



The Queen's Award
for Voluntary Service



Lockdown Newsletter Number 16

December 2021

Newsletter number 16! Little did I think when I suggested the first one that we would still be restricted in our Upbeat activities all these months later. Hilary has written on Pages 14 and 15 about what a strange year it's been and how so much of our contact with each other has been through Facebook or Zoom. I know that many members have really missed the social side of Upbeat. Important as the exercise sessions and seeing the nurse are, just getting together and having a chinwag over a cup of tea or coffee is very valuable too and helps to keep us sane! For that reason it's really good that exercise sessions have restarted, but we are a little concerned that members attending are still much lower than before the lockdown. Is it that some are still apprehensive about going out and mixing with others? Maybe that's the reason. We certainly hope that it won't be long before our numbers are back up to pre-lockdown levels.

For the benefit of those of you who have not yet visited the new community centre on the Howard estate, I have included some photographs and a write-up on Pages 10-13. We look forward to many years of Upbeat activity there.

I am writing this early in December, in the knowledge that it won't actually be posted to you all until the new year. The printers will be shutting down for a fortnight or so over the holiday period so we have to get the copy to them well before they close. Enclosed with this newsletter will be various papers from our Secretary, Hilary. Please read them and respond accordingly. I know she has asked members to consider joining the 100 Club (see Page 5 in this newsletter), and Valerie, our Treasurer, has asked me to repeat to you her request that If you wish to donate or pay for something, do please try doing so through BACS. If you are unsure and/or your bank queries if details are correct, try just £1.00 first of all and Valerie will be able to confirm all is well. The bank details are:

CAF Bank Sort Code 40-52-40 Account number 00009019

CAF stands for Charities Aid Foundation.

Thank you all for your support and co-operation throughout this difficult year. Let's all hope for better times ahead.

David

www.upbeatheartsupport.org.uk Reg Charity No. 1087415

A Message from Upbeat's Chairman

I hope you all enjoyed the Christmas festivities and wish you all a Happy and Healthy New Year

Since taking over as Upbeat Chairman I have worked hard, with lots of help, to improve the group. It has taken time and lots of fund-raising events to build up a good, strong foundation of which I am very proud, especially us getting the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service. However, I have always been honest with you all and I do need to share my concerns going forward.

It was so lovely to see you all at the Annual Lunch and I am sorry the time went so quickly that I did not get the opportunity to talk to you all, but thank you so much for coming and I hope you all enjoyed it.

Our Social Committee is now suffering from lack of members – Joyce and Ron always led the way but since she lost Ron Joyce, who doesn't drive, will find it hard to get to us. We sadly lost our lovely Penny Morris and more recently dear Chris Medcraft. Margaret Orr cannot be so involved because of Ray's issues so you understand that we need help here. Please come forward and help organise some social events as this is the way we raise essential funds

This horrible pandemic has hit the charity sector very hard. During lockdown many people lost confidence, had health issues which have not been properly addressed, and were very isolated and lonely. Sadly some lost loved ones which means because they can't drive or the bus service is inadequate, they often can no longer easily get to attend classes.

Some of us are still scared to go where there are groups of people and whilst most of us will be triple-jabbed it is still a concern. We have taken advice and assure you that we do try to adhere to rules as we have a duty of care to all members to keep them safe so if you feel you want to come back to group and are worried at all, please ring me or any committee member.

I have my own health issues and need two knee operations. This means I will be unable to drive and therefore will be out of action for weeks at a time so I don't know if I should really stay on as Chairman. If any of you feel you would like to do this job please have a chat to discuss matters.

I am concerned about lack of numbers returning and lack of new members. We used to get a steady flow of new members direct from the hospital but because of Covid rules they now operate the re-hab sessions differently. As we are unable to attend we do not get very many referrals. Doctors will not let us put literature or posters into surgeries, which does not help. We are all that much older and dwindling numbers of new members means fewer people attending and therefore less revenue.

We have reduced the times we operate; where we used to have three sessions each day in Bury it is now only one session on Mondays and only two on Wednesdays. Sadly there is no Friday evening session at present. Tuesdays in Long Melford it's only two sessions. The reduction in sessions is due to the to the lack of people exercising.

We are lucky that Martyn and Sue still come along to sort out tea and coffee at venues and that Bill still sets up and clears away at Long Melford. Nick and David have been doing this in Bury but now that we have moved to the new Community Centre they will not have the responsibility of holding keys and opening up. Thank you, guys, so much for all you've done.

We still have to pay for hall hire, Nurse and Instructor costs for each session, and we run at a considerable loss each week. The new centre in Bury is brand new, clean and warm, lovely and bright, but of course it's also more expensive. Not long ago it looked as if we might not be able to start using the new facilities until the new year but happily we were able to hold our first exercise sessions there on Monday, November 29th. The Executive Committee voted to trial the new hall until end of January when we shall have to look carefully at the costing and find out from all of you if you are happy about this change. We have looked at village halls in the area but some are not on a bus route which would deny access to some of our members. Obviously we will keep you all up-to-date with developments.

The next few months will be a trying time for UPBEAT but it is such a good organisation and helps lots of people so we must keep it going. Upbeat members are the best - such a great group of people who I am happy to call friends who have always shown support to me and the team. If this pandemic allows, we can get stronger again!

Thank you all for the support you give me.

Sylvia

New Members October - November

Mrs Sylvia Bunt Miss Tarna Garner Mrs Ginny Bone

Mr Ray & Mrs and Eileen Harding

Mr Kevin & Mrs Carol Browning

Mrs Carol Baker

Mrs June Shield

We extend a very warm welcome to you all. We hope you receive support and help from being an Upbeat member and we would welcome your comments on what we do: what we do well, or any improvements or innovations you would like to see.

Due to the printer's deadline, this list is correct only up to December 3rd. Members who joined after that date will be shown in the next issue of the newsletter.

Have you ever heard of this organisation?



We hadn't, so it came as a lovely surprise when our Treasurer, Valerie, received a cheque for £207 from them. 'GIVEACAR' is a not-for-profit organisation that can turn old cars into cash for any UK charity. They arrange free collection, then either sell your car at auction or scrap it. Any proceeds raised (minus their service fees) go to your nominated charity.

Upbeat member John Dawkins nominated Upbeat to benefit from the sale of a car he donated and hence the cheque! Thank you, John, for thinking of Upbeat. You're a star!

For further information go on line to www.giveacar.co.uk.

100 Club Winners

The November draw took place on Monday, November 29th at our first class in the brand new New Bury Community Centre. The lucky winners were:

1st prize £100 No. 128 Mr. Gary Steed, Stowmarket.
2nd Prize £71.50 No. 324 Mr. & Mrs. Anthony Turner, Sudbury

100 Club

As we have come to the end of another extraordinary year, it is time for the reminders of the 100 Club to go out again. The monthly draw starts in February each year and runs for twelve months. Provided there are over 200 shares sold, the first prize will be £100 per month. The second prize will be 50% of the additional shares sold.

This year we have been able to give a second prize of between £65-£71.50 which is a testament to all those members that have supported us this year. Thank you all for that but please don't give up on us. This is a valuable source of income for us and without the usual fundraising activities taking place we need it more than ever. Forms are enclosed with this newsletter. If you can, please join in.

The cost is £12 per year for one share and there is no limit to the number of shares you can have. Draws this year have taken place during the Zoom coffee mornings, but as you can see from November's results on Page 4, with the move to the new New Bury Community Centre we can now draw the numbers in person at the venues again.

It is a bit of a thankless task always asking for money from members. It's not something I relish doing but I hope we agree we all 'get' something from Upbeat. It might be the enjoyment (blood, sweat, & tears) of the exercise classes, the reassurance of our lovely nurses (pumping our arms & checking our heart rates - boom diddy, boom diddy, boom!). It could be the banter and friendship with other members, chatting over a cup of tea and putting the world to rights, or just knowing you are still thought of, still part of the group, and getting a visit from the postman with the newsletter occasionally.

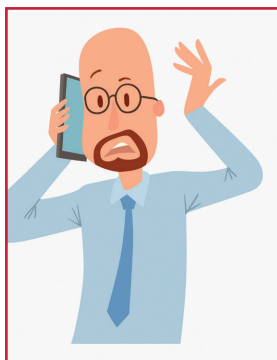
We have over 730 members now, many whom we don't see from one year to the next, but if you are still one of Upbeat's members who, for various reasons, cannot visit the venues anymore, please keep supporting us; you are greatly valued.

I met someone at the Stoke-by-Nayland lunch whom I hadn't seen in several years. He visited the Long Melford session the following week. He was older and a little frailer, but when I started chatting to him, I discovered that he was one of the founder members of Upbeat and had been the Treasurer for many years. He was so interested and full of praise for where Upbeat is today. Praise indeed from someone who gave us the reins to go forward. I would like to wish you all a very happy and healthy new year.

Hilary

Is your doctor too busy to see you?

Having been advised some weeks ago by one of our cardiac nurses to speak to my GP, I telephoned and, after describing my symptoms to the receptionist and telling her of the nurse's advice, I was very surprised to be given a date (albeit three weeks later) for a face-to-face appointment. It's been widely reported in the media that the pandemic has caused extra strain on GP surgeries, and many people are finding it difficult to get an appointment so I counted myself lucky. Have you had a problem getting to see a medical professional? The British Heart Foundation has advice on what to do if you have.



If you can't get through to your GP you could try registering for GP online services where you might get a quicker response by submitting your query online. Most GP practices offer a website or app where you can request appointments, submit questions, or order prescriptions. If you're not sure what your GP surgery offers, visit their website to find out what online services are available, and to get started.

If you have to complete an online consultation form, try to be as clear and descriptive as possible in order to give as much information as the doctor may need. Say if your issue is urgent and if you need a face-to-face appointment. Be specific if there is something that you are worried about. This will help your doctor to prioritise your request and respond accordingly.

Whether you're waiting for a check-up, a consultation, a procedure, or maybe an operation, the first piece of advice is to persist! It's true that there are delays across many medical services, but if, like most Upbeat members, you are living with an existing or suspected heart or circulatory condition, delays can be worrying, and possibly dangerous, so it's important to be proactive about your health. If you think that possibly your appointment has been overlooked, you can contact your cardiologist's secretary to ask if there are any updates on your appointment. If you don't have the contact details for their secretary, contact the switchboard of the hospital they consult from and ask to be directed to the appropriate extension.

Experiences like this can be frustrating, but it's important that you persist and get

the help you need. If you have a health concern and can't get an appointment with your GP, there are other ways you can get medical help.

If you have an urgent medical issue and you're not sure what to do, call 111 or visit NHS 111 online. NHS 111 is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. A trained adviser can give you advice or connect you to a nurse, doctor, pharmacist, paramedic, or dentist. Half the people who call 111 are referred to a healthcare professional for further help. NHS 111 can also book you an appointment at an urgent treatment centre, A&E department, or can send an ambulance.

You can try visiting a pharmacist when you have a minor illness or questions about your medication. Pharmacists are qualified specialists, who can advise on a range of common illnesses and help assess whether your health issue requires further medical help. Most pharmacies have a consultation room where you can talk in private.



Another option, for non-urgent questions about a heart or circulatory condition, is to call the BHF Heart Helpline on 0300 330 3311. Cardiac nurses are available weekdays from 9am to 5pm, and are ready to answer questions about your medication, recovering after surgery, and managing your condition or recent diagnosis.

Of course, in an emergency, call 999 immediately. ***Don't delay.*** If you do, you are more likely to suffer serious damage and to need intensive care. Tell the operator your symptoms, and tell them if you think you might be having a heart attack or stroke.

The British Heart Foundation advises that it's better to wait for an ambulance rather than taking yourself to A&E, as the paramedics can start helping you as soon as they arrive, and they can let the hospital know you're coming.

Don't delay because you think hospitals are too busy, or because you're worried about the virus. The NHS still has systems in place to treat people who need urgent heart or stroke treatment and hospitals operate strict procedures to ensure patients are kept apart from those suffering from suspected or confirmed coronavirus, making it very unlikely that you will become infected.

Take care, and keep well.

David (with thanks to BHF)

At last - the Annual Lunch!



A good time was had by all at the Upbeat Annual Lunch held on the 28th of October at Stoke-by-Nayland Golf Club. It was to have been held on the 19th March 2020 but due to Covid, it was postponed. The arrangements were painstakingly kept open by Upbeat Chairman, Sylvia Baker, who secured the final date at this prestigious venue. The ambience was very congenial for meeting up again with good company and fine food. We normally see members dressed for a gym environment so it was delightful to see both the ladies and gentlemen in such elegant attire for the occasion, even if they were not always immediately recognisable.

In past years, we have enjoyed the journey to the venue in springtime with trees in leaf and all the countryside waking up. This time the journey was equally enjoyable, seeing the seasonal colouring of autumn leaves. Any budding photographers amongst us could have taken the opportunity for some great landscape pictures.

Upon arrival at this elegant venue with panoramic views, there was the opportunity to meet and greet at the bar before being seated in the spacious dining room. The numbers attending were lower than usual due to the consequences and continuous concerns over Covid but there were still 117 present. This showed good support for Upbeat and all the work put in by the Chair and committee members to make this first outing after lockdown so enjoyable. Bouquets of flowers were presented accordingly.

We all know that the hospitality sector has been affected by staff shortages but the professional and friendly staff did their best to make things run smoothly, albeit the time for congenial chat between courses was rather longer than may have been expected. This was difficult for the Master of Ceremonies, David Deacon, who rose to the challenge with his commentary and continuous humour. Peter Durrent kept guests entertained in the relaxed atmosphere by playing the piano.

Raffle tickets had been purchased before the original date but this did not prevent the members and guests from digging deep and generously buying more tickets on the day. Over £1,000 was raised in all, providing greatly-needed funds for Upbeat.

No doubt members are looking forward to the next social event and we can only hope that Covid does not prevent Upbeat from getting back into full swing very soon.

David Baldree

That's me on the right ►



THE END OF AN ERA

As one door closes, another one opens at the **new** New Bury Community Centre.

Several years ago Valerie and I attended a meeting at the old New Bury Centre at which proposals were put forward for the development of the area comprising the community centre, the primary school, the children's centre, and the adjacent playing fields. We heard that the new centre would incorporate the children's centre and social club and include two halls, a community hub café, committee room, offices, and associated uses. There would be parking provision for sixty-two vehicles, as well as covered cycle storage for up to sixteen bicycles.

The first of these meetings was held in 2016 and the scheme seems to have been a long time coming. However, for some months now builders have been busy in the area. The primary school was demolished, the school having been moved into buildings which had previously been Howard Middle School in Beard Road, which had been closed under the reorganisation of local education. The centre we had been using for years was deemed to have come to the end of its life and was, itself, marked for demolition. It was, after all, fifty-three years old and had had a lot of use!



Upbeat were told that we might not be able to move into the new centre until early in 2022, but things moved more quickly than anticipated and on Wednesday, November 24th the last exercise class at the old centre took place. Towards the end of the morning several members gathered to help transport Upbeat's bits and piece

to the new centre but, as it happened, folk from the new centre were on hand with a van and willing helpers who moved everything for us.



The area around the new centre is still a building site

The first class in the *new* New Bury Community Centre took place on Monday, November 29th, when members had to run the gamut of builders' lorries, dump trucks, and

various other obstacles to make our way to the front doors of the centre.

One of the things which struck me was how big the new centre seemed in comparison with the old one, and the increased amount of parking space which was available. There are covered cycle racks and also a covered area for storage of babies' buggies.



The main doors to the new centre



We must hope parking for sixty-two cars will be enough when the centre is fully used

The floor of this large open area is of a light-coloured wood, which we were told would be easily damaged if users didn't wear suitable footwear. It's just as well that Upbeat members aren't likely to want to exercise wearing stiletto heels!



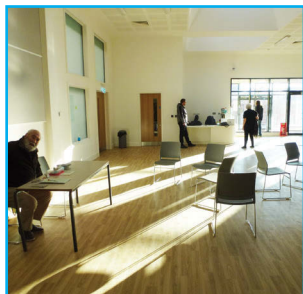
The view as you enter the new centre



The entrance hall seen from the opposite end, showing the beautiful wood flooring.

This is the area where locals will be able to drop in for coffee and a chat, making the centre a real hub for the community. There is a fairly large kitchen area but the word was that as yet no company has been found to run the kitchen. Obviously it's very early days for getting things like that organised. Upbeat were the very first group to make use of the centre.

Off the very large hall lies another, almost as big, with a sliding partition so that the area can be divided into two smaller halls. The Wednesday class had partly closed the partition so that exercise was taking place in one part while in the other the Nurse met with patients and Sue Tyrell and her trusty urn were ready to dispense tea and coffee as required.



Tony Chaplin waiting to check in the first members



You can see how the partition can divide the large hall



Instructor Peter Azzopardi taking the first class at the new centre



Members not exercising can get coffee or tea from Sue ...



... or simply sit and have a chat...



... before or after exercising.



The whole building has a lovely, bright atmosphere, with large windows and plenty of natural light. At present there is no wi-fi available, but this may be provided in the future. We are indeed very lucky to be moving into a completely new building, though there are likely to be a few teething problems.

One of these concerns storage. We had hoped that there would be room not only for the items we'd had stored at the old centre, but also for some of the considerable amount of 'stuff' currently being stored in garages at Sylvia's, Hilary's, and our house. However, that clearly is not the case. We have only a few shelves in a cupboard and must find somewhere else for the bulk of our equipment and supplies. Valerie and I have been looking into hiring a self-storage unit in a nearby facility but there seems to be nothing of an appropriate size available at the moment and, of course, hiring one would involve additional costs, on top of the increased cost of hiring the hall.

Still...let's look on the bright side. We have excellent new facilities, with the prospect of things becoming even better if and when the coffee bar is operating. It's going to be more expensive, but we hope very much that numbers of members attending the exercise classes and coming to see the nurse will go up so that we have increased income. This is vitally important so, if you haven't returned to exercising yet, for whatever reason, please think about it seriously now and come along and enjoy all that the **new** New Bury Centre has to offer.

David

Absent Friends

We are sad to report the loss of several members of Upbeat:

Mr Tony Elston Member from 2001-2019

Mr Fred and Mrs Mary Turkentine Members from 2008 - 2019

Mrs Chris Medcraft Member since 2010

Mr Ray Pettitt Member since 2012

Mr Robert Aitken Member since 2012

Mr David Begg Member since 2015

We offer our sympathies to all their family members and friends.



A LOOK BACK OVER THE YEAR – ONE LIVED LARGELY ON FACEBOOK AND ZOOM!

What a year it's been!

DECEMBER 2020 –

We were all locked down and thinking about spending Christmas in isolation. I posted a Facebook message on Christmas Day 2020 to all our members and their families:



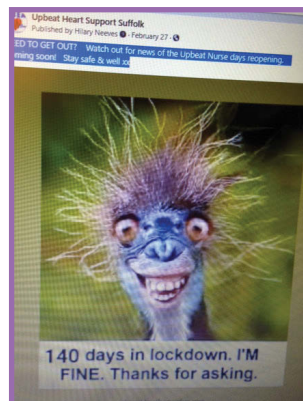
FEBRUARY –

We were all pulling our hair out at being in lockdown

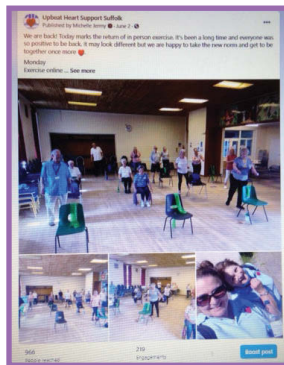
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APRIL –

... BUT there was light at the end of the tunnel:



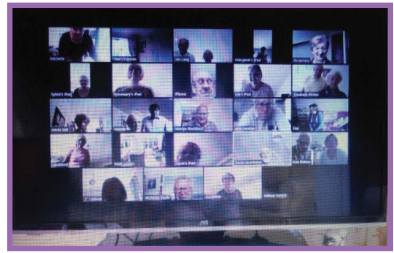
JUNE – WE ARE BACK!



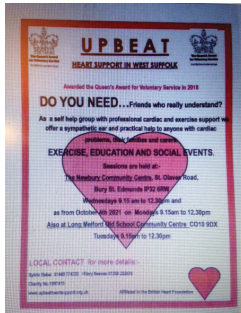
AUGUST –

Tea & Coffee back, thank goodness!

Last session on Zoom August 2nd.



OCTOBER –



I updated our poster with new days and times

NOVEMBER –

After such a long time, we said goodbye to the old Community Centre.



DECEMBER –

We've moved into the brand new building!

It's been quite a year and although we have had some very sad times during the year, we look forward to 2022 with a renewed hope that all will be well.

Happy New Year to you all.



Hilary

We were all sad to learn that our lovely Chris Medcraft was taken into hospital with Covid and passed away quickly, which was a great shock to us all.

Bubbly, cheeky, and full of life, Chris was always the first to dress up and help at social events. She and Frank made marmalade, jams, pickles, Christmas puddings – they were always so busy working for us and helping others.

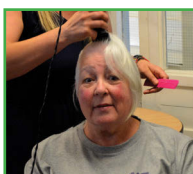
Many will remember when, as reported in the last issue of our Upbeat magazine in Spring last year, Chris had her head shaved in aid of Macmillan Cancer Support, raising more than £600 for that excellent organisation.



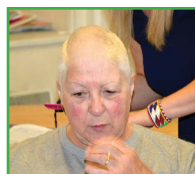
Chrissy in fancy dress at an Upbeat social evening in November 2016



Chrissy before her shave ...



... during ...



... and after!

Chris touched many lives and we will miss her so much. Our thoughts are now with Frank and the family.



Chris's funeral is scheduled to take place on Monday, 20th December at 3.30 pm at the Bury Crematorium (Risby). At the time of writing there is uncertainty about Covid rules which may apply but we feel sure many members will want to attend to show their support for Frank and to pay their respects.

Sylvia