

Newsletter for our patients

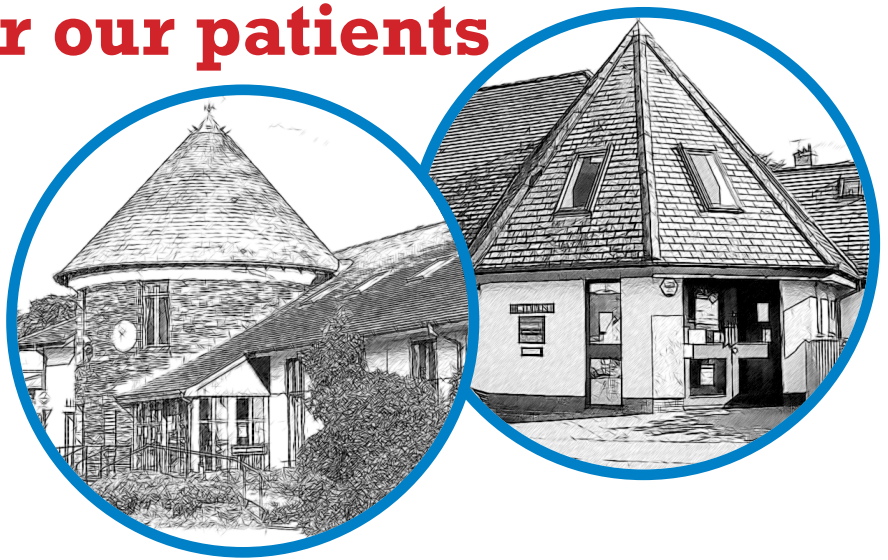
March 2025

Riverside Surgery
Bovey Tracey
01626 832666

Tower House Surgery
Chudleigh
01626 852379



Scan to go to our website



Riverside Befrienders

Riverside Surgery Befrienders is a local charity which provides transport to the surgery and other healthcare locations for patients who would otherwise find it difficult to get to their appointments.

Bookings

If you'd like to use the Befrienders' service, you'll need to book via Riverside Surgery.



How the service is run

The charity has volunteer drivers who use their own cars, and although they give their time for free, they are fully reimbursed for mileage expenses.

There's also a team of coordinators whose job it is to match up the requests from patients with the availability of drivers.

New volunteers needed

The Befrienders are always looking for new volunteers who live in, or within the immediate vicinity of Bovey Tracey, for both driving and coordinating.

The users of the service are typically from older age groups

Using SystmConnect at Reception or by telephone

For those unable to complete online forms, we want to reassure you that help will always be available.

You are still able to contact Reception, whether on the telephone or in person, and our receptionists will happily assist you by completing the SystmConnect forms on your behalf.

Please help other patients

If you have relatives, neighbours or friends who rely on phoning Reception rather than using online facilities, please reassure them and emphasise they're not being left behind and that we will help them all we can.

If you know of someone who needs special assistance in order to be able to contact us, please give them a hand, or let us know about them.

We are here, we are listening

We are committed to being accessible and inclusive, and we will ensure that no patient feels alienated because they are unable to use the online system.

We are dedicated to providing care that works for everyone.

If you have any questions or need assistance, please do not hesitate to get in contact.

Thank you for your support: we will always strive to deliver the best possible care to our patients.

who may not be able to use public transport, even if it's available, and are unable to drive themselves.

Users of the service are expected to make a donation to help keep the service going. The donations are collected by the driver, handed to the charity's treasurer, and the driver then makes a mileage claim.

There is a suggested list of donations, the amount depending on the length of the journey to and from an appointment.

The primary commitment of the service is to those who have no relatives or friends who can help them.

Apart from Riverside Surgery itself, the volunteers serve a range of other destinations,

including the hospitals at Torbay, Exeter and Plymouth.

The volunteer drivers can give as much or as little time as they wish.

Each patient journey is arranged individually and drivers are free to decline any run if they have other commitments. The main requirement is that once a driver has accepted a run, they honour that obligation.

Riverside Befrienders is an ideal for volunteers who do not wish to tie themselves down to a fixed day each week.

A very popular service

Use of the service increases each year. There were 1350 requests for the service in 2023, but in 2024, the Befrienders took 1612 requests. After cancellations, there were over 1400 journeys taken in 2024.

Further information is available:

<https://www.boveytracey.gov.uk/Riverside-Surgery-Befrienders/Bovey-Tracey/>

Breast Screening Unit

The mobile screening unit is in Bovey Tracey from 25th February to 3rd April.



The location is the House of Marbles, the Old Pottery, TQ13 9DS. The mobile unit will be in the parking area at the rear (the area used for coaches)

Invitations to make an appointment are being sent out to all our eligible patients.

Do attend for screening

If you haven't taken up previous invitations for breast screening, please be sure to have your scans this time. Remember, screening could save your life.

Learn more

KnowYourLemons is the only global charity solely dedicated to the early detection of breast cancer. The site's educational

programmes and tools are designed to overcome taboo, fear and literacy issues in a remarkable way that saves lives no matter one's age, race, literacy level, or gender. The site aims to "educate everyone".

Have a very close look at <https://www.knowyourlemons.org/> and also view the TEDx Talk by the founder of the site, Dr. Corinne Ellsworth-Beaumont: <https://youtu.be/E15BC3lu3hI>. There's an app too, from Apple and Google.



The illustration at the foot of the previous page shows you some of the symptoms that call for investigation.

If you're worried, see your GP

If you have any breast symptoms which worry you, please see your GP as soon as you can. If the GP thinks that your symptoms need investigation, you will be referred to the Breast Care Unit straight away.

The route via your GP is much faster than the standard screening pathway, which is primarily designed to identify cancers where there are no symptoms.

Further information about the Breast Screening Unit's visit to Bovey Tracey is available from **01803 655350** and <https://www.torbayandsouthdevon.nhs.uk/services/breast-care-unit/breast-screening/>

Can't get to sleep?

Not being able to get to sleep does worry a lot of people. The standard advice is to go to bed at the same time each day: avoid screen time—phone, tablet, computer, etc—and, for the hour or so before going to bed, also avoid any tasks which need a lot of thought or physical activity.

Find a simple task

Some people find that doing a simple task for 20 minutes or so, for example a jigsaw, can make all the difference in getting to sleep quickly.

Even after all that, you might not be able to 'drop off' easily.

The 15-minute tactic

If you're still lying awake after 15 minutes or so in bed and are thinking, 'I'll never get to sleep now', there is a tactic which is known to help.

After your 15 minutes of not sleeping, get up and do some

very simple activity, certainly nothing energetic.

Eventually, you'll feel ready for bed again, so go to bed. Keep repeating the 15 minute tactic until you go off to sleep. If you have difficulty the next night, do the same thing again.

Keep trying; don't give up

It might take many nights to sort things out, but in the end, you'll find that getting off to sleep is no longer a problem.

Staff news

There are quite a few changes to report this time.

Dr Tessa Keeler went on maternity leave in January.

Hannah Cross, Social Prescriber went on maternity leave in December and has since welcomed a baby girl.

We said a sad goodbye to our paramedic **Lynne Campbell** in January. Lynne has worked with the surgery for many years and has decided that now is the time to move to pastures new. Lynne will be missed but we wish her all the best in her next chapter.

February marks **Dr Bialick's** (Forbes') last month with us before he retires. We will be very sad to see him go and wish him all the best on his next adventure.

Jane Chadwick, HCA will be leaving us in February. Jane will be moving to a Practice in Exeter. We will all miss Jane, and we wish her all the best for the future.

Paula Forsey, Practice Nurse, will be leaving us in March as she is taking early retirement. We will all miss Paula but wish her luck for the future.

We are currently recruiting for a Practice Nurse to join the Practice and our Nursing team.

Andrea Nicol, Health & Wellbeing Leader has decided that now is the right time for her to leave her present role to seek a new challenge. We

are extremely grateful for everything Andrea has done for our Practice, our PCN and most importantly, our patients. Andrea's last day will be end of March.

Joey Milburn will continue with his coaching role in a hybrid model of referrals and targeted work across the three PCN practices.

The referral pathway will be self-referrals from patients and referrals from other organisations.

You can refer yourself for a consultation with Joey, by booking a telephone call with Reception or by using the QR codes which are shown in clinical rooms, patient areas, websites etc.

Shingles, a reminder

Shingles is a common condition that causes a painful, or very painful, rash. It can sometimes lead to serious problems such as long-lasting pain, hearing loss or blindness.

You're more likely to get shingles, and it's more likely to cause serious problems, as you get older or if you have a weakened immune system.

Initial symptoms

People who've had shingles often say afterwards that they had some distinctive symptoms before their rash appeared.

Such symptoms can include small areas of very painful skin, where just touching the area is very uncomfortable and can feel like the damage from a burn.

Sharp pains

Another frequent comment is that there were sharp, shooting pains in particular areas of the body—areas where the rash later appeared.

Note that the symptoms were on one side of the body only, as shingles usually affects only the one side.

Get advice from 111 as soon as you suspect you have shingles. You might need special medicine to help speed up your recovery and avoid longer-lasting problems. This treatment works best if taken within 3 days of your symptoms starting. 111 will tell you what to do. They can arrange a phone call from a nurse or doctor.

The shingles vaccine

This vaccine:

- ❖ reduces your chances of getting shingles
- ❖ reduces your chances of getting serious problems if you do get shingles

Who should have the vaccine

The shingles vaccine is recommended for people at higher risk from shingles, including all adults turning 65, those aged 70 to 79 and those aged 50 and over who have a severely weakened immune system.

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/vaccinations/shingles-vaccination/>

Who cannot have the shingles vaccine

Most people who are eligible for the shingles vaccine can have it, unless you've had a serious allergic reaction (anaphylaxis) to a previous dose of the vaccine, or an ingredient in the vaccine.



Shingles rash, on a leg in this example.

One of the shingles vaccines (called Zostavax) contains a weakened version of the virus that causes shingles. This vaccine is not suitable if you have a severely weakened immune system so you'll be given a different one (called Shingrix).

How to get the shingles vaccine

We will usually contact you when you become eligible for the shingles vaccine. This will usually be by letter, text message, phone or email.

Sometimes you might be offered the vaccine during a GP appointment you're having for another reason.

Let us know if:

- ❖ you think you're eligible for the shingles vaccine, but you've not been contacted about it
- ❖ you did not have the vaccine when you were contacted and you're still under 80 (only people with a severely weakened immune system can get the vaccine after 80 years of age)
- ❖ you're due to have your vaccine and you're feeling unwell—you may need to wait until you're feeling better before having the vaccine

NHS care Volunteer Responders

This is a volunteering service provided by NHS England and delivered by Royal Voluntary Service and GoodSAM.

This free service is delivered by Royal Voluntary Service and GoodSAM on behalf of NHS England.

The volunteers work alongside healthcare professionals and offer vital non-clinical support to help streamline operations and improve both staff and patient experiences.

Built on a digital platform, the programme connects a pool

of available volunteers to live tasks and pre-scheduled shifts via the GoodSAM app.

Support available

The volunteer support includes:

- ❖ Driver support (pick up and deliver): delivery of medication and equipment between NHS sites and to and from patients' homes.
- ❖ Community Response: assistance with essential shopping and prescription delivery.
- ❖ Community Response Connect—(accompany to an activity): Supporting people to enjoy social activities within the community.
- ❖ Telephone support: calls to people who may need a friendly voice and a listening ear.
- ❖ Site support: Stewarding at vaccination sites.
- ❖ Site support: Providing refreshments for ambulance crews at A&E bays.

Services may vary from area to area.

If you need support, please raise a separate referral for each type of support or task you require, even if the support is for the same person.

Help is available from Volunteer Responders

If you, or someone you know, or someone you care for would like support or they have any questions about the Volunteer Responders programme, The Support Team is on standby to book volunteer support and address any queries on **0808 196 3646**.

There's a website too:

<https://nhscarevolunteerresponders.org/id-like-support>

Cervical screening

Cervical screening, which used to be called a smear test, is checks the health of the cervix

and helps prevent cervical cancer. It's offered for ages from 25 to 64, to women and people with a cervix.

You may be very worried that you'll find the procedure unpleasant, and that might put you off having the test. Please do book your test in spite of any worries about the procedure.

Your cervical screening appointment

The test will be carried out by a nurse, but you will be in full control of the session and **you can ask the nurse to stop at any time, or to find ways to make the test more comfortable for you. Tell the nurse about any worries or concerns you have.**

You could ask for a longer appointment to give more time for you to get comfortable.

If you're worried about insertion of the speculum, tell the nurse you'd like plenty of lubrication to be used, or even that you'd like to be able to insert it yourself.

You can also ask for a smaller speculum to be used.

Alternative position

You no longer have to be on your back during the test. You can also lie on your left-hand side with your knees bent and legs slightly apart.

If you'd like to, you could bring an audio device and listen to music while the procedure goes ahead.

Above all, don't be afraid to say what you want to happen or what you don't want to happen.

How cervical screening helps prevent cancer

Cervical screening is one of the best ways to protect yourself from cervical cancer. The screening checks the health of your cervix and helps find any abnormal changes before they can turn into cancer.

Screening is not a test for cancer, it's a test to help **prevent** cancer. Cervical screening checks a sample of cells from your cervix for certain types of human papilloma virus (HPV). These types of HPV can cause abnormal changes to the cells in your cervix and are called "high risk" types of HPV.

What is HPV?

HPV is the name for a very common group of viruses.

Most people will get some type of HPV during their lives. It's very common and nothing to feel ashamed or embarrassed about. You can get HPV from any kind of skin-to-skin

contact of the genital area, not just from penetrative sex.

This includes:

- ❖ vaginal, oral or anal sex
- ❖ any skin-to-skin contact of the genital area
- ❖ sharing sex toys

If high risk types of HPV are found during screening, the sample of cells is also checked for abnormal cell changes.

If abnormal cells are found, they can be treated so they do not get a chance to turn into cervical cancer.

Some types of high risk types of HPV can cause cervical cancer. In most cases your body will get rid of HPV without it causing any problems. But

AFFORDABLE GROCERIES FOR ALL - NO REFERRAL NEEDED

£4.50 SUGGESTED DONATION

BOVEY TRACEY SOCIAL SUPERMARKET

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EVERY TUESDAY
15.00-17:00

3-4PM WARM SPACE WITH FREE HOT DRINKS AND CAKE
4-5PM SOCIAL SUPERMARKET OPEN

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Everyone Welcome - Help stop food waste!

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We utilise food surplus so the selection available will be different each week. **FREE refreshments available.**

No membership fee is required but you will have to complete a form with some basic information.

Please note, the only eligibility criterion is location.
If you're unsure if we cover your area, please contact hello@bebuckfastleigh.co.uk

sometimes HPV can stay in your body for a long time.

If high risk types of HPV stay in your body, they can cause changes to the cells in your cervix. These changes may become cervical cancer if not treated.

If you do not have a high risk type of HPV it's very unlikely you'll get cervical cancer, even if you've had abnormal cell changes in your cervix before.

Thinking of having surgery abroad?

Patients who seek surgery abroad, including bariatric surgery and cosmetic procedures, need to know that they must also arrange ongoing post-procedure follow-up within the UK **on a private basis. The required after-care is not something that the Practice is able to provide on the NHS.**

Social Supermarket

In these straitened times, a social supermarket is a way for people to access affordable, good quality produce locally and build community.

Now, Bovey Tracey has its own social supermarket. Look at the details on this page, and on the previous page, to get an idea of how it works and whether or not it would be of help to you.

Norovirus

This causes sickness and diarrhoea and is prevalent at present. The best way of combatting it is cleanliness: in particular, wash your hands thoroughly (and frequently) with soap and water, especially before you prepare food.

Recent hospital statistics

NHS data published on 6th February showed there were more patients in hospitals the previous week than at any other point so far this winter,

as the number of norovirus cases in hospital continued to rise.

The data also showed that 961 patients a day were in hospital with norovirus the previous week, up 7% on the week before and 69% higher than the same period last year (570 for the week ending 4 February 2024).

There were an average of 98,101 patients in hospital each day for the week – higher than at any point so far this winter. Around 96% of adult hospital beds were occupied, also a record for this winter.

Almost 1 in 7 beds (13,776) were taken up by patients who did not need to be in hospital

and were well enough to be discharged, a record high for this winter.

Flu rates had dropped since January's peak, but more than 2,462 patients were still hospitalised with the illness on average each day at the start of February, including 122 in critical care.

Other winter viruses were also continuing to circulate with almost 1,000 patients on average (952) in hospital with COVID-19 every day in early February, a slight decrease on the previous 7 days (995). There were 18 children on average in hospital with RSV each day – a decrease from the previous week (28).



SOME MORE INFORMATION



A Social Supermarket is a way for people to access affordable, good quality produce locally and build community.



We believe in a whole community approach where everyone is welcome.

We pay for the food purchased from Fare Share—a charity that redistributes surplus food (mainly from industry) to other charitable and non-profit organisations. Fareshare's food is of great quality. Other food and goods are donated by local suppliers.



You can donate! We have a free table where you can put donations that are unopened and useable.



Can I take as much as I want?

No. For your donation there will be a selection to choose from. Some items may be restricted on numbers so that everyone gets a fair portion of our stock, it will just depend on the quantity of each item that we get delivered. It will vary weekly, depending on what we get in, but we aim to always have at least 10 things to choose from. So, even if you are not at the front of the queue, you should still have a selection, while stocks last.



There is a suggested donation of £4.50 per household but if you want donate more or less that is also fine. All money that is donated to the Social Supermarket is used to cover its costs.



There is no commitment expected. Please just come along as and when you need, although it helps us to know if you come regularly so we can buy the right amount of stock.



There will generally be a selection of fruit and vegetables as well as some household staples.



We also offer free tea, coffee, and biscuits and a warm friendly welcome! You are more than welcome to come along just for a hot drink and a chat.



Our volunteers get to do their shop first as they put in many hours of time each week but all the same rules apply to them as to all others.

If you are interested in volunteering, please email hello@bebuckfastleigh.co.uk