

FRIENDS OF SOMER VALLEY MEDICAL GROUP
(subject to Charity Commission confirmation)
formerly Friends of St Chads & Chilcompton Surgeries
Chair's Annual Report 2024

Introduction

This year we said a fond farewell and huge thanks to Alan Webb, our former Chair, a stalwart of the Friends for over 12 years, and to Peter Clifford who has been with us for almost 3 years. We also welcome members of the Friends of Somerton House committee, but more of that later. I would also like to record huge thanks to our Secretary Ethne Dando and Treasurer Ann Dawson for their efforts to keep us on the straight and narrow and compliant with all the rules, and to Bea Hooper for running numerous Bric a Brac stalls and to everyone who has been involved in selling raffle tickets, arranging prizes and generally helping out at all the events we have managed to run or attend. We also bid farewell to Dr Nick Jones, our Senior Partner after many years of dedicated service. We wished him a long and happy retirement.

Merger

This Spring saw the merger of our 2 local GP Practices to form the Somer Valley Medical Group. This has involved a huge amount of work for the staff at a time when the demands on community care have never been higher. We congratulate them on making this as painless as possible for the patients. After the merger, there seemed little point in having 2 Patient Participation Groups, and discussions took place concerning a merger of our groups. FoSC&C has been a charity for 20+ years, but FoSH was not. The combining of the groups was formally agreed in June, and the paperwork submitted to the Charity Commission for. As I write this, we are awaiting their confirmation which normally takes about 12 weeks.

Health Talks

We arrange these from time to time as and when we can find speakers with the knowledge to share, and who are willing to come to Midsomer Norton on a cold wet evening for FREE! Last September we had a talk on Osteoporosis. Regrettably owing to sickness, we were unable to arrange any this Spring, but we are pleased to have arranged talks this Autumn on Blood Pressure and on Hearing Difficulties and Lip Reading. We are always on the look out for suggestions for speakers and topics so please do not hesitate to get in touch with your suggestions. These talks (advertising and venue hire) are funded by our own fund raising.

Finances and Fundraising

Our financial position is healthy. We have raised £4,634 this financial year and donated £5,764 to the surgery for additional equipment or to improve patient experience or speed of diagnosis.

Our main fundraisers are our Christmas Raffle, the 100 Club and our stalls at local events & fairs. Special thanks go to local businesses Mitchard's the Butchers, The Old Down Inn, and 100 Club members Mechelle Barnes & Nicky Kays for their generous support of the raffle, as well as those committee members who generously donated prizes and their time in selling tickets.

Our 100 Club is outgrowing its name and we have drawn up plans to recruit extra subscribers from former Somerton House patients, and to review prize levels annually in line with membership growth.

The broader picture I would like to extend our thanks to all categories of staff who have taken the merger in their stride and continued to provide medical services at a time of such huge demand. Whilst no organisation is perfect, we do recognise that the demands on Primary Care have never been higher, and all those patients on waiting lists are looked after by their GP Surgeries and carers whilst they wait. We thank all of them for their dedication and commitment.

Jenny Evans
Chair

September 2024