



— SEPTEMBER 2026 — PETERBOROUGH GP ST PROGRAMME



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Hello all!

As another training year begins, we'd like to welcome you to the third edition of the Peterborough GPST Training Newsletter.

This is an exciting time for our VTS as we celebrate progression, embrace new challenges, and welcome new colleagues to the programme. Congratulations to everyone who have moved on to the next stage of their training—from ST1 to ST2, ST2 to ST3, and to those who have recently completed their GP training. We also extend a very warm welcome to our new ST1 trainees and anyone joining Peterborough GP Training. We are delighted to have you with us and hope you quickly feel part of our friendly and supportive community.

General practice training is a journey filled with learning, growth, and new experiences. Each rotation brings fresh opportunities to develop new skills, build confidence, and form lasting professional relationships. Whether you're taking your very first steps in GP training or entering your final year before CCT, we hope this newsletter will continue to be a useful resource, a source of encouragement, and a way of staying connected with colleagues across the programme.

In this edition, you'll find educational resources, our Trainer Spotlight, examination tips, wellbeing content, announcements, and opportunities to help support your professional development throughout the year.

We would also like to thank everyone who has contributed to this edition. Your willingness to share your experiences, knowledge and achievements is what makes this newsletter such a valuable resource for our training community.

As always, we welcome your ideas, stories and feedback for future editions. This newsletter is created for all of us, and we look forward to continuing to celebrate the people, experiences and successes that make the Peterborough GP Training Programme such a wonderful place to train.

We hope you enjoy this edition and wish you all a successful, fulfilling and enjoyable year ahead.

Welcome to the Peterborough GP Training scheme!

Dear New Trainees,

A huge congratulations on securing your place on the Peterborough GP Training Scheme! We are absolutely delighted to welcome you to the team and to this vibrant city.

About the Scheme

You have joined one of the most highly regarded GP training programme in the UK. We are committed to providing you with a well-rounded and supportive foundation for your career. In your ST1 year, you will gain invaluable acute experience through three four-month rotations in local hospitals, with the remainder of your training spent in our excellent GP clinics. This includes the innovative Integrated Training Programme (ITP) in your second year, which is designed to deepen your clinical skills in a community setting.

Exploring Peterborough

Life isn't just about work, and Peterborough has a fantastic array of activities to help you unwind. When you are ready to explore, you will find a diverse culinary scene with a wide range of restaurants, from Chinese, Indian, and Turkish to Thai and European cuisines.

For leisure and sport, you can catch a match at the Peterborough Stadium in Fletton, enjoy the local football and cricket pitches near PCH, or head to Hollywood Bowling Peterborough for some friendly competition. No visit to the city is complete without seeing the magnificent Peterborough Cathedral, one of England's finest Norman buildings, home to a stunning 13th-century painted ceiling and the tomb of Katharine of Aragon.

Excellent Transport Links

One of the major advantages of being based in Peterborough is its fantastic connectivity:

London: Direct trains to London King's Cross take around 50 minutes.

Cambridge: Direct trains take approximately 50 minutes to an hour, with the city centre just a pleasant 20-minute walk from the station.

Oxford: While a little further afield, Oxford is reachable in about 2 hours and 27 minutes.

Everyday Essentials

For your day-to-day needs, you will find plenty of convenient shopping options, including Queensgate Shopping Centre, Asda, Tesco, Sainsbury's, and Aldi.

Also, the city hosts key testing facilities, including the Pearson Test Centre and the local Driving Test Centre, should you need them.

TRAINER'S SPOTLIGHT

It is our pleasure to introduce one of our Training program directors- **Pete Hadfield**. We are excited for you to get to know him.

About:

I studied medicine at Newcastle University and then completed my GP training in Northumberland, a beautiful part of England. Following CCT, my wife and I travelled around the world, visiting Southeast Asia and Australia, before working in Auckland, New Zealand.

I came to Peterborough in 2003. I have always enjoyed teaching, and during our practice inspection, the AD suggested I apply for the TPD position. I didn't get the job initially, but I reapplied a year later and became a TPD in 2017.

I live in the small market town of Oundle with my wife and two sons, neither of whom chose medicine but instead are studying economics at university

Teaching Insight

Don't hesitate to ask when you don't know- I have been a GP for 25 years and still ask my colleagues questions about patient's clinical conundrums most days. GP is vast – you will never know everything!

Trainee Takeaways

- Take opportunities as they present themselves –the worst that can happen is that you don't like it, and then you can chalk it off. I have had some really interesting experiences as the Peterborough Lead for Palliative Care and completing a Fellowship through Cambridge University, which led to an MSc.
- Work-life balance is crucial- a career is long. Don't take work home with you and have plenty of interests (and friends) outside of medicine.
- The key to a great job is the people you work with. They don't need to be your best friends, but having good, dependable colleagues to seek help, advice and support from can make a career in GP enjoyable and fulfilling.

Quick Fire

- I would rather be scuba diving on a tropical coral reef
- Or watching The Arsenal
- I failed my first year at medical school



Exam Resources



SCA CORNER

Passing the SCA- Know what you're facing
I think it's important to first understand what the exam actually is before preparing for it. I won't go into all the details here as the RCGP website covers everything. What I would highlight is understanding how the consultation runs, what capabilities are being assessed, and how the exam is marked.

Preparing for battle

Like a lot of things in life, preparation is a key part of success.

When to do the exam: Book the exam when it works well for you, not other people. Just because your colleagues are booking before or after you doesn't mean that's right for you. Think about holidays, special occasions, and other commitments. Just make sure you plan ahead for the booking deadline. For example, if you want to sit the October 2026 SCA, the final booking deadline is 31st July. If you need reasonable adjustments, the deadline is even earlier.

Courses:

Currently, our deanery will fully fund a revision course. I would recommend the one- or three-day RCGP SCA preparation course. You get to practise cases, watch other registrars, and receive feedback from actual SCA examiners.

Resources:

There are loads of resources out there—books, podcasts, websites—some are free whilst others are paid. I quite liked SCArevision as it has lots of cases that are easy to work through. However, I found the best practice was simply seeing everyday patients in clinic and reflecting afterwards.

Practice:

Again, this will be different for everyone. Know your strengths and weaknesses, and don't get worried if you're doing something different from everyone else. I knew my

consultation skills were a strength, but I wasn't great at having guidelines at the tip of my fingers. I actually spent most of my revision reading NICE guidelines and very little time practising cases. Remember that clinical management is weighted more heavily in the marking. Also, this isn't an exam where you need to pass a certain number of stations—it's based on your total marks. In short, do what works for you and don't be distracted by what everyone else is doing.

Room set-up:

Again, the RCGP has lots of advice on this, but let your practice know well in advance when your SCA is. Decide which room you want to use (don't just let them choose for you—pick somewhere you'll feel comfortable), and make sure the technology works beforehand.

Judgement day:

All your hard work has come down to this day. It's a lot of pressure, and you might not have done an exam like this before.

Don't overload your brain trying to cram in last-minute information. Take it easy and set yourself up well. Try to get a good night's sleep, go for a walk, or do something that helps you relax. Bring snacks and water. It's a long exam, and you'll be talking a lot!

Arrive a little early so you can check your room and technology one last time.

Once the exam starts, take it one station at a time. Not every station is going to go smoothly, and that's okay. Be confident, but safe, in your management. If you go blank, summarize back what the patient has told you or reflect on their ICE. I found this often bought me a bit of thinking time and helped me work out where to go next.

Good luck to all those preparing for this exam in the not-so-distant future! I hope this helps, but if you have any questions feel free to grab me at VTS or drop me an email/message.

Fourteenfish -Portfolio

A Guide to Your Portfolio

FourteenFish is an access point for all things portfolio-related during your training. For everyone, it can appear overwhelming at the start, so if this is you now, do not fret. Relax, you've got this!

How to Access FourteenFish

You can access FourteenFish:

- Through the FourteenFish app
- Through the web

There is a benefit to documenting things immediately after an encounter, as this makes it easier to remember the details and complete your documentation while the experience is still fresh.

The purpose of FourteenFish is to record your learning as a GP trainee, which will be needed for your yearly assessment.

On FourteenFish, this has been tagged as Learning Logs at the top of your portfolio page.

Clinical Case Reviews

A minimum of 36 cases should be uploaded in each learning year. How often you upload these depends on you; however, a case per week would be recommended. This makes it easier for you to keep up with your portfolio and gives room for your supervisor to review them.

Learning Event/Significant Event Analysis:

A minimum of 1 per learning year is required. Any scenario that makes you evaluate your clinical Practice could be uploaded. For example:

- Prescription errors
- Mismanagement of a patient
- Ethical errors involving patients or colleagues, etc.

QIA/QIP

A minimum of two QIAs is required during your 3 years of training. This is usually done in ST1 and ST3.

A minimum of one QIP is required during your training, and this is usually done in ST2.

However, it is recommended that you complete a QIA in each year of training if possible - 3 QIAs and 1 QIP by the end of your training.

Ideas for QIA and QIP and more information can be found on the RCGP website.

Clinical Examination and Procedural Skills

You will be required to provide evidence of examination skills, which have been pre-determined. The list of skills you need can be found on your portfolio page.

You will need to request a colleague who is ST4 or above in their specialty to complete the assessment for you. They would need to have witnessed you performing the requested examination and be confident in your ability. It is advised to spread these assessments evenly over your years of training. If more are completed in your earlier years, you may be required to repeat them in your final year.

Placement Planning Meeting

This is the initial meeting with your Clinical Supervisor at the start of your rotation, where your objectives for the rotation are discussed. Therefore, a meeting is required for each rotation.

CbD / Mini-CEX / COT

In ST1 and ST2, a minimum of 4 CbDs/CATs and 4 COTs and/or Mini-CEXs are required each year.

In ST3, a minimum of 5 CATs is required, which can include CbDs and other appropriate Clinical Assessment Tools. In addition, a minimum of 7 COTs is required.

A Mini-CEX is an observed clinical interaction between you and a patient, usually in a non-primary care setting, assessing your clinical skills, attitudes and behaviours.

A COT (Consultation Observation Tool) is an observed consultation, usually in a primary care setting, assessing your consultation skills and clinical practice.

Fourteenfish -Portfolio

A CbD (Case-Based Discussion) is a structured discussion about a clinical case you have managed, assessing areas such as clinical reasoning, decision-making and professional judgement.

The assessments are recorded under the Education Assessment section of your portfolio.

Colleague and Patient Feedback

Multi-Source Feedback (MSF): This collects feedback from colleagues on your clinical performance and professional behavior. An MSF is required once in each training year (ST1, ST2 and ST3), with a separate Leadership MSF required in ST3. Each MSF requires a minimum of 10 respondents, ideally including a mix of clinical and non-clinical colleagues. You should discuss and reflect on your feedback with your Educational Supervisor.

Patient Satisfaction Questionnaire (PSQ):

This provides feedback from patients on your empathy and relationship-building skills during consultations. It is completed once during ST3, with a minimum of 34 patient responses required. The results should be reviewed and discussed with your Educational Supervisor.

CSR

This is your Clinical Supervisor Report, completed at the end of each rotation, where your Clinical Supervisor carries out an assessment of your progress.

IESR and ESR

This is your Educational Supervisor Review, completed twice a year:

- IESR (Interim Educational Supervisor Review): Initially at the midpoint of the year.
- ESR (Educational Supervisor Review): At the end of the year, just before your ARCP.

This is a review of your portfolio and learning logs by your Educational Supervisor to assess whether you are keeping up with your training requirements.

You will be required to prepare prior to your IESR or ESR by completing the ESR Preparation, which can be accessed through the Prepare icon in the ESR Preparation section.

Supporting Documents/Evidence

Level 3 Adult and Paediatric Safeguarding Evidence of Level 3 safeguarding is required for both adult and paediatric safeguarding.

This includes:

- Completion of a Level 3 safeguarding course.
- Knowledge updates for adult and paediatric safeguarding, e.g. webinars on safeguarding or e-learning courses.
- A Clinical Case Review that demonstrates your understanding of safeguarding should be completed for both adult and paediatric safeguarding and linked to the relevant mandatory training.

The option to link Clinical Case Reviews can be found at the top of the Clinical Case Review page.

BLS

Evidence of Basic Life Support (BLS) is required every 12 months.



Buying Your First Home as a GP

Buying your first home while working in NHS training can feel daunting, but planning ahead makes a significant difference.

A few things to remember:

- Start saving for your deposit as early as possible.
- Avoid taking out new loans or credit before applying for a mortgage.
- Keep your bank statements tidy during the application process.
- If you're rotating between hospitals or approaching CCT, choose a mortgage that fits your future career plans as well as your current situation.

What Are Mortgage Rates Like Right Now?

One of the first questions I am asked is, "What mortgage rate can I get?"

The honest answer is that it depends on one key factor: the size of your deposit.

The larger your deposit, the lower the lender's risk, and the better the interest rate you're usually offered. As of 27 July 2026, the most competitive fixed rates available are approximately:

	2-year fixed	3-year fixed	5-year fixed	10-year fixed
5% deposit	5.06%	5.14%	5.10%	5.74%
10% deposit	4.65%	4.91%	4.61%	5.59%
15% deposit	4.51%	4.61%	4.55%	5.39%
20% deposit	4.49%	4.60%	4.50%	5.39%
25% deposit	4.45%	4.47%	4.41%	5.14%
30% deposit	4.45%	4.47%	4.41%	5.14%
35% deposit	4.45%	4.47%	4.41%	5.14%
40%+ deposit	4.33%	4.38%	4.32%	5.13%

Buying a Home on a Visa

One question I am increasingly asked by GP trainees is whether it's possible to obtain a mortgage if you're in the UK on a visa.

The simple answer is yes—but your options may be more limited.

While some high street lenders will only consider applicants who have Indefinite Leave to Remain (ILR) or permanent residency, there are a number of lenders who are happy to lend to doctors and other healthcare professionals on Skilled Worker or Health and Care Worker visas.

The number of lenders available, the maximum loan-to-value (LTV), and the amount you can borrow will depend on several factors, including:

- The type of visa you hold.
- How long you have remaining on your visa.
- How long you have lived and worked in the UK.
- Your income and employment history.
- The size of your deposit.

In general, obtaining a mortgage becomes more straightforward once you have Indefinite Leave to Remain (ILR), as a wider range of lenders and mortgage products become available.

That said, many GP trainees successfully purchase their first home before obtaining ILR. Three popular lenders for GPs on visas are Halifax, Barclays and Accord.

Final Thoughts

Buying a home is a journey involving estate agents, lenders, surveyors and solicitors, but you don't have to navigate it alone. Get advice from a professional mortgage broker who specialises in GPs.

For most GP trainees, purchasing your first home is not only a major financial milestone but also an exciting step towards long-term financial security. With the right advice and careful planning, it's an achievable goal.

Wellbeing and Lifestyle



5 WAYS TO RESET IN NENE PARK AFTER A TOUGH WEEK

Ferry Meadows, Peterborough – 5min drive from the hospital.

Although August is the start of a new training year for most of us, we know residency can sometimes feel like a never-ending cycle of clinics, demands, and exams. So, use this tiny window before winter hits. If your brain feels like 40 tabs open, a Nene Park visit can be the reset button you need. Pick ONE this week. No guilt if you don't do all 5.

1. GET ON THE WATER AND LOG OFF

The bleeps can't find you on a paddleboard. Nene Outdoors offers kayaks, canoes, paddle boards, row boats, even those ridiculous dragon + swan pedalos. Go solo or take a friend for a proper day out.

When: Daily 11am–6.30pm

Trainee hack: Book online so you're not queuing. 60 minutes paddling gives you a reset that 2 hours of scrolling won't.

2. BIKE IT OUT

Hire a bike and let your brain go blank on the trails. There are two clearly marked cycle trails in Nene Park, as well as a digital cycling route. Just ask the team at Nene Outdoors for trail maps and advice.

Nene Outdoors does cycle hire daily. E-bikes available + helmets are free.

When: 10.30am–5pm daily

It's the best way to enjoy the outdoors without thinking.

3. START A WELLBEING ROUTINE OF MINDFUL MOVEMENT

Weekly Tai Chi (Free): Join a class and learn gentle, easy-to-follow movements focused on balance, posture, and stress reduction. Hosted by the Chinese Community in Peterborough. When: Every Saturday morning throughout September, 10:30 AM – 12:00 PM. Where: Coney Meadow (directly behind the Ferry Meadows Visitor Centre).

Rise & Shine Yoga (Free): All-level, inclusive outdoor movement and breathing sessions right by the water. When: Sunday mornings, 9:00 AM – 10:00 PM. Where: Overton Lake, Ferry Meadows. All excellent ways to reset your nervous system and clear your mind.

4. SLOW DOWN AND BREATHE

If you're not up for much activity, you can still enjoy a slow morning. Sit. Watch birds. No target, no portfolio deadline. Don't forget to bring a picnic.

Or take the 45-min eco boat trip from the Visitor Centre Jetty. It's a calm, slow ride. Wheelchair accessible + dogs are welcome.

Or Enjoy a relaxed, friendly social walk led by the park's Visitor Rangers, designed to promote community connection and mental clarity through gentle walking. When: Alternating Tuesdays starting at 10:30 AM

Dates in September:

8 September Route: Langley Green Way Meet Point: Lakeside, Ferry Meadows

22 September Route: Thorpe Meadows & Longthorpe Meet Point: Thorpe Meadows Car Park

A calm day literally lowers your cortisol. That's a better prescription than anything.

5. BOOK A CAMPING TRIP

If you're a night owl, camp under the stars by Gunwade Lake. They do cozy bell tents, and you've got easy access to all the Park activities. Make it a family thing and enjoy a calm night outside.

Parking £2.50/2hrs. Cafe + toilets at Visitor Centre. Dogs welcome everywhere.

Whatever you choose, make sure you're destressing and making your mental health a priority. Your best only comes from the best of you.

BONUS: GP TRAINEE ELECTROLYTE DRINK

For the days when water isn't cutting it and your head is pounding at 3pm

You need: 500ml water, pinch sea salt, 2 tbsp orange/lemon juice, 1 tsp honey.

- Method: Shake it in a water bottle. Keep one in the car, one in your bag.

Why: It's cheaper than Lucozade, rehydrates faster, no crash.

See you at the lake 🍷

TRAINEE CORNER

Chasing the Ridge: The Miners' Track.

The hike up Yr Wyddfa (Snowdon) remains one of the highlights of my summer, and I would highly recommend the breathtaking views!

The adventure kicked off at Pen-y-Pass on the historic Miners' Track from the 19th century, passing the Llyn Teyrn, with the crisp morning air and the warming presence of my companion.

We passed Llyn Llydaw, crossed the iconic stone causeway slicing through deep blue glacial waters. Looking up at the towering Snowdon horseshoe, we stopped to appreciate the view.

Beyond the Britannia Copper Mines ruins, our hike became a steep, scramble toward Glaslyn.

On our descent, we found shelter among rocky crags for a well-earned lunch on a flat boulder.

We then sat and shared some food while looking back at the peaks we conquered, the quiet contentment felt entirely earned.



Announcements

We want to say a big welcome to the new ST1s! We hope you are settling into your respective rotations.

The autumn term starts on the 8th of September – Looking forward to seeing everyone including the new faces. Please be sure to make them feel welcome.



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This issue wouldn't be the same without your creativity and effort—thanks for making it happen.



That's all for this edition – thanks for reading, and we'll see you in the next one with more news and updates!

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