Message from Charing Surgery to Parish Councils with residents who attend Charing, Hamstreet, Woodchurch or Tenterden (Ivy Court) Surgeries:

Charing surgery is currently acting as the vaccination centre for the Primary Care Network consisting of these four surgeries. Nearly 1,000 patients over 80 had their first dose of the Pfizer vaccine on December 18th or 19th. They were given appointments for the second dose on January 8th and 9th. In view of the debate over whether the priority should now be to give more people the first dose of a vaccine, the surgeries wish to reassure those patients that they should still attend for their second dose as planned. While they are sending text messages where they have mobile phone numbers for people concerned they do not have numbers for everyone. Charing surgery would be very grateful if relevant Parish Councils could help to spread the word by any means conveniently available to help reassure people and also help to ensure surgery phone lines do not get swamped with enquiries.

An additional 280 people will get their first vaccine on January 10th (since now six doses can be extracted per vial rather than five) – these and subsequent patients will wait up to 12 weeks for their second dose.

Also there are around 2,660 people over 80 who attend one of the four surgeries – more than double those so far vaccinated. So people over 80 who have not yet been called should not be concerned as they will be called as soon as more supplies become available.

The surgery expects to get the first batch of the Oxford vaccine towards the end of this week and this will be used for care homes across the primary care network. They do not yet know when they will get further batches but hope it will not be long before they are getting regular supplies.

Charing surgery is 6 miles west of Ashford , and it at least has a large car park (tip: drive down the side road called 'Hither Field' past the station car park, then round to the right, to avoid the one-way restriction from the actual Surgery Close car park...).