



LEN VALLEY PPG – Draft Notes

**8th, September 2025, 1 pm start
at
Lenham Community Centre**

1. Welcome and Apologies:

Present: Terry New (chair), Carol McKeough (note taker), Julia Allen, Stephen Taylor, Sadie Curtis, Peter Hasler, Peter Livesey, John Britt, Jan Smith.

Elaine Moles, Dr Lloyd, Georgia Lane.

Apologies from Maggie Lineham

2. Notes from PPG meeting on 2nd, June 25

The notes from the meeting held on 2nd June 2025 were approved and signed.

3. Practice update

Georgia gave an update on the digital front door starting from 15th September. Information is on-line on the LVP Facebook site and there was a message to all patients who have the NHS AP. Some posters have been distributed about the changes, thank you to PPG members who were able to put the posters up around Lenham and Harrietsham. Terry will arrange for the content of the poster to be published in the Magazines for Lenham and Harrietsham.

Appendix 1 includes sections about Total Triage from LVP Facebook and the Website. Georgia has been responding to comments or concerns raised by patients on the Practices FB.

The PPG carried out patient surveys about aspects of the practice on-line and face to face last year. This information will provide a baseline particularly related to access to the practice. The PPG will look to carry out a survey 4 to 5 months on from the introduction of Total Triage. This will concentrate on the access issue which was the main concern raised during the surveys.

The practice does not engage with the Making Lenham Safe FB as the comments there can be rude, insulting and abusive and any response from the practice may fuel further abuse.

From December the PPG would like to have a copy of the practice update a week before the PPG meeting so that we can discuss any points at our pre-PPG meeting. Flu and Covid vaccinations are likely to start in October and be carried out as part of normal business.

4. PPG Update: (How can the PPG help the practise)

PPG members, especially virtual members will be able to attend a pre- PPG meeting about a week before the formal meeting with practice. This is likely to meet the evening at the community centre for an hour.

With the start of Total Triage from 15th Sept the practice will welcome any PPG members who are able to attend the surgery to support patients attending the surgery to understand how the new system will work. Carol agreed to attend on 15th with a lift to the surgery arranged.

Bearsted PPG are now working with their practice to produce a Practice Newsletter.

Would LVP support the development of a Practice Newsletter in partnership with the PPG?

Would the LVP PPG have the capacity to support such a project?

5. Primary Care Network (PCN) Update:

Carol attended the PCN meeting earlier and the notes from the last PCN meeting in June were approved and will be circulated with these PPG notes.

Discussions this morning were about the PCN obtaining Covid and Flu vaccinations on behalf of the 4 practices.

The GP contract was discussed and especially section

5.2 Standard General Medical Services Contract

Published August 2024. NHS England.

5.2.1. The Contractor must establish and maintain a group known as a "Patient Participation Group" (PPG) comprising some of its registered patients for the purposes of: (a) obtaining the views of patients who have attended the Contractor's practice about the services delivered by the Contractor; and (b) enabling the Contractor to obtain feedback from its registered patients about those services.

5.2.3. The Contractor must make reasonable efforts during each financial year to review the membership of its PPG to ensure that the Group is representative of its registered patients.

5.2.4. The Contractor must: (a) engage with its PPG Group, at such frequent intervals throughout each financial year, with a view to obtaining feedback from the Contractor's registered patients, in an appropriate and accessible manner which is designed to encourage Patients participation, about the services delivered by the Contractor; and

5.2.5 review any feedback received about the services delivered by the Contractor, whether by virtue of clause 5.2.4(a) or otherwise, with its PPG with a view to agreeing with that Group the improvements (if any) which are to be made to those services.

5.2.6 The Contractor must make reasonable efforts to implement such improvements to the services delivered by the Contractor as are agreed between the Contractor and its PPG.

We discussed the use of AI in general practice. Patients must give permission to a GP wishing to use AI during a consultation. Nothing recorded using AI is accessible once the information about a consultation is added to the patients record. (this consultation record will be accessible to patients via the NHS AP).

Bearsted Practice and its PPG are running 2 half day sessions in November about Healthy Hearts. This is aimed at the prevention agenda for patients aged 40 to 60. In the future maybe the PCN will put on or support such sessions on various topics.

6. ICB & HCP update:

Both the Kent and Medway ICB and the West Kent HCP are required to reduce their budgets. This has meant that the chair of the WK PPG chairs group contract was not renewed. WK HCP have agreed to provide a note taker for the meetings to continue virtually, and the chairs group are in the process of seeking a new unpaid chair to take this forward.

7. Update for walking for health:

Sadie provided the update as Jan Enever is away. Last week 20 members of the walking for health group had a holiday break in Bourton on the Water. Weather was a challenge, but the week was enjoyed by all. The number of patients attending the various walks has increased this year. The walks available are: Wednesday pm short walk around the village for those wishing to maintain their mobility. Thursday 2 walks of different lengths and Saturday long walk. Elaine was asked if she would provide a container for the walks leaflets at the Harrietsham surgery. She agreed to do so.

8. Communication and engagement.

NHS TEXT, ACCURX, and social media how will these systems for communication from and to NHS bodies support information provision to patients who do not have internet access. We become so used to communication on-line that we need to ensure that those with no access, receive information via other routes. Notice boards and the 2 local magazines need to be used. Concern that the lead in time for publication means that information can be out of date by the time the magazines are circulated.

Car park: The practice was alerted to the partial closure of the Community Centre car park to allow for repair work to the car park. This did not happen on the day planned.

9. AOB—

Surgery Planning Application for the work needed to enlarge the Lenham Surgery. John explained that the application was turned down as there was no traffic assessment. This should have been included by the person completing the planning application on behalf of the owners of the building. Elaine will follow this up.

Heathlands: John Britt raised concerns about the Heathlands consultation regarding the supplementary planning document for the 1400 houses planned in the first phase. This does not include any reference to health provision specifically access to GP services. These will not now be considered until 2035. John will pass on information to Elaine to read the sections related to health provision. The provisions are referred to using various terminology

Next Meeting date: Tuesday 9th December 2025 1pm at Lenham Community Centre.

Appendix 1



Len Valley Practice - Important Changes – How to Contact Your GP from 15th September

From **Monday 15th September 2025**, Len Valley Medical Practice will be moving to a new system called **Total Triage**.

This will change the way you contact us for GP appointments or administration queries (such as test results, fit notes, or referral updates). The aim is to make access to care fairer, quicker, and easier for everyone.

How it works:

To request GP help or an admin query, you will complete a short online form.

The form is available on:

- Our practice website
- The NHS App
- A QR code in the waiting room or at reception

The form is simple and only takes a few minutes to complete. It allows us to collect the right information so your request can be sent straight to the right person.

If you cannot use the form yourself:

We know not everyone has internet access or feels comfortable using online forms. **You will not be left out.**

- You can still call us by phone during our normal hours (08:00–18:30)
- Or come to reception in person

Our reception team will fill in the form with you, either over the phone or face to face, so your request goes through in exactly the same way. There is no disadvantage if you cannot complete the form online.

IMPORTANT: ONE FORM = ONE PROBLEM

Please complete a separate form for each issue you need help with. This helps us manage requests safely and fairly.

What happens once the form is submitted?

- **Admin queries** (such as medication, test results, letters or referrals) will go directly to the right department.
- **Medical queries** (such as new or ongoing symptoms) will be reviewed by a clinician.

You will then receive the most appropriate next step, which might be:

- A text or phone call with advice
- A prescription sent to your pharmacy
- An appointment (in person, by phone, or by video)
- Being directed to another service, such as pharmacy, physiotherapy, or NHS 111

All requests are checked during our core hours and a **response can take up to three working days** so please keep that in mind when submitting a form. Call NHS 111 or attend the nearest walk in centre for urgent but non-life-threatening issues.

What stays the same?

- You can still call the surgery to book nurse or healthcare assistant appointments (e.g. blood tests, vaccinations, smear tests).
- You can always contact us by phone or in person during our normal opening hours.

Emergencies

Please remember:

- **Call 999** or go to A&E if you have a medical emergency.
- For urgent but non-life-threatening issues, call **NHS 111**.

+ Total Triage

At Len Valley Practice

We're Changing How You Contact Your GP – Here's What to Know

From 15th September 2025, all GP appointment and admin requests must go through our online triage form.

How does it work?

- Go to our website or use the NHS app and fill out the short form.
- A triaging clinician will review your request within 3 working days and reply via text, phone or email.
- If you need an appointment, it will be booked based on clinical need.

If you can't use the internet, our reception team will help you fill out the form over the phone or in person.

No more 8:30am rush,
request help anytime
during our opening
hours!



Appendix 2

With the imminent demise of NHS-E the PPG Champions group could not continue. However, as the meetings had been valuable in allowing learning across PPGs in England, the group continues with support of members taking on the role of Chair and Secretary. Information from the first meeting included:

- *Digital exclusion: Older, rural, disabled, or non-digital patients may be locked out of services.*
- *NHS assumes digital readiness across population, which is unrealistic.*
- *The NHS App's inconsistent integration across GP practices causes confusion and frustration.*
- *Lack of training/support for patients and volunteers.*
- *Safeguarding concerns: especially when volunteers assist patients with access to their personal health records.*
- *Some members highlighted poor communication from NHS Digital regarding the app's rollout and expectations. This experience not universal.*
- *Use of AI tools (like auto-summarised notes and digital triage) raised safety and equity concerns.*