nurses, and other clinicians to support safe and evidence-based prescribing. They carry out structured medication reviews, manage patients with long-term conditions, and provide advice on the best treatment options. They're also on hand to answer complex medication queries and help resolve any issues that arise with hospital discharge summaries or changes from secondary care.

Working alongside the pharmacist, our Pharmacy Technician focuses on the practical and administrative side of medicines management. This includes processing repeat prescriptions, liaising with community pharmacies, ensuring medication changes are correctly updated in patient records, and supporting care homes with their medication systems. She also runs daily lipids clinics for patients with high cholesterol, providing advice on statin medication and supporting them to manage their cardiovascular health.

Their attention to detail helps ensure patients always receive the right medicines at the right time.

Throughout the day, the Pharmacy Team collaborates closely with the wider practice team, answering queries from clinicians, following up on test results that affect medication, and helping patients understand their treatment plans. They play a key role in helping patients manage their conditions safely, avoid unnecessary side effects, and make the most of their medicines.

In addition to their day-to-day work, the Pharmacy Team contributes to wider practice initiatives such as medication safety audits, cost-effective prescribing, and patient education. Their work helps ensure the surgery continues to deliver high-quality, sustainable healthcare.

The Pharmacy Team may not always be visible at the front desk, but their work underpins much of what happens behind the scenes. Their expertise keeps our prescribing safe, our records accurate, and our patients well-supported.

Next time you collect your prescription or have a medication review, you can be confident that our Pharmacy Team has played an essential part in ensuring your care is safe, effective, and tailored to you.



As winter approaches, we know it can be a challenging time for many of our patients — shorter days, colder weather, and more coughs and colds around. The good news is that a few small steps can make a big difference to your health and wellbeing this season.

Stay Protected

If you're eligible, make sure you've had your flu and COVID-19 vaccinations. These help protect you and those around you from serious illness. You can book through our reception team for flu and via 119 for your COVID-19 vaccination.

Eat Well & Keep Moving

Comfort food has its place, but try to include plenty of fruit, vegetables and whole grains in your meals. Even light exercise — a short daily walk, gentle stretching or online yoga — can help boost your energy and mood.

Keep Warm

Try to keep your main living area at 18°C or above. Warm layers, hot drinks and blankets can help too. If you're struggling with energy costs, visit www.gov.uk/winter-fuel-payment.

Look After Your Mental Health

Dark mornings and evenings can affect how we feel. Getting outside in daylight, keeping connected with friends and family, and talking about how you're feeling can all help. If you're finding things difficult, please speak to one of our team — we're here to listen.

Know Where to Get Help

Your local pharmacist can advise on coughs, colds and minor illnesses. For anything urgent or if you're unsure where to turn, contact NHS 111 online or by phone for advice.

We Value Your Feedback!

Your voice matters – and we're listening.

Whether you've had a great experience or have suggestions for how we can improve, we'd love to hear from you.

- Tell us in person at reception
- Email us with your thoughts
- Complete the Friends and Family Test on our website

Every piece of feedback helps us improve our service and provide the best possible care to our patients.

Thank you for helping us do better, together.

NEWSLETTER

To receive this quarterly newsletter via email, please leave your email address with the reception team. We may also use your email address to communicate other information.



www.bramblehaiaessurgery.co.uk

