

March 2025

The Leat is distributed for the patients of Leatside Surgery by the patient group to provide information and news about what is happening at Leatside and also in the wider NHS.

The Leat is edited by Mike Mintrum, Graphics by Jill Lawrence.

Answers to Christmas Quiz

1. He was actually the Duke of Bohemia
2. November 1994
3. Kentucky Fried Chicken
4. George V in 1932
5. Fred Astaire
6. They travelled to Egypt.
7. William 1st 1066
8. The Goose in Mother Goose
9. Belle

From the Chair

Greetings to all Leatside Surgery patients and a belated Happy New Year.

We did not have space in the last issue of the Leat to say "Thank You". Thank you to all the staff working at Leatside many of whom we don't see and don't know about. Here is the breakdown:

10 x GP Partners, 4 x Junior Doctors, 5 x Advanced Clinical Practitioners
4 x Clinical Pharmacists, 2 x Pharmacy Technicians, 5 x Practice Nurses, 1 x Assistant Practitioner
2 x Healthcare Assistants, 1 x Trainee Nurse Associate
1 x Phlebotomist, 10 x Health Navigators / Reception Staff
3 x Medical Secretaries, 2 x Care Coordinators, 11 x Administrators
1 x Operations Coordinator, 1 x Operations Manager, 1 x General Manager

So thank you all for your patience with patients.

We are continually aiming to improve communications with patients including how the Leat is organised. To that end please let us know if you would like us to include letters from patients in response to articles in the Leat. Please also note that the Leat will only now be distributed by e-mail so if you wish to continue receiving it please make sure the surgery has your latest email address. Copies will continue to be available on the website and in the Reception area.

In this edition we have information from the Practice Manager about the financial pressures impacting the Leatside Practice. We all understand, I think, the pressures facing the NHS and look forward to the improvements promised by the new government, however, we believe you, as patients, should understand the full financial pressures on the surgery, its operation and the staff working there.

Annual General Meeting

Following the good response at the half yearly General meeting the committee has decided to hold the AGM on 15th April, at The Old School Hall at The Mansion, Fore Street, Totnes, starting at 1800. The cost of hiring this room, where there will be more space, is £62 and as the LPG does not have any funds, we are hoping that those attending will donate £1 or £2 towards the room hire. Any surplus money will be donated to Totnes Caring.

All Leatside surgery patients are invited to attend the meeting to hear reports of the activities of the LPG and to elect the Officers and members of the management committee. There will be an opportunity to ask questions of Leatside staff and the Practice Manager and two of the Leatside GPs will be in attendance.

The Guest Speaker will be Doctor Richard Scheffer who will talk about Dying Well.

Vaccinations

Vaccination rates, especially for children, are falling at a time when cases of Measles are rising.

If your child has not had the MMR vaccination the surgery recommends that you contact them to arrange an appointment.

You can find out more about Measles at www.nhs.uk/conditions/measles.

Nominations for Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, and seven committee members must be received by the secretary seclpgleatside@gmail.com no later than 8th April 2025. If an election is necessary, it will be held by ballot at the AGM.

Surgery News

Important Notice for Patients who have blood tests at the surgery on behalf of the hospital

We are happy to help our secondary care colleagues by performing their blood tests for them to save patients a trip to the hospital.

However, it is vital that the specialist has either placed the blood test request electronically or provided patients with a paper blood form PRIOR to EACH blood test appointment at the surgery. This is a contractual requirement, and we are not insured to do this for them. Most importantly, it is a patient safety issue as without this there is a risk of delay or error in the blood results being received by the specialist.

We will no longer be able to take bloods for secondary care without a paper form or an electronic request from them. We appreciate you may not have been aware of this information and apologise any inconvenience this may cause you.

We have reminded our secondary care colleagues of the importance of this and wish to work with them to continue supporting this phlebotomy service.

Please discuss further with your hospital specialist if required.

Leatside Surgery Update: Changes to GP Services in 2025/26

The government has announced a new GP contract for 2025/26, which means some changes for both patients and practices. At Leatside Surgery, we are reviewing what this means for our services and wanted to update you on the key points.

Appointments – Reviewing Our System

As part of the new contract, all GP surgeries must offer more online booking options from October 2025 as well as identifying those patients whose complex needs mean that they would likely benefit from continuity of care. We will be reviewing our appointment system to see how we can meet this requirement while continuing to provide the best possible care for all our patients. The key part of this process will be ensuring that we make the most out of the team we have, ensuring that the right patients are being seen by the right professional at the right time. We will engage with the Leatside Patient Group throughout this process.

Funding – Covering Costs, Not Expanding Services

While there is a funding increase for GP practices this year, it is mainly to cover rising costs such as staff wages, energy bills, and importantly the increased cost of employer's national insurance as set out in the budget. Unfortunately, a proposed amendment from the House of Lords asking for exemption from the NI rise for GP practices and hospices was voted down by parliament on 19th March. This means the extra funding will not allow us to offer more appointments or expand our services.

Less Paperwork for GPs

The contract announced that some administrative requirements for GPs will be reduced, with the aim of giving doctors more time to focus more on patient care. However, although this guidance has been removed from the contract, good practice guidelines still require us to undertake this work.

Junior Doctors at Leatside

Leatside has a long tradition of training the GPs of the future. In fact, half of our GP Partners underwent their specialist training right here at the surgery. From April 2025 we will have five doctors placed at the surgery who will be working alongside our GPs to provide care to our patients. Three of these are GP Registrars, qualified doctors who are now undertaking specialist GP training over a period of three years. Two of the doctors are in their Foundation 2 year, which they will complete before moving into specialist training next year.

The doctors are:

GP Registrars:

Tanya Bainbridge

Emily Taylor

Henry Enyi

Foundation Year 2

Emilie Tindall

Matthew Thomas

What This Means for Our Patients

At Leatside Surgery, we are committed to providing the best care possible with the resources available to us. While we will be adapting our appointment system in line with national guidance, we are doing so within the financial pressures we have been placed under. Over the next couple of months, we are conducting a full review of how we provide proactive care to patients with ongoing health requirements, the experience of patients booking appointments, and how we ensure that continuity is prioritised for our patients. We will also be focussing on how we communicate with our patients so that everyone is aware of how we deliver our services and how best to work with us.

We appreciate your patience and understanding as we work through these changes. If there are any further updates, we will keep you informed.

Thank you for your ongoing support.

Martin Randall, General Manager, Leatside Surgery

A Doctor Writes

This is a summary of a more detailed article written by Doctor Gillard. The full article can be read in the Patient Group area of the Leatside Website.

<https://leatside.co.uk/lpg-news/>

Breastfeeding Complications: Mastitis

Summary and Key Highlights

This article by Dr. Kate Gillard discusses mastitis, a common breastfeeding complication involving breast inflammation. It highlights recent changes in mastitis management guidelines, emphasizing a shift away from forceful massage techniques towards gentler approaches.

Key Highlights:

- **Outdated Massage Techniques:** Aggressive massage is no longer recommended as it can worsen swelling and potentially lead to tissue damage, including abscess formation. The article emphasizes the need to understand that blocked ducts are not solid obstructions but rather areas of excessive milk buildup and swelling.
- **Responsiveness is Key:** Instead of aggressive pumping or feeding on the affected side, the focus is on responsive feeding and maintaining usual pumping schedules. This approach avoids exacerbating the problem by not over-stimulating milk production in the affected area.
- **Ice Therapy:** Cold compresses are recommended to reduce swelling and inflammation, while hot compresses should be used cautiously as they can worsen the problem.
- **Gentle Lymphatic Drainage:** Gentle lymphatic massage, from nipple to armpit, can enhance fluid drainage and is recommended as a safe technique for relieving discomfort. The provided YouTube link offers visual guidance.

New Starters

Lindsey Day has joined us this month and is a newly qualified nurse who has previously worked as a Healthcare Assistant for over 15 years. She completed her nurse training placement here last year and we are so happy to have her join the Leatside team!

- **Medication:** Non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) like ibuprofen and changing feeding positions can help manage inflammation. When to Use Anti-biotics: Antibiotics are not always necessary for mastitis. Seek medical advice if symptoms worsen, become more severe, and especially if signs of sepsis (serious illness) appear.
- **Prevention:** Factors increasing mastitis risk include latch difficulties, engorgement, sudden changes in feeding frequency, tight clothing, or any injuries impacting breast tissue. Addressing these issues proactively can prevent and help treat mastitis.
- **Seeking Help:** The article emphasizes the importance of seeking support from healthcare professionals like health visitors, midwives, and breastfeeding support groups. A national breastfeeding helpline is also available to provide additional assistance.
- **Probiotics and Lecithin:** Though some studies show promise, the evidence for probiotics and lecithin in mastitis is not conclusive. If used, consider strains like *limosilacto-bacillus fermentum* or *ligilactobacillus salivarius*.
- **Prioritizing Wellbeing:** Mastitis can be uncomfortable and potentially debilitating. The article stresses the importance of prioritizing rest and pain relief measures to facilitate recovery

Totnes Caring Corner

We need our transport service more than ever to get clients to and from hospital, doctors and beloved Memory Café.

Stats for the bus over January and up to mid-February (6-week period) are as follows:

50 journeys made.
140 clients transported.

It costs the charity over £40,000 a year to run our transport service as a whole. That includes our minibus, our wheelchair accessible vehicle and reimbursing our amazing volunteer drivers at 45p per mile.

For the minibus alone, it costs £5,000 a year just for fuel and maintenance.

With spiralling costs and little breaks for charities following the budget - we are rallying the community to support raising £5000 for our bus over the next three months to try and help to keep this essential service going.

Anything you can give will help! Thank you!

https://www.justgiving.com/page/boost-our-bus?utm_medium=FR&utm_source=CL

Endpiece

Congratulations to Julie Spinks being elected a Governor of the Torbay and South Devon Foundation Trust.

If you wish to contribute to the Leat or would like to see particular information, please contact me at chairlpgleatside@gmail.com.

Committee Members

Mike Mintrum (Chair), Katie Porkess (Vice-Chair), Janice Balch (Secretary), Fiona Green, Sue Barry Campbell, Jill Lawrence, Sally Lougher, Cliff Morley and Julie Spinks.