

Minutes Martins Oak PPG

Thursday 14th May 2026 held at The Pavilion

Attendees:- Claire Brown Martins Oak; Sue Terry (ST); Frances Hamson (FH); Jeffrey Bridges (JB); Andrew Barton (AB); David Russell (DR); Lynne George (LG); Joyce Rock (JR); Martin Holgate (MH); Stephen Mellor (SM); Christine Gwyther-Scott (CGS)

1. Apologies:- Jan Grey; Debbie Buchanan; Richard Banner; Sue Mitchell; Malcolm Gates; Doug Edworthy; Bhabhinder Cooley (BC)
2. Minutes of previous meeting
These were accepted and there were no matters arising
3. Practice Update from Sam Bridgwater

SB thanked the PPG for the valuable comments they had offered to the partners regarding the possible Caldbec Hill site. The comments had encouraged the developer in considering this site for a future build. Sam confirmed that a viability survey would be carried out by a developer before any further decisions on a suitable surgery site is made. The same developer is looking at the Watch Oak site which is still an option

The partners are concerned at the costs that will be faced in outfitting the new surgery to increase services offered to patients. They are keen to explore various fund raising options and the PPG could be instrumental in developing this either via setting the PPG up as a charity with a separate bank account or by setting up a "Friends Of Martin's Oak" to raise money to support the outfitting of a new surgery.

At present there are no members of the PPG in a position to take on this task but it will be explored at future meetings when accessing CIL (Council Infrastructure Levy) money will also be discussed. AB explained that CIL funding grows with each new development in Battle so there is a possibility that the surgery could apply to access these funds.

Sam mentioned an event coming up for carers.....Carers Week runs from the 8th to the 14th June. There will be a drop in session for carers at the Almonry on Friday 12th June 10-12pm. It was not felt that the PPG would need to support this.

4. Grant Application Survey

YU and SB submitted an application to the Integrated Care Board (ICB) to access part of a grant fund and were pleased to be informed that the bid had been successful .

The proposed survey will look at elderly patients who do not have an email address registered with the surgery and who do not live in a care home or have a diagnosis of dementia. This group of people may be disenfranchised when attempting to access care and it is important to connect with them to make sure their needs are being met. The paper based survey will be sent out by surgery staff who will also collate their responses. YU and CGS will craft the survey along with another patient of the practice who has special expertise in conducting surveys but who is not a member of the PPG.

5. Newsletter and Future Ideas

SB's team put together the newsletter which appears on the website, Facebook and a paper based version in the surgery. They would like ideas for future publications.

YU has produced an article "Help your Health Care Professional to help You" for the next newsletter.

Another idea is to signpost an interesting podcast called "What's up Doc" run by Drs Chris and Xand van Tullken, well known media doctors, who are on a mission to help people take ownership of their health.

If any of the PPG have further ideas please, send them to YU.

6. Oldwood Surgery Booklet

The booklet issued by the surgery in Robertsbridge is excellent giving a lot of important information and contact details. It was suggested that Martins Oak develop a similar thing. There is, of course, a cost involved but there may be the possibility of sponsorship to cover the cost. It could then be issued to every household,

7. Young Person's Survey

SM spoke about developing a survey to give to young people. This may give an idea of what services they access and the experiences they have had. Could young people access the virtual group, or through Martins Oak website?

AB spoke about the Youth Forum which shows young people how the Councils work. In the coming weeks the Youth Bus will visit Battle parking in the car park in the Park. It has information and shows young people how to access services.

AB and SM will report back to how successful this was. SB will market the event on the surgery website. AB will discuss with the Deputy Head at Claverham School what issues the school faces.

8. NHS Involvement PPG Network Meeting Report

Dawn Bamforth runs the East Sussex wide PPG network and is very supportive of the PPGs. There are regular meetings that members of local PPGs can be part of and participate in. YU attended the latest meeting. YU will send out links for others to consider joining future meetings.

9. Primary Care Network (PCN) local meet-up

Each PPG in the PCN (Primary Care Network) has been asked to send two PPG members to a face to face meeting held at the home of Martine Blaser-Smart. This will be an opportunity to discuss how each PPG is run and how they support their local surgery. YU will report back in September.

10. Experience of using 111 and Out of Hours Care

A brief discussion identified varying success of using the 111 service. YU will feed that back to the surgery.

11. Ideas From the Floor

It was noted that for residents who do not live close to the surgery getting to and from can be a challenge.

Further discussion on accessing funds included the possibility of finding companies and businesses who may be willing to support and donate to help the surgery with equipment for future services. This may require a sub-group to explore. One suggestion was the Benefactor Group with funds up to £5,000. If members have contacts or suggestions please let YU know.

Next meeting date:-

Thursday 10th September 2026 at 2.30pm at The Pavilion