



## PRESS RELEASE

### For immediate release

#### Lifesaving defibrillators for the Portishead community

A new community Automated External Defibrillator (AED) has been installed and is rescue-ready at Walnut Grove Clinic, Slade Road, BS20 6BB (what3words: perused.eyelid.brisk). A second is due to be located at Walnut Grove Studio, 81 papermill gardens, BS20 in December.

It's thanks to the staff at Walnut Grove, and their local community, that these two new AEDs will soon be available in Portishead.

The team at Walnut Grove is passionate about health and community. So, when they were made aware of the need for more public access defibrillators in the community, they jumped at the chance to fundraise for two more.

Spearheaded by new owners, Steve and Kathryn Harper, and with the support of the Portishead Lions, Walnut Grove organised a fundraising event in June that pulled the whole town together.

Kathryn said: *"Our aim was to raise enough funds to provide the community of Portishead with two more defibs to save lives. We wanted to get as many people as possible involved in a collective mileage to take us from Land's End to John O'Groats, in whatever mode of activity people saw fit. Not only did we SMASH the mileage — we needed 874 miles and we achieved 1400!"*

And to coincide with Steve and Kathryn's first full year of ownership in October, they held a cake sale and raffle: *"Yet again, the support was overwhelming and unfathomable. We raised another £615 enabling us to order the second defib, for the Paper Mill Gardens studio site. The first, as some of you may have noticed, is in situ outside the main clinic on Slade Road."*

Steve and Kathryn have worked for Walnut Grove for fifteen years, but when they took over ownership last year, they wanted to do something to show and reiterate the ethos of Walnut Grove and its community spirit.

Their immediate thought was that the main clinic did not have a defibrillator and they knew there was a shortage in the area. But having it installed inside the building would mean that it wouldn't be accessible outside of opening hours or for the general public. Kathryn said: *"If you're going to try and help save lives, why not try and save more."*

While looking into how they could install public access AEDs, they got talking to the Portishead Lions who offered help with maintenance, and the Lions put them in touch with Great Western Air Ambulance Charity (GWAAC) and HeartSafe. The rest, as they say, is history and they're now well on their way to having both defibs installed for the community.

*"Kathryn and her team at Walnut Grove have done such amazing work fundraising for not one, but two, AEDs for the benefit of their local community with incredible creativity, resourcefulness, and determination. We are so proud to have partnered with such a shining example of a caring, conscious establishment in Portishead and I look forward to continuing to work together in 2023."*

Philippa Walker, Supporter Engagement Coordinator, Great Western Air Ambulance Charity

[GWAAC's public access defibrillator campaign](#) makes it easy for people to place an AED on a building or street. An AED is an easy-to-use medical device that can deliver an electrical shock, or defibrillation, to someone who is in cardiac arrest. It is an essential part of trying to save their life.

GWAAC is working with [HeartSafe](#) to provide an all-in-one AED package including training, support with maintenance and help with fundraising for the package.

**ENDS**

### Notes for editors

1. GWAAC provide the critical care and air ambulance service for 2.1 million people across the counties of Bath and North East Somerset, Bristol, South Gloucestershire, Gloucestershire, North Somerset, and parts of Wiltshire.
2. The GWAAC Critical Care Team consists of highly trained and experienced Critical Care Doctors, Advanced Practitioners and Specialist Paramedics in Critical Care, who bring the skill and expertise of a hospital emergency department to the patient.
3. 2021 was the charity's second-busiest year to date, with 1,964 call-outs. The Critical Care Team attends an average of over five incidents a day, either by helicopter or in one of three critical care cars. On average each mission costs around £2,000 to attend.
4. The charity needs to raise over £4 million a year in order to remain operational, yet receives no day-to-day funding from the Government or National Lottery.

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