

NEWS

Life-saving facility

Defibrillator boost for Abbeystead area

BY STAFF REPORTER
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The life-saving benefit of having access to a defibrillator was thrust into the spotlight at the Euro 2020 Championship when Denmark's Christian Eriksen suffered a cardiac arrest while playing for his country against Finland.

Much to everyone's relief the former Tottenham Hotspur midfielder now appears to be on the road to recovery though his career as a professional footballer may have come to a premature end.

The incident highlighted the importance of having such a vital piece of equipment within easy reach and now it's thanks to the efforts of Over Wyresdale Parish Council that residents and visitors to Abbeystead have such a facility to hand.

Providing such an asset doesn't come cheap so when organisers of the Legend Fires North West Stages Rally donated £500, around a third of the total cost, it helped accelerate the installation of the life-saving equipment in the former village telephone box.

Parish Council Chair Mark Atkinson said "We wanted to locate an acces-



Mark Hothersall, Parish Councillors John Drinkall and Mark Atkinson, Darren Atkinson, Parish Councillor Barry Pye. Photo: www.pro-rally.co.uk.

sible defibrillator in the village and we're very grateful to all those who supported us achieve our goal. Once covid-19 government advice allows we plan to run training sessions for first responders to compliment those who are already qualified as part of their work duties."

Local rally ace Darren At-

kinson is one likely to take the course but it's unlikely he'll be racing to the scene of any emergency in his rally car! Darren said "I've lived locally all my life and I attended the village school opposite the phone box that now houses the defibrillator so it means a lot to me to be able to help the local community."

North West Stages Rally Deputy Clerk of the Course Mark Hothersall said "I first met with the Parish Councillors in the build-up to the 2019 event and given the help they gave us I was delighted when the opportunity arose for us to help them provide this wonderful facility in the heart of the village."

Veterans

Breakfast Club makes a return

Garstang's Armed Forces and Breakfast club, which was forced to halt its monthly meetings last year due to Covid rules, is to re-launch next month.

The club will return to its original venue - Th'owd Tithebarn, Garstang, on July 3 at 9.30am.

Chairman Paul Robinson said: "We not only welcome Veterans of all ages but also their family members - and this we believe is one of the reasons that this club has been so successful.

"The Veterans themselves belonged to the family of Armed Forces and they could not have done this without the support of their own family, so it is important that these family members young and old are made welcome at our breakfast club meetings.

"Restrictions due to Covid have impacted on people in many ways and the feeling of isolation has been one of

the many affects, to try and overcome this when the rules allowed we have held monthly socially-distanced walks that have given members an opportunity to meet others outdoors and enjoy a change of scenery and company. We have wherever possible maintained contact via social media, newsletters and phone calls and have been there should any of our Veterans or their family needed help.

"Now subject to the rules in place at the moment and after what seems an eternity we will be able to re-start our breakfast clubs and everyone is looking forward to meeting again at the Tithebarn and sharing a breakfast and catching up with friends old and new.

● If you or someone you know has served in the Forces please come along to the Tithebarn on July 3 starting at 9.30 am you will be made most welcome.



Covid recovery

More signs of 'normality' across county

Life is slowly returning to normal in Lancashire, data suggests, despite the coronavirus restrictions still in place.

Current curbs will remain a while longer, as Prime Minister Boris Johnson recently announced that the end of all coronavirus restrictions in England - which the Government's roadmap outlined would be June 21 at the earliest - would be delayed by up to four weeks.

Google uses location data from phones and other personal devices to track trends in people's movement in different parts of their daily lives.

It compares footfall in five areas outside of the home - retail and recreation, supermarkets and pharmacies, parks, public transport and workplaces - to a five week-baseline period recorded before the Covid-19 crisis.

In Lancashire, average activity across these categories was 23% above normal levels in the week to June 6.

This was up significantly from 33% below in the week beginning January 4, when the UK was plunged into its third national lockdown.

Across the UK, average activity peaked at 9% above the baseline between May 31 and June 6 - a higher level than

any other week since the UK entered its first lockdown in March 2020.

While many activities and venues such as large-scale events and nightclubs still have several weeks before they can return, many other parts of the economy have reopened.

After months of lockdown, the first coronavirus restrictions were eased in April when non-essential retail and outdoor hospitality resumed.

This was followed by pubs and restaurants welcoming customers indoors in May, along with many indoor entertainment and cultural

venues, such as museums, theatres and cinemas - though all are operating at a reduced capacity.

Google data for the week ending June 6 in Lancashire showed:

Activity in retail and recreation establishments was 2% below normal levels

● In supermarkets and grocery stores, it was 9% above usual

● Activity was 158% above pre-pandemic measurements in parks and public spaces

● It was 14% below the baseline on public transport

● And activity in workplaces was 34% below normal

The Prime Minister pushed back the end of England's coronavirus restrictions to July 19 due to concerns over the rapidly spreading Delta variant first identified in India.

Experts feared going ahead with step four on June 21 as planned could lead to hospital admissions on the scale of the first wave of Covid-19, heaping unsustainable pressure on the health service.

Limits on numbers for sports events, pubs and cinemas will therefore remain in place, nightclubs will stay shuttered and people will be asked to continue working

from home where possible.

Mr Johnson left open the option of ending restrictions on July 5 if the data proves drastically better than expected, but conceded "let's be realistic, probably more likely four weeks".

Labour leader Sir Keir Starmer said the delay was a direct result of the Government's failure to secure the UK's borders from the Delta variant. Speaking in the House of Commons, Sir Keir said: "We all want these restrictions to be over, for our economy to be open, for businesses to thrive - but the Prime Minister's indecision at the borders has blown it."