

Village Defibrillator Project Update - January 2024

Project Launch: Cllrs Bob Fossey (Chairman) and Sharon Coates launched the Village Defibrillator Project with the installation of the first defibrillator at the Martham Fire Station this month. Defibrillators are devices that apply an electric charge or current to the heart to restore a normal heartbeat. If the heart rhythm stops due to cardiac arrest, also known as sudden cardiac arrest (SCA), a defibrillator may help it start beating again.



Background

In 2023, Martham Parish Council agreed on a project proposal to place some additional and 'adequate' defibrillators in accessible locations across the village of Martham. In comparison to other villages of a similar size to Martham, an identified need was found for additional units and in a variety of locations across the whole of the village.

Councillors Sharon Coates and Cllr Bob Fossey proposed to lead on a long-term project as part of a council working group, working in collaboration with Jayne Biggs from the registered charity **Heart 2 Heart – Norfolk**, who raise funds for life saving defibrillators across Norfolk, Suffolk, and the UK. Their aim is to place 24/7 public defibrillators in communities, outside schools, clubs, and small organisations. The charity provides free CPR and Defibrillator Training for the community and training in schools, starting from 5 years old.

Jayne says "I set up Heart 2 Heart Norfolk in 2016, raising money placing defibrillators in schools, clubs & public places across Norfolk and now into Suffolk. I have placed over 260 public 24/7 defibrillators across Norfolk & Suffolk and now all over the UK!"

Working Group members met with Jayne Biggs from Heart2Heart Charity, to seek additional advice on writing a proposal which would result in additional defibrillator units across the village.

Defibrillator provision: Midway through 2023, a review found that the village had only two of four working defibrillators registered with the British Heart Foundation National Defibrillator Network - The Circuit. The Circuit ensures that thousands of unregistered defibrillators are added to the centralised network for emergency access. More details can be found here: [National Defibrillator Network - The Circuit](#)

Defibrillator locations:

1. **Martham Lodge:** older peoples home in the centre of the village.
Status: behind closed doors – working and maintained by owners of the home.
2. **Central Co-op Shop:**
Status: outside - now up and running again.
3. **Martham Parish Council:** Located on the Cricket Scoreboard
Status: Not working and requires replacement due to age
4. **Flegg High School**
Status: behind closed doors – working, however only accessible for internal use when school open is open.

Additional Locations

In comparison, other local villages have more than Martham and in some cases up to nine units located across their village. As a growing village, Jayne recommended additional units and suggested the following locations:

1. **Repps Road** end of the village near the DIY shop and supports a request from Ealing House Older People Home.
2. **Rollesby Road** - Fire Station **(NOW INSTALLED AND WORKING – JANUARY 2024)**
3. **Playingfield Lane** - to support Martham Football Club, Social Club and Bowls Clubs
4. **Central Village** - ideally close to Public Houses or local shops where the unit is more visible.
5. **Hemsby Road** – close to the Business Park
6. **Somerton Road** – close to Flegg High School/Scout Hut
7. **Other areas** - outskirts of the village such as walking areas and where an electricity supply is available.

Frequently asked questions

Q1. What are the costs?

The purchase price of the unit is £1500, plus any setup of electricity installation for each unit. Maintenance is the cost and value of a volunteer's time. Running costs are for replacement batteries and pads which have an expiry date. Ongoing fundraising activities will be planned and organised to pay for this. Any fundraising suggestions or people willing to volunteer are welcome to become involved in the project.

Q2. What are the considerations for citing the defibrillator?

Agreement for an electricity supply is required. The business or organisation must agree for the installation. Any location suggested, must be suitable for the unit to be available 24 hours a day, and seven days a week.

Q3. Who does the checks? Currently Parish Councillors act as volunteer guardians alongside other willing helpers. More are needed, as the frequency of checks, recording of checks takes a little time each month. This time is invaluable because if the regular checks are missed, then the unit may not be available when it is needed in an emergency. If a volunteer takes a holiday, then someone else must step in if available. If you would like to become involved, please email clerk@martham.gov.uk

Q4. Training requirements. Heart2Heart delivers free training for organisations and volunteers. The next session has been arranged at the Community Centre.

Q5. Are there funds available for new developments in the village, i.e., new development near the Scout Hut?

Grant funding is available in some cases, for example through the Football Association (FA) however, any units bought are not necessarily the quality or have the lifetime required. All lines of funding will be accessed where possible. A recent application made to Great Yarmouth Borough Council for Section106 funding was unsuccessful, because the purchase and installation of defibrillators did not fit into the open spaces criteria for the funding.

Q6. How are the units recovered after an incident of use? The units are returned to the venue by the user (contact details can be found outside the venue).

Q7. How are the Ambulance service involved?

Users are asked to call 999 to gain access to the unit who have the code for the box/case, which holds the portable defibrillator. If an ambulance is required, the 999 operators will give guidance on what happens.

Q8. What is involved with the ongoing maintenance?

Checks: one of biggest challenges is the commitment to ongoing monthly checks to ensure the machine is working and the actual defibrillator is put back in the case after use. The effectiveness of this work falls to the reliance on local volunteers such as Parish Councillors and volunteers from the community. However, by working with Jayne from Heart 2 Heart Norfolk she offers added support by monitoring the status of all defibrillators installed from a 'distance' by sending over an additional notification if a unit has been used, before a scheduled check or the email notification from The Circuit has been read.

Q9. What fundraising activities are being organised?

It was agreed for Heart2Heart Norfolk to install a 'working and accessible' unit ,as soon as possible by temporarily accessing council reserve funds. These funds will be replaced by organising fundraising events and applying for grants.

Q10. Who else is involved in the project?

The Fire Station in Martham (Norfolk Fire and Rescue) have kindly agreed to be a guardian for the first unit which has been installed outside the Fire Station.

Q11. How can I make a donation?

The council will be adding multiple ways to make a donation in the forthcoming weeks. More details and updates can be found on their website here

<http://marthampc.org.uk/> If you would like to make payment by cheque or by direct BACS payment, please email clerk@martham.gov.uk

DATE FOR YOUR DIARY: DEFIBRILLATOR TRAINING

PLEASE NOTE THE NEXT DEFIBRILLATOR TRAINING DATE

WEDNESDAY 20 MARCH 2024 – 6.30PM

COMMUNITY CENTRE – PLAYING FIELD LANE, MARTHAM

ALL WELCOME TO ATTEND

BOOK YOUR PLACE BY EMAILING clerk@martham.gov.uk