

A photograph of a forest path in spring. The path is made of gravel and leads through a wooded area. The ground is covered with a layer of snowdrops, and some trees are bare, while others have small green leaves. The sky is overcast.

UPBEAT MAGAZINE

Journal of the West Suffolk Heart Support Group

Spring 2026

www.upbeatheartsupport.org.uk Reg Charity No. 1087415
e.mail upbeatheartsupport@btinternet.com



The Queen's Award
for Voluntary Service

Patron: Dr Pegah Salahshouri
Consultant Cardiologist
West Suffolk Hospital and
Papworth Hospital, Cambridge

Patron: Mr Daemmon Reeve
Former CEO
R C Treatt PLC
Bury St Edmunds

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From the Chairman



How the time flies, doesn't it? As I write this we are already nearing the end of February and, I suspect, we are all looking forward to the spring. In the garden snowdrops and crocuses have been in flower for some weeks and already early daffodils are in bloom so it won't be long. The days are longer and this afternoon Valerie and I actually managed to sit out in the garden having tea in the sunshine with some friends. I can't remember when we were last able to do that and it certainly raises the spirits. Probably by the time you receive this magazine we shall be approaching the day when British Summer Time begins and (we hope) long sunny days will be with us. Lovely!

I hope this edition of our Upbeat magazine contains items you will enjoy reading. Nowadays we don't have as many social functions as we used to but even so there were several to report on and I'm grateful to those members whose names appear as contributors to the various pieces.

It seems that in every issue of the magazine we strive to make you aware of Upbeat's financial situation and the continual drain on our reserves caused by the fact that income from exercise classes and seeing the nurse never meets the expenditure incurred in hiring the venues and paying our nurses and instructors. Additional costs include stationery, postage, printing, and travelling expenses, among others. The magazine itself is expensive to produce and to mail to those members who do not collect a copy at the venues. The Committee has addressed the issue at many meetings and tried to come up with ways of slowing the rate at which our bank balance is depleted. As Editor of the magazine I have looked at other software which would allow me to produce a magazine of comparable quality at a lower cost and I am optimistic that I have found some but it will take me some while to become familiar enough with it to do all that I currently do with InDesign, the application I've been using for

Front cover: Carpets of snowdrops at Walsingham, Norfolk. Photograph by kind permission of Siobhan Laskey

ten years or more. In the meantime, as you will see from an insert sent with the papers included with this mailing, we are asking those of you who wish to continue to receive the magazine to contribute towards its cost. We are asking for £5 per year, which would get you the Spring and Autumn editions. This can be paid by BACS (for the details required see the enclosed documents). Alternatively you could choose to have the magazine emailed to you as a PDF, or you can view it on our website. We ask also that if you do not want to have the magazine in the future, you let Valerie, our Treasurer, know. We understand that for many members who, for various reasons, are no longer able to attend our exercise sessions or social functions the magazine is valued as a way of keeping in touch with what's happening and still getting a measure of enjoyment from reading about it and seeing the photographs. We certainly don't want to cut anybody off so please get in touch and let us know what you would like to do to continue getting your copy.

You may notice that there is no 'Forthcoming Events' item in this issue of the magazine. This is because there are only two events planned so far. One is our forthcoming Annual General Meeting on Tuesday, July 14th, papers for which are being sent to you with this magazine. Please try to attend this important meeting and also think carefully about whom you would like to fill the various Committee posts which will be up for re-election. Could you offer yourself to fulfil one of these roles or to help on the Committee? It doesn't have to be very time-consuming and you don't need any specific skills. Talk to one of the present Committee to find out more about what's involved.

The other date for your diaries is July 9th when we will hold our annual Strawberry Tea, this year at a different venue - Acton Village Hall. Hilary, Valerie, and I went to check out the facilities there and we were very happy with everything we saw. The Strawberry Tea afternoon is always a happy occasion when Bury and Long Melford members get together. Please make a note of the date and be sure to get your tickets when they go on sale.

I hope to see you at the AGM in July.

Best wishes to you all.

David

Secretary's Report



In the last magazine of 2025 I explained the Secretary's role would be available in 2026 and asked for anyone with secretarial experience to come forward to take on the role. I also stressed that we need extra people to get together as a Social Sub-Committee or Fundraising Committee. Since then, no one has come forward, which is very disappointing. This is my sixteenth year as secretary and I feel I need to step back. I know this is not new; every charity around is in the same difficulty, lack of people willing to take on these roles. If you feel you could help or know of anyone that could fill these roles, please let one of the Committee know.

We are extremely lucky in having Valerie as our Treasurer. She works tirelessly on our behalf keeping everything in meticulous order and it is an awful lot of work. So much goes on behind the scenes with The Charity Commission/ Gift Aid etc. that we don't get to see, so thank you, Valerie.

Reality Check - Costs

Exercise Class – The actual cost per person is around £12. This covers costs of professional help and rental of premises. We have been subsidising this with our reserves and fundraising but this can't go on for ever.

The costs associated with the magazine are printing, stationery, the software used for design and layout, plus the high cost of postage. David Axton, our Chairman, as you know is also Editor of the magazine and does a fantastic job which is very time-consuming. We are so lucky that he continues to volunteer his time on this. Each magazine costs us around £1000. With the departure of Daemmon Reeve, our Patron from RC Treatt, we have lost their help in covering the postage costs.

Reality Check - Grants

Before Covid came along, I was mainly responsible for applying for grants from wherever they were available and we were quite successful and able to

build up a financial cushion. Since Covid the world has changed completely. We are in an economic crisis with many more charities looking for money and the criteria for applying for grants have changed. We now have Food Banks, Homelessness, Young people with Mental Health Issues, Suicide Prevention groups, Refugee Support, and so on. The list just goes on and on. Each grant provider normally has a specific area that they want to help, and older people with heart problems are now way down the list. However, whenever something suitable comes along I will always make an application.

Steve Dennington, also deserves a mention. He has been looking after our Website for us for many years. It's another time-consuming job and he does it voluntarily so thank you, Steve. We are often complimented on our professional website. Check it out and see for yourself:

www.upbeatheartsupport.org.uk

A shout out to Debbie, Tracey, and Linda in the Café at New Bury. They are very generous with their time for the community at New Bury and we have benefited from that, so thank you.

Sylvia Baker and David Camp continue to help out with organising the Annual Lunch at Stowmarket Golf Club, which is always a nice occasion.

There are so many people involved in keeping things running. We couldn't function without all our helpers at New Bury and Long Melford, so thank you. We must also send a big hug to Kate Turner, our long-serving nurse whom many of you know and love. She has been struggling with illness for the past year and we all send her our love and support. The nurses and instructors deserve a huge vote of thanks. They do a brilliant job looking after us all.

Times are very difficult; the world is a scary place at the moment, but help us out if you can. It is a worthwhile thing to help keep the group not only surviving but thriving and helping as many people as we can.

Every day is a blessing. Enjoy the summer.

Hilary x

Treasurer's Report

Email: treasurer@upbeatheartsupport.org.uk

Telephone: 01284 747238 or 07931 512676



Since my last report we continue to be financially viable but each month we use up some of our reserves. Fortunately, at the moment we have reserves which help. Many charities are finding it difficult to manage. I monitor our accounts on a weekly or daily basis and move monies between our accounts to make the best use of any interest.

How You Can Help Financially

As you will see in the Chairman's piece on Page 4 we are asking for voluntary donations of £5 towards the cost of two magazines a year. This will help towards the cost of the design software, printing, and postage. We have previously had adverts in the magazines, but these lapsed during Covid and we have had no one to organise finding advertisers since. It's possible to send the magazine to you by email. This would cut down on costs so please let me know if you would like to receive your copy this way or, if you no longer want the magazine or to be a member of Upbeat, please contact me via the details above.

Bringing your own water bottle to exercise classes saves money on paper cups.

Any donations you may make, from putting coins in the pot at our venues, to small regular donations and larger sums - every penny helps. We have had several funeral collections which have been very helpful indeed.

How You Can help by Volunteering

Our MAJOR challenge is finding volunteers to help with so many things. Can you help at all? Even occasionally would be a help. At Long Melford taking turns to make drinks, setting up and clearing away or locking up? It would just help to have a list of people who could occasionally help out, particularly if someone is ill.

At New Bury on the front desk, occasionally.

On Thursday Mornings at Southgate occasionally (Second and Fourth Thursdays 10.30 to 12.00)

Help with planning an event or helping at an event.

Perhaps doing some secretarial work.

As Hilary has written, we need help and support and whatever you can do will be very much appreciated.

Thank you.

Valerie

Donations over £50.00

Ed Callaghan £75.00
David Catton £50.00
Thursday Coffee Mornings £100.00
Ilva Maxey £50
Valerie Axton £50
Sylvia Bambridge £150.00
Bob Mountfort £50
CAMRA East Anglian Beer Festival £600
Catherine Bird £50
Phillip and Philippa Melton £1500

Thank you for all and any donations. Just a few are listed here.

Donations in memory of members who have died:

Geoffrey Clarke £669.65	Edward Williams £165.00
Doreen Land £267.97	Tom Hunt £488.90
Pamela Wappett £286.16	

Fund-raising September 2025 to January 2026

Easy Fund Raising £24.25

Christmas Cards Profit £226.98

Tombola Stall November Bury Light switch-on £740.00

Long Melford Christmas Raffle £134.50

New Bury Christmas Raffle £142.00

Bury Christmas Lunch £219.00 Raffle £311.00

Membership

Please remember to let me know if you change your address, phone number, or email address or if you no longer wish to be a member and receive the magazine. Valerie Axton 01284 747238 or valerie_axton@hotmail.com

Toast Are Coming To Town

In last spring's magazine I wrote a piece thanking Toast Coffee House in Sudbury for their generous ongoing donations to us of tea and coffee. You may remember that the company state that they are 'proud sponsors of charities, and organisations who work tirelessly to help others', and that had certainly proved to be true in their support of Upbeat.



I am happy to say that according to a recent report in the Bury Free Press newspaper, Toast are opening a branch in Bury St Edmunds, to be located in the building formerly occupied by Sneezums the jewellers, so Bury residents can look forward to sampling their delicious coffee and snacks in the near future. This will be in addition to their branches in Sudbury, Braintree, Chelmsford, Witham, and Colchester so it's good to know that the company with the community spirit is apparently doing well. Nice work, Toast!

David

Personal Reflections of Upbeat Over the Years

When I first walked into Hardwick School on a Friday night aged 22, clutching my CD's and with far more confidence than experience, I had no idea that Upbeat would become such a huge part of my life. Back then we ran two classes – one aerobics, one circuits – and I thought I was living my absolute best life. I vividly remember climbing up a ladder to retrieve equipment, passing heavy steps down to willing hands below, teaching a full session, jumping in the car, racing home for a lightning-speed shower and heading straight out clubbing with friends. The stamina! If only I could bottle that version of myself now.

A few months later I was offered a class at Abbeycroft Leisure alongside our wonderful nurse Kate. It felt like a big step forward. We settled in happily... until a fire at the leisure centre forced us to relocate. Upbeat has never been one to stand still, so we packed up and moved to St John's Church. My strongest memory of St John's Church is being heavily pregnant and still lugging my music system down the road. Health and safety may wince, but determination (and perhaps a touch of stubbornness) prevailed. From there we moved to the British Sugar Sports & Social Centre, and after maternity leave, we eventually found a long-term home at the (old) New Bury Community Centre.

Those New Bury years were golden. Classes grew and grew. Wednesdays went from one session to three. Mondays followed the same pattern. Fridays too. What started small quickly became wonderfully busy. In the height of summer, we would pull the curtains tight against the blazing sun, then escape outside to cool down under the shade of a tree. In spring, we'd head off on long walks around the field. We adapted to seasons, spaces, and circumstances – and always kept moving. Always kept moving despite having no hot water and a building with the fate of demolition. And then there was Christmas!

Every year, the pressure was on. Our very own creative genius, Patrick, wrote the most brilliant sketches, and we discovered that among our members we had some truly excellent actors and actresses – and yes, a few delightful drama queens. The Christmas show became part of Upbeat folklore. Members would say in October, "I'm already looking forward to it!"

The expectation to be bigger and better was real, but so was the laughter. Instructors, nurses, Committee members – everyone got involved. If you haven't seen the archives, I highly recommend requesting a viewing!

Of course, no reflection would be complete without mentioning the “naughty mat”. Occasionally, when behaviour during circuits became slightly... spirited... someone would be banished. All in good humour, of course. Then there was the “famous 7” shouted dramatically during countdowns, and my attempts to educate everyone on muscle names. Hearing “maximus glutilus” instead of gluteus maximus (the bottom, for clarity!) remains one of my personal highlights.

When the first lockdown was announced, I worried deeply about our members. Many relied on guided exercise and routine. The risk of deconditioning was real. Although I was nervous about teaching online, I knew I had to try. Overnight, I launched a Zoom session. To my amazement, 20–25 members logged in each week. Seeing those smiling faces on screen lifted my spirits more than they will ever know.

Returning after the pandemic wasn't straightforward for me personally. Complicated breast surgery kept me out of action for a long time, and just as I properly returned, I managed to break my ankle – quite impressively, I might add. Now I am back every week, and it feels wonderful to be creating memories again.

Upbeat has been part of my life for over twenty years. Members supported me through my Master's in Exercise Medicine, even participating in research. My professional world has evolved – from teaching and tutoring to research and now therapy – yet I still hold tightly to my Wednesday sessions.

Upbeat feels like family. I often say our members remind me of the film Cocoon – they must have got in the pool and come out younger. You amaze me constantly. You are living proof that movement is medicine, laughter is powerful, and community keeps us strong.

Here's to the next chapter. And perhaps... an even bigger Christmas show.

Michelle

Emergency First Aid Course

17th January 2026

This short course, sponsored by Upbeat for a mix of members, nurses, and instructors, covered basic first aid in an emergency situation. Our tutor, Martyn, covered how to assess any danger, first making sure we are safe before proceeding.

We covered basic assessment processes including asking others for help, such as by phoning 999 or 112. Martyn demonstrated techniques for resuscitation, recovery positions, etc., and encouraged us all to practise these on our willing group members.



Martyn Blackford, who organised and led the course, is one of Upbeat's long-serving BACPR Instructors. He also owns Latitude, a company which provides a range of first aid, safety, and mental health awareness courses.

A few people were surprised to learn that a nose bleed is helped best by pinching the nose and leaning forward onto your elbows for ten minutes. Just one example where a more modern method has been found to be more effective than previous treatments.



Peter Azzopardi, another of our Instructors, practising chest compressions on a manikin.



Martyn produced several examples of defibrillators, the ones we see in villages near the community centre or in towns as in the Arc centre in Bury. We all had the opportunity to use these and practise our resuscitation techniques on models

on the floor. The defibrillator voice tells you exactly what to do, which gives extra confidence in an emergency situation. The equipment has to be regularly checked for efficient use and should have a check date visible for information.



A short test was given at the end and we all passed. A big 'Thank you.' to Martyn our excellent tutor. It was an enjoyable experience learning together with some laughs to balance the serious nature of the course.

*Felicity
Stemp*



Well done, us!

An Update from Our President



Hi, Everybody. I can't believe it's been seven months since I stepped down from being Upbeat Chairman. Where does the time go? I was overwhelmed by the large amount of money members gave me as a leaving present and I have had fun spending it and there's still some left. I've been on a cruise to Italy and then to the Canary Islands. This one had Michael Ball and Harry Redknapp as the entertainment and they were really good. I came home at the end of November and then suddenly it was Christmas and New Year and as you all are aware it hasn't stopped raining since!!!

I still work hard at promoting Upbeat and went to a meeting recently with Suffolk and North East Essex Integrated Care Board NHS and WSH. We are going to trial a voucher method of getting new members. They are providing vouchers which entitle the new person to attend four sessions free and they will pay us so we are not out of pocket. Hopefully, after coming along four times they will want to continue exercising and will pay to attend themselves.

The Committee will document and provide feedback which will hopefully show the need to help Upbeat, get more members for us, and promote our name throughout the professional sector. There may be opportunities for further funding so please make these new people welcome. This voucher scheme may take off or may not work but we will trial it and who knows?

I notice that people are not wearing badges during exercise sessions. Please wear these. It may help should you need medical intervention during class.

Some of our long standing members need our support as they endure illness and we offer kindness and lots of love to them all.

Please keep attending and supporting us - and don't get washed away with this awful rain. Roll on spring and some sunshine, eh? Best wishes.

Sylvia

Celebrating an Upbeat Nonagenarian

On the afternoon of September 11th 2025 friends and family gathered at New Green Community Centre in Thurston to help celebrate the 90th birthday of long-standing Upbeat member Bob Mountfort. Bob and his wife Frankie have been Upbeat members since 2016 and although they aren't able to exercise any more they are regular participants in the Upbeat Zoom session which our Secretary, Hilary, hosts every Friday morning.



Guests enjoyed a lovely buffet, a free bar, and the chance to enjoy each other's company for several hours. Despite the fact that Bob had requested 'No presents, but just your presence' (Clever word play, Bob!), a few guests disobeyed and brought gifts for the birthday boy.



Bob and Frankie led the way in the cake-cutting



There was no denying Bob had reached his three score years ... and a little bit more!



All smiles for Bob!

Remembering a First World War Heroine ...

... and My Visit to Norwich Cathedral

My Mum, Edith Bennett, was born in 1903 in Colwyn Bay, North Wales and when she was 12 during the First World War, she wanted to help raise money to help the wounded soldiers in the local Military Hospital. Mum wrote a poem about Nurse Edith Cavell, who was executed by the Huns (as the British often called them in those days). It was printed on a post card and sold for 1p a copy.



I don't know how many were printed but it raised quite a lot of money for the soldiers. Nurse Edith's mother, Louisa Cavell, heard about the poem and wrote a personal letter to my mum thanking her for the lovely poem.

I didn't know anything about the poem my mother had written until the 1980s. A few years before she died I was sorting through some paper work and found the poem and letter so I was able to find out how it came to be written.

In 2020 I found it again and realised it was a treasure. I visited Edith Cavell's grave at Norwich Cathedral. I contacted Cannon Peter Doll, who is in charge of the museum there, and after a few emails he said they would be delighted to have the poem in their archives. Unfortunately, Covid struck and Lockdown. I also lost my darling husband at that time and so the poem didn't make it.

Last September a speaker at W.I. spoke about Nurse Cavell and I showed her the poem and letter. She urged me to re-engage with Cannon Doll.

In October they commemorated the 110th Anniversary of Edith Cavell's death with a televised service. I was invited to attend the service at the Cathedral and two days before the service Cannon Peter came to my home to collect the poem and letter so it would be there at the service. Unfortunately, my daughter was not well on the day so we could not go

but I was able to watch the Symposium on my I-pad. I learnt so much more about her life and Charity which to this day continues to help our nurses if they need help financially anywhere they might be in Great Britain.

A few weeks later we were able to go to the Cathedral and meet Cannon Peter Doll in the Library to see the small museum. It was lovely to see some of Nurse Cavell's diaries. Cannon Peter took us into the lovely café there for a coffee and a chat. He is such a kind and friendly man and I was grateful for the time he spent with us.

I still have an original postcard of Mum's poem and a copy of Louisa's letter to keep in the family but I am so glad they are both now where they should be. I hope Mum knows I did the right thing.

Olva Maxey

Absent Friends

We are sad to report that since the last issue of our magazine the following members have passed away:

- Mr Ray Hoskins - member since 1999*
- Mrs Dorothy Langridge - member since 2000*
- Mrs Gillian Southgate - member since 2001*
- Mr Tom Hunt - member since 2004*
- Mrs Vivienne Simpkin - member since 2005*
- Mrs Geraldine Rolfe - member since 2007*
- Mr George Hazell - member since 2009*
- Mrs Doreen Land - member since 2005*
- Mr David Padley - member since 2010*
- Mr Paul Ashfield - member since 2015*
- Mr Keith Francis - member since 2015*
- Mrs Pamela Wappett - member since 2016*
- Mrs Julia Perkins - member since 2016*
- Mr Colin Durston - member since 2018*



We offer our sympathy and condolences to their families and friends.

In aid of

Colwyn Bay Military Hospital.

THERE was a victim the Germans had,
She was true and honest, but they were bad;
She hated the war, as we do now,
And wanted to stop it, but didn't know how,

She was a nurse out at the front,
She helped the sick and wounded,
She tended them carefully and well,
They loved her dearly as all can tell.

She was captured by those wretched Huns,
Under shot and shell of the enemy's guns ;
She thought of our Empire and of it's sons
Who once fought Danes, but now fight Huns.

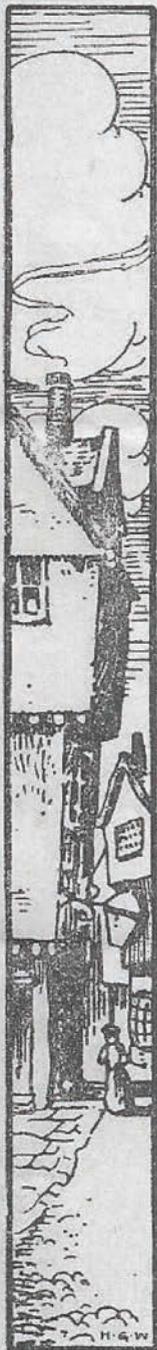
She helped some Belgians to escape,
The treatment they'd had made her heart ache ;
They were made to despise their well belov'd land
By fearfully cruel murderous hand.

She was sentenced to death for the work she had
done,
And was taken at night to be shot ;
No one was known to face their death braver.
She knew she was going to abide with her
Saviour.

Her name is known throughout the land,
And now she's joined the Heavenly band ;
Her splendid deeds are known quite well,
This noble woman was Nurse Cavell.

Written and composed by Edith Bennett (aged 12)
Sunny Bank, Nant-y-glyn Road, Colwyn Bay.

Price One Penny.



Introducing Our New Nurse, Sonia Denny



I was born in Norwich in 1955, later moving to Sudbury. In September 1972 I followed my lifetime ambition and commenced my nursing at the old West Suffolk Hospital. In 1973 I began my nurse training, which I completed in 1976, followed by midwifery training in 1978. During this time I had married and we had our two daughters, Rebecca and Emily. Rebecca is a heart failure specialist in the community and Emily works with families with neuro-diverse conditions.

Following spells on F7 and Coronary Care we moved to Essex in 1982. There I worked for an agency before joining the evening service in the community. In 1988 we moved back to Thurston and I joined the community teams working at Baxter Street Surgery in Bury, followed by twelve years at Ixworth Surgery. During this time I was involved with the first blood transfusion in the community and conducted trials in intravenous antibiotics being administered in the community.

Further roles included four years with NHS-funded Continuing Care in Bury and Ipswich, accessing complex patients across the county. At the same time I had rejoined the local evening service team where I continued until I retired in December 2024 after fifty-two years with the NHS.

My motivation for heart failure was due to the sudden death of my father-in-law in 1992 and then the death of my father in 1999 after three heart attacks. He had been a regular visitor to the local Upbeat group in Sudbury.

My hobbies include walking, netball, my garden, and Mr Boris, our cockerpool, as well as holidays and spending time with the family and grandchildren.

Sonia

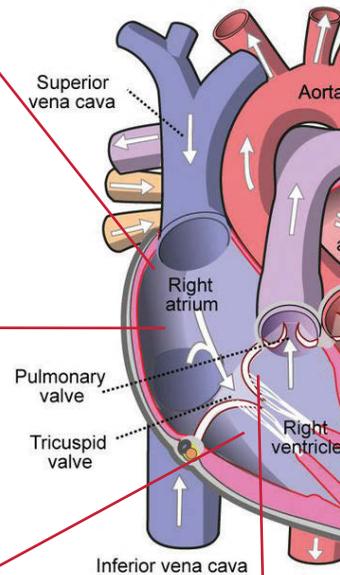
The sinoatrial (SA) node is a small cluster of specialized heart cells that generate tiny electrical impulses that set the rhythm and pace of your heartbeat. Every normal heartbeat you've ever had started right there. The SA node sits in the right atrium near the opening of the large vein that brings blood from the upper body back to the heart. It's only about the size of a small pea, embedded in the wall of the atrium, but it keeps the entire heart in sync.

Right Atrium

This is where used blood that is returning from the body and needs to be sent to the lungs for oxygen enters the heart.

Right Ventricle

Its main function is to pump the deoxygenated blood from the right atrium into the pulmonary artery, sending it to the lungs where carbon dioxide is removed and oxygen is added.



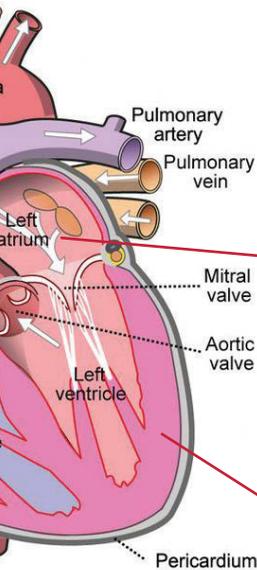
The atrioventricular (AV) node is a cluster of specialized electrical cells in the heart. Its job is different from the SA node. It acts as a gatekeeper between the atria and the ventricles. It is located in the lower part of the right atrium, between the two atria, just above the tricuspid valve. The AV node delays the electrical signal so that the atria contract first. The AV node pauses the signal for a short time before letting it pass to the ventricles. This delay allows the atria to finish contracting and pump blood into the ventricles so they can fill properly.

ome Heart

Without a doubt the human heart is a wonder. Even before birth, at around 5–6 weeks of pregnancy, the tiny electrical impulses which trigger its beats begin and the embryonic heart begins to pulse. This is when the primitive heart tube starts contracting, even though the heart is not yet fully formed.

The average heart rate for a newborn baby is 100-160 beats a minute, which is faster than an adult's resting rate of between 60 and 100 beats per minute. Incredibly the average adult human heart beats 100,000 times a day! Just imagine how many beats that is for a lifetime of 60 or 70 years.

King David of ancient Israel was right when he wrote in Psalm 139 verse 14: "in an awe-inspiring way I am wonderfully made".



Left Atrium

Here the oxygen-rich blood returning from the lungs through the pulmonary veins is prepared for the most powerful pump in the heart.

Left Ventricle

This is the main pump to the body. It pumps the oxygenated blood from the left atrium into the aorta, and then sends it throughout the entire body. It's the strongest chamber, with thick, muscular walls, because it has to generate enough force to supply every organ and tissue.

is another small cluster of
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node's: it acts as the gate-
the ventricles. The AV node
t atrium, near the wall be-
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inish squeezing blood into
properly before they contract.

TOMBOLA STALL - CHARITY EVENT

20th November 2025

On the day of the Bury St Edmunds' Annual Christmas Lights Switch-On Upbeat held a Tombola Stall in the Buttermarket in Bury. It turned out to be one of the coldest days of the year! The previous days we had lovely sunshine and mild weather, but everything changed on the day of our outing! A few of us gathered around midday to set up gazebos, tables, etc. and get ready for the opening around 2.30 pm. It was very windy, and even though we were all wrapped up to within an inch of our lives, we took turns to go off and have hot drinks to warm up.



We had a few Upbeat people come and say hello, which was very heart-warming, so thank you if you came to see us. Thanks go to all the people who donated prizes for us, particularly one member from Elmswell who provided us with several boxes of really good things. We finished the day at around 8pm, having only one or two things left on the stall. We were all tired and cold, but glad that we had sold out and a profit was made.

Thanks go to the two chaps who came to help set up the gazebo and tables etc., the main helpers on the stall, Valerie, Felicity and her friends, Hilary and others who came to do "a turn", so we could have a few minutes away to have a hot drink. Thanks, too, to my family who had been roped in, my two daughters and two granddaughters, who also took a turn on the stall.

The profit on the day was £615 and we had donations of £125 so altogether it was a very good result.



It was magical when all the lights went on with all the charity and craft stalls in the Cornhill and Buttermarket area. There were food stalls, live entertainment, fairground rides, and character appearances by the Snow Queen, St Edmund, and a larger-than-life Polar Bear walking around. With crowds of people milling around the town looked beautiful. Well done, everyone.



This is a typical event where we need more helpers. Could you help out for an hour or two this year? Please think about it.

Hilary

(Photos provided by Giles Washbourn)

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SOCIAL EVENTS & FUNDRAISING

At present no-one is responsible for these but we would greatly welcome somebody to take on the role.

LAST DAY PARTYING AT LONG MELFORD

16th December was the last day of exercise at Long Melford and we had one class only, before Gaye & Richard Scott came in and sang for us while we all enjoyed a splendid display of various savoury and sweet nibbles, brought in by the membership. It was a lovely occasion and finished off the year very nicely.



Although Val was on her way to USA on the day the Raffle was drawn she had organised it all and a profit of £134.50 was made. Well done, everyone.



One person who was very much missed, was Martyn Roper who had been taken into hospital after slipping on the stairs. At the time of writing (end of January) he is recovering at home after having a hip operation and hopefully will be returning soon.



Both Clare & Bill Kettyle should be mentioned as without them we could not run the group at Long Melford. Bill goes in every Tuesday morning and sets up the tables and chairs etc. and Clare has taken over the running of the kitchen from Martyn. It is not a job to relish in the winter as it is very cold in there so many thanks go to them both.



A CHANGE OF VENUE FOR BURY'S CHRISTMAS LUNCH

This year we chose to have our lunch at the New Bury Community Centre in Bury. Our previous venue had worked out quite expensive last year, and Tracey from The Hub Café at the centre had suggested she could cater for us this year so we agreed to change venue and see how it went. Some people wanted to stay with our previous venue, Ashlar House; some were nervous that The Hub would not be able to manage to cater for 60 meals, so it was with some trepidation that we planned ahead and awaited the day!

We shouldn't have worried. Tracey, Linda, Debbie, and the team looked after us very well. They had decorated the room and tables and the food was delicious. The bar was open to start with as people arrived and made their way to their seats, and we were served a traditional two-course Christmas dinner.

It was lovely to be able to catch up with members and have time to chat. Rosie had kindly organised the raffle and as well as enjoying the meal and each other's company, we even made a total profit of £505 on the day, which was brilliant.

Many, many thanks go to Sylvia who arranged it, to Rosie for organising the raffle, and to Tracey, Debbie, Linda, and their helpers on the day for looking after us so well.

It's inevitable that whatever we arrange, it is almost impossible to please everybody and while it was true that the setting at the centre perhaps did not quite match up to what we'd enjoyed in previous years at the other venue, all-in-all it was a very nice occasion and very enjoyable. One member phoned our Chairman after the event to say that he had attended several Christmas lunches that year and he thought ours was the best he'd been to!

Hilary





At the New Bury Centre in December members enjoyed each other's company and a good Christmas lunch.



Our Southgate Group



Upbeat's Southgate group meet every other Thursday at the Southgate Community Centre on Bury's Nowton Estate for tea, coffee, biscuits, and a chat. It's a small group - often only a dozen or fewer - but like our other, larger groups which meet in Bury and Long Melford, it provides company, companionship, and the chance to chat with Upbeat friends.

Ann Clarke, who has led these coffee mornings for a number of years, had a fall before Christmas and broke her wrist, which meant that for a few weeks we needed others to step up and take the reins for a while. I had the pleasure of helping with the last of these to be held just before Christmas.

Usually only an assortment of biscuits and some cheese straws are on offer but in view of the season we pushed the boat out a bit. I made some sausage rolls, Ann (recovering but not yet fully operational) brought some battered prawns, Len provided mince pies, and others brought along various sweet and savoury nibbles so that we had quite a spread to go with our tea and coffee. Keith even thoughtfully brought along a small air fryer so that we could enjoy our sausage rolls and mince pies WARM! What a treat!

Why not come long and join us one Thursday soon? You'll be sure of a warm welcome. For dates and times see Page 32 in this magazine.

David



Southgate Coffee Mornings Thursdays 10.30 am - 12 Noon

Future Thursday Coffee Mornings in 2026

12 and 26 March

14 and 28 May

9 and 23 July

10 and 24 September

12 and 26 November

9 and 23 April

11 and 25 June

13 and 27 August

8 and 22 October

10 December

Please contact Mrs Ann Clarke 01284 750980



100 Club Winners

September 2025	1st Prize	Mrs Jennifer Streetin £100.00 No. 35 - £50 donation to Upbeat
	2nd Prize	Mrs Cathy Forge £52.50 No. 206
October 2025	1st Prize	Mrs Yvonne Orbell £100.00 No.119
	2nd Prize	Mrs Linda Munson £52.50 No.165 - £20 donated to Upbeat
November 2025	1st Prize	Miss Christine Horricks £100.00 No. 271 - £100 donation to Upbeat
	2nd Prize	Mr Alan Chapman £52.50 No. 020
December 2025	1st Prize	Mrs Doreen Emberson £100 Number 149
	2nd Prize	Mr Brian Penson £52.50 Number 049 - £52.50 donation to Upbeat
January 2026	1st Prize	Mrs S Baker £100.00 Number 072
	2nd Prize	Mrs V Axton £52.50 Number 005 - £25.00 donation to Upbeat
February 2026	1st Prize	Mr & Mrs R Orr £100 Number 42
	2nd Prize	Mr Cyril Lancaster £19 Number 192

The amount of second prize money increases if more people join the 100 Club during the year.

THE 100 CLUB



Upbeat's 100 Club started its new year in February, so thank you if you have sent your form back and are already participating. There is still plenty of time to join if you would like the chance to win £100! Please make sure you complete the application form. These were delivered in the new year, but you can ask at venues for an application form, or fill one in online on the website.

The draw takes place towards the end of each month. The first prize will be £100 per month (for the first 200 shares sold) and the second prize will be 50% of the additional number of shares sold. Winners will be published on the website and also in the magazines. £12 per share per year. This is open to family members as well as Upbeat members.

The draw runs from 1st February 2026 - 31st January 2027. If you are joining during the year, just send £1 per share for every month left in the draw; e.g. if you are joining in March, send £10 for ten months.

This is a good way to help the group's finances, especially if you do not attend the exercise classes.

New Members September 2025 - February 2026

*Mrs Margaret Freeman, Ms Sonia Denny, Mr Terry Robinson,
Mr and Mrs John and Christine Argent, Mrs Carolyn Chappel,
Mr and Mrs Robin and Barbara Brownlow, Mr Ted Tracey,
Ms Rosanne Tempest Holt, Mr Julius Crosby,
Mr and Mrs Malcolm and Jennifer Jeffrey,
Mr and Mrs Joseph and Elizabeth Stanford.*

*We extend a warm welcome to you all. We hope you receive support, help,
and companionship from being an Upbeat member.
Due to the printer's deadline, this shows only those who have joined Upbeat
up to the end of February 2026.*

Generous Donation from Bygone Collectors' Club

The Bygone Collectors' Club began in a shed at Monks Eleigh over forty years ago and continued meeting in members' sheds, bringing stationary engines and tractors. After a few years the club grew to around eighty members. Every year they have a rally, a bygones exhibition, classic motorcycle show, tractor working day, and lamp night. Over the years they have donated thousands of pounds to local charities, choosing one each year to support. This year Upbeat member John Thurman, who is also a member of the Bygones group, put forward Upbeat's name as a charity to be supported and we were chosen.

Nowadays they meet in the Long Melford Football Club clubhouse and on the evening of Friday, February 6th, Valerie and I travelled to Long Melford to attend a meeting to which we had been invited to give a talk to the members of the Bygones group about our work.



It was a dreadful evening for driving, with torrential rain all the way to Long Melford and numerous potholes to be avoided when possible. We found the club grounds without difficulty but the car park had huge puddles and not much lighting. Valerie stepped out of the car into one such puddle and spent the evening with a very wet foot! However, we received a warm welcome from the club Secretary, Beverley Walker, and

set up a display board with photographs reflecting some of what we were to speak about.

Valerie began with a general introduction on how Upbeat first began and then outlined how we operate at present. I then spoke about how she and I came to be involved, back in 1997 after I had the first heart attack and what I do now. We finished with a short quiz on heart matters which Hilary had prepared. and the evening finished with the presentation of a cheque for £500 - a splendidly generous donation! Our heartfelt thanks go to the club members for their generous support.

David



Photographs by kind permission of Mr John Thurman

New Bury's Last day of Exercise 2025



After the exercise class on December 17th members enjoyed a social get-together. Mince pies, sausage rolls, cakes, and nibbles were brought in by members and drinks were provided by the Hub Café.

I ran a Christmas draw. There was a good selection of prizes and a total of £ £142.00 was raised for Upbeat funds. Michelle and Yvonne organised a quiz which included questions relating to the instructors. We were asked which instructor's cat has its own Facebook page and the answer was Peter's! Yvonne asked members to write down their comments on a slip of paper with ideas on how to improve the classes. One slip was drawn out of the bag and the winner won a prize.



It was a very pleasant lunchtime gathering to end the year.





*Photographs courtesy of Giles Washbourn
Text thanks to Rosie Rayson*



Once again the East Anglian Beer and Cider Festival will be held in the magnificent St. Edmundsbury Cathedral in Bury St Edmunds. This will be the sixth year that the festival has been held here and it will be the 34th festival.

It will last for six days, from Wednesday, August 26th until Monday, August 31st and tickets are now on sale.

For more information go on line to:
<https://burystedmundsbeerfestival.com>.

More than 250 real ales and craft beers as well as 60 ciders will be available. In addition there will be food stalls and a Sound Stage with a full entertainment programme.



Many volunteers are needed to help run the event and every year the organisers donate money to charities on behalf of whom people have volunteered. For several years Upbeat members have been among the volunteers so Upbeat has received donations. Last year we received £600! Here you can see some of those who helped out last year on behalf of Upbeat.

Could you volunteer for a few hours during the festival? You don't have to be available every day but hours can be arranged to suit you. If you're interested, speak to our new Committee member, Felicity Stemp, telephone : 07472 208193 or email: felicity.stemp@gmail.com.

If you aren't able to volunteer, you can still enjoy the Festival as a visitor. Go on line to get your tickets and enjoy a good day out.

Cheers!



Responding in an Emergency

Life throws us a few curve balls sometimes, and calling 999 for ourselves or a loved one is never a nice experience. Planning for such an occasion will not only reduce the pressure on the immediate family, but can also help speed up the response and treatment of our loved ones.

If we call 999 the call handler will want to know if the patient is breathing and conscious, and the reasons for the call. It may be medical related, such as chest pains, slurred speech, or perhaps trauma related such as a slip, trip, or fall. Your specific address is vital; house numbers are more useful than house names. We may feel the call handler asks a lot of questions, but it may be an ambulance has already been assigned and is enroute to the address.

Below are some tips you can use to help the 999 call run more smoothly.

- Work out how to select hands-free function on your phone; this will allow you to help the casualty physically, while speaking to the call handler.
- Keep an up-to-date list of medication nearby to use as a reference during the conversation, and when the ambulance arrives.
- If you have pets, e.g. dogs, you will need to put them in a separate room.
- If it's a phone call in the evening, turn on all your lights in the house, and open the front door.
- Speak to your neighbours in advance; they may be able to help you get the defibrillator, assist with the arrival of the ambulance, or swap over with you if you have to do CPR. It's useful to find out where your defibrillator is located when you're out for a walk.
- Other questions the ambulance may ask could include if the casualty has any allergies, and when the person has last eaten or drunk, or when they last went to the toilet. You may also need to explain the visual signs of the casualty, which could include any changes to skin colour, behaviour, speech. This would also include any symptoms such as pain, feeling sick or dizzy.

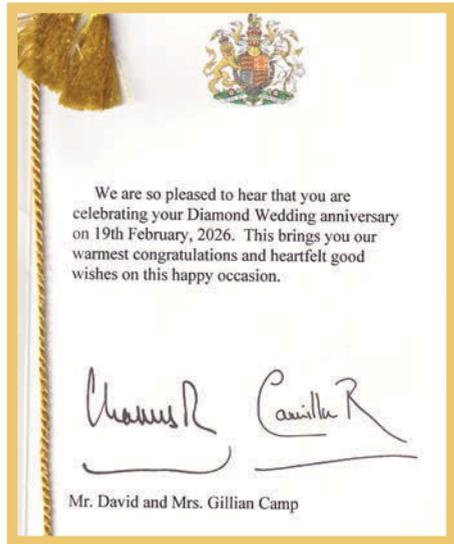
The call handlers are fantastic, and are often front-line staff themselves.

Keep safe. Martyn.

Owner - Latitude Training www.latitudetraining.co.uk

Diamond Celebration for Our Former Treasurer

On February 19th Upbeat member David Camp of Long Melford and his wife Gillian, celebrated sixty years of marriage. In acknowledgement of the auspicious occasion they received a card of congratulations from the King and Queen.



A little belatedly, but no less sincerely, we add our own good wishes to those from the Palace.

Many of you will remember David from the long term he served as our Treasurer before stepping down in 2015. Though no longer serving on the Executive Committee, David is still very much involved in Upbeat activities, including the 100 Club and the Annual Lunch, as well as assisting our present Treasurer, Valerie, with approving any cheque payments.

Thank you, David, for all your work on behalf of Upbeat.