

UPBEAT MAGAZINE

Journal of the West Suffolk Heart Support Group



Nurse Kate celebrates her 50 year career
(See Pages 34-35)

Spring 2025

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Once again it's my pleasure to be putting together another issue of our Upbeat magazine. It's hard to believe that I've been privileged to have the job of editor now for twelve years, having succeeded the late David Williams in 2012, and I must thank all those who've contributed pieces during that time. Without you there wouldn't be a magazine.



Throughout the years there have been many and varied social events to be reported on and although these have become fewer recently it's good that some which have become 'fixtures', such as the Annual Lunch and the Strawberry Tea, continue, thanks to those willing members who give their time and energy to arranging them and carrying out all the donkey work to make them successful. It's not possible to name you all but you must know that everything you do is very much appreciated.

In several articles in this issue you will see reference to the fact that 2025 marks Upbeat's 30th anniversary. I hadn't realised when I joined in 1996 that it was such a young organisation. At that time I was working as a primary school head teacher and apart from attending Friday evening exercise classes (which I gave up after a while because I was working in Leicester and only home at weekends) my involvement with Upbeat was minimal. Since then, of course, things have changed greatly as Valerie and I are both retired and (theoretically) have more 'spare' time, so that Upbeat has become an intrinsic part of our everyday lives, as it is for many members. Since 1995 there have been in the region other, similar groups which have ceased to exist. Let's do everything we can to prevent that happening to Upbeat by supporting events and lending a hand in any way we can.

Best wishes to you all.

David

Chairman's Report

It's been a bit wet and miserable since my last report and several members have been unwell. Christmas was a trying time for lots of us and the government new rules about winter fuel allowance, food, and cost of living going up has worried lots of members but....we will get through this together.



The Christmas lunch at Ashlar House was a success and Alan, David, and their wives, together with Nick and Rosie ran this event for which we thank them.

We can look forward to the Annual Lunch in March and by popular request the Strawberry Tea will be held again in the summer. I would again ask for help with social events which not only give us the chance to get together and enjoy each other's company but also raise much-needed funds to keep Upbeat going.

Upbeat will have been operating for 30 years in July, which is a great achievement. To mark the occasion we will have a celebration tea directly after the AGM on the afternoon of Tuesday July 8th. We will not charge a fee but any donations will be gratefully accepted – a collection box will be in evidence at the event. Put the date in your diaries and **let us know if you hope to attend so that we can cater for everyone.**

It's been an honour and privilege being Upbeat Chairman and I feel sad writing this, my last official report. My husband and I retired to Suffolk in 2007 but sadly after six weeks he died, which was not part of our plan. Not knowing anybody and feeling lost I was thankful to meet my friend Wendy Deeks who introduced me to Upbeat. I never envisaged being part of a voluntary group or that it would become so important to me but in 2008 I offered to help Jill Brooks who was the Chairman at that time. I soon became Vice-Chair and then after a time stepped up, becoming Chair in 2014. I thought this would be a three-year term but I have now been in office eleven years!

I have had met loads of lovely people during my time in office – made friends and, with the help of Hilary, travelled and given talks to raise money locally and about the county. I've been to High Sheriff's parties – participated in

making videos, and we went to Buckingham Palace, having been invited to the Queen's Garden Party. We've raised lots of money, with members such as Joyce and Ron Lawes, Chrissy Medcraft, Joyce Hurrell, and many more arranging and leading fetes, jumble sales, and trips, and even making jam, marmalade, and lemon curd. Clare and Bill help so many people in Long Melford, and Wendy Deeks and Brenda help with raffles. There are too many people to mention everybody by name and I don't want to forget anybody, but to ALL of you, THANK YOU. Upbeat has grown and thrived through the years thanks to your hard work and enthusiasm.

Big thanks to our editor David Axton and Valerie, a great Treasurer, and to Hilary, our fabulous Secretary, also to David Camp and David Deacon who have done lots for me and Upbeat. To all the committee members past and present - thank you too.

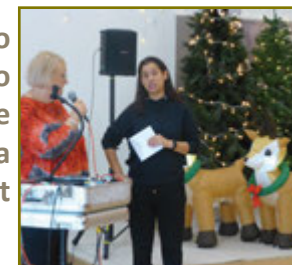
It is time for me to move on and I sincerely wish my successor and Upbeat all the very best going forward. Good luck to you all.

Sylvia

AMANDA

Amanda joined us as an Instructor ten years ago, a tiny figure with a big voice. She hated wearing a microphone and was quite shy at first, but soon settled in, getting to know us more, and was a valued team member.

She started a new job which meant she could no longer work for Upbeat. I know she wanted to stay with us but had to work. The members were fond of Amanda and a collection raised £164 a cheque for which was presented to her at her last exercise session at Christmas.



We all wish her well and good luck in her new job.

Sylvia

Secretary's Report



To start this report I am minded to acknowledge all the members who help with the running of the group on a day-to-day basis. We are very thankful for you all in your dedication to turning up and helping out each time we have a class, and also those working away in the background, who you rarely see, spending many hours working on our behalf. There are too many to name individually, but know that we appreciate every single one of you for giving up your time for us.

I must also pay my own tribute to Sylvia Baker's role as Chairman for the last eleven years. As you are probably aware from the previous magazine, she is stepping down as Chairman at the next AGM. She was Vice-Chairman for several years and took over the mantle as Chairman from Jill Brooks in 2014 at a very difficult time, offering to stay in the post for three years. Here we are eleven years later! She has given so much more of her time and has done a sterling job of guiding the group through some very tough situations. We have had lots of fun times together, the highlight of which was the trip to Buckingham Palace after Upbeat received the Queen's Award in 2018.

We are at a critical point in the group's history. This year we are celebrating Upbeat's 30th Anniversary and in my research of previous records, I found in the AGM Minutes of 2015 where Sylvia is asking for someone to come forward to take her place, because at the next AGM (2016) she is wanting to stand down. It could be said that we have taken advantage of her good nature in that we are in the same position now as we were ten years ago.

We all know the demographic of the membership of Upbeat has got considerably older over the last few years and the chances of someone, say in their early to mid-sixties joining us and willing to help out are rather remote. We preferably need someone who already attends the classes or at least is familiar with the group and what we do and is willing and able to put in the time to help out.

Sylvia is hopefully going to stay on in an Ambassador's role, helping to promote the group and maybe give talks etc. so would not leave Upbeat altogether,

thank goodness. If you feel you could help, or know of anyone that could fill this role, please let one of the committee know. The next AGM is in July and the Nomination Papers and letter are enclosed with this magazine.

We are living in very uncertain times at the moment, and the need for us all to keep close and support each other is very real. Thirty years is a long time for a small local charity to survive. During that time we have seen similar groups go to the wall so we should all be extremely proud that we have all been part of Upbeat's success. Hopefully, we will continue for years to come. We need more members to come and exercise at both New Bury and Long Melford, more help with the running of the group, and lots of goodwill from everyone to support our events.

It isn't impossible. We can do it! We're a fantastic group with lots of belief in ourselves, in Upbeat, and what it stands for. Above all we want Upbeat to survive.

Have a great spring and summer everyone, and we look forward to seeing you at some of the events.

Best wishes,

Hilary x

Absent Friends



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

*Mr Ken Bishop Member since 2004 – former committee member for several years
Mr Fred White Member since 2006 Mrs Elizabeth Blazeby Member since 2008
Mrs Wendy Godfrey Member since 2012 Mrs Liz Davey Member since 2012
Mr David Rowe Member since 2013 Mr Anthony Turner Member since 2013
Mrs Marjorie Clarke Member since 2015 Mr Robert Wakerley Member since 2017
Mr Gareth Davies Member since 2021*

We offer our condolences to their families and friends .

Treasurer's Report

Upbeat continues to be in a healthy position financially. We currently run three bank accounts in two banks which are monitored several times a week and detailed reports sent to all the Committee members every two months. The accounts will again be audited in April this year. A detailed report will appear in our next magazine.



We now have to provide our own insurance as the cover we had previously through the BHF – British Heart Foundation - has now ceased. This will be an extra expense but we have managed to negotiate a deal to cover all necessary areas for £335.00. For this year only, the BHF have given us £150 towards the costs.

We need to raise about £20,000 a year to keep us on track, so thank you so much to everyone who has given donations in the last few months. Thank you also to all those who help organise and run our fund-raising activities. It is not easy, so your help is very much appreciated.

Donations Over £25

Anonymous donations of smaller amounts total £149.46

Donations via January 2025 posting £169.50

Donations from 100 Club wins £119.00

Collecting tins Long Melford, New Bury, The Woolpack £162.37

Southgate Coffee Mornings £150.00

E A CAMRA Beer Festival £900.00

The Buffs via Ken James £500.00

Jo Matten £46.00 Beryl Hazell £260.00 David Catton £35.00

Sylvia Bambridge £25.00 (sale of books)

Giles Washbourn £76.00 (Busking)

All Saints Church Coffee Morning £269.94

Cornard Ladies £300.00

Councillor Richard Kemp £200.00 towards new Laptops

Victoria Doctors' Surgery Bury St. Edmunds Valentine's Collection £100

Donations in memory of

Dennis Pitt £201.55, Tony Chaplin £68.00, Marjorie Clark £50.00

Fund-raising

Christmas Cards £60.50

Christmas Fayre Tombola on Bury Market £416.75

Craft Fayre £282.50

Pantomime Profit £25.40

Ashlar House Lunch Raffle & Tickets £438.00

Long Melford Christmas Raffle £202.00

New Bury Christmas Raffle £180.00

Easy Fund Raising £38.60

Could you help raise any money for Upbeat? Could you put a collecting tin in a shop near you? Could you sell anything or do something? Online can you make donations via Easy Fundraising when you buy something? (See the article on Page 39) All these small acts could make a big difference. We really need more people to come forward to help organise things as we cannot manage everything.

Thank you.

Valerie

PLEASE REMEMBER TO WEAR YOUR BADGE!

Recently a member was taken ill during an exercise class and collapsed. They were not wearing their badge and it took valuable time to identify them and reach their emergency contacts so, please **ALWAYS WEAR YOUR BADGE WHEN EXERCISING!**

Also, please bring your own water bottle, rather than using cups each time as they cost us money and increase the amount of waste we generate.

Thank you.



New Bury Christmas Party

After the one exercise class only on December 17th, the room was soon transformed into a Christmassy venue with Santa's sleigh and reindeer on the stage, a forest of sparkling Christmas trees, and an abundance of Christmas jumpers everywhere.



Gaye and Richard (Katie Orris's Mum and Dad) came and sang for us and they were brilliant. They had chosen familiar songs so we all joined in and had a good time. Thanks go to Tracey, Linda, and Debbie for providing the food. The Christmas Raffle was drawn and thanks go to everyone for donating prizes and helping run this.

We said goodbye to Amanda (one of our Instructors at New Bury) as she has taken up a post for which she has been studying over the last year. Good luck, Amanda, in your new job. She was a popular instructor and had been with us for a number of years. A collection was made for her and Sylvia presented her with a cheque, thanked her for all her time with us, and wished her well.



All photographs courtesy of Giles Washbourn



Hilary

Long Melford Christmas Lunch

10th December - The Cock and Bell in Long Melford was the venue for the members of Long Melford to gather for the Christmas Lunch. At the end of the year it is always good to have a gathering of members, when there is plenty of time to chat. About fifty members made the most of it and had a delicious lunch and a good catch-up. Many thanks go to Val and her friend Joyce for organising this each year.



All photographs courtesy of Giles Washbourn



Future Events

March 20th Thursday	ANNUAL LUNCH held at Stowmarket Golf Club, Lower Rd. Onehouse IP14 3DA. A lovely occasion where both groups i.e. Bury St. Edmunds and Long Melford can get together. Tickets available now at £28 each. Numbers limited so please book early. There will be a Grand Draw and entertainment by singer Daniel McClelland.
APRIL 30th Wednesday	FUNDRAISING:- We are holding a Get Together Lunch at the New Bury Community Centre. 1 Charles Place, Bury St. Edmunds IP32 6TD. This is part of the 'Community Eating Together Programme' and will be a maximum of 40 places. The charge will be £5 per person. We will be holding a raffle on this occasion. Further details later. Raffle prizes would be welcome.
JULY 3rd Thursday	STRAWBERRY TEA at Newton Green Village Hall, School Lane Newton CO10 0QS . Always a nice occasion to get together. 2pm – 4.30pm Tickets £10 will be available at both venues later in the year. Please come and support this event.
JULY 8th Tuesday	AGM at New Bury Centre, 3pm start followed by celebratory tea to mark Upbeat's 30 years. Please come and support the group and be sure to let us know if you hope to attend. We need to know numbers for catering.
AUGUST 20th – 25th Wed-Mon	EAST ANGLIAN BEER FESTIVAL , St. Edmundsbury Cathedral. Each year we need volunteers to help at the Beer Festival in various posts. A Volunteer form will be available nearer the time. All festival profits go to charity and Upbeat has been a recipient of donations for several years. If you would like to help out, please let us know. You can choose your day and length of time: say for 1 hour or 2 hrs or all afternoon etc. WE NEED MORE VOLUNTEERS TO HELP OUT.
DECEMBER 4th Thurs.	ASHLAR HOUSE (IP32 7AB) Christmas Lunch - not finalised yet - details to follow Christmas Lunch at Long Melford – dates to be set
BANK HOLIDAYS	Easter- Friday 18 April: No Zoom and no classes Monday 21 April May Day Monday 5 May No classes. Spring Bank Holiday Monday 26 May No classes. Summer Bank Holiday Monday 25 August
CHRISTMAS 2025	Last classes Tuesday 16 and Wednesday 17 December No classes week 22 December and 29 December Classes restart Monday 5th and Tuesday 6th January 2026

Unfortunately, due to lack of people willing to help organise and run events we have a reduced programme this year. We have not booked for the pantomime this year as we were unable to sell all of the 25 tickets booked last year and had to return some.

We have had no Social Committee for some years now and it has become impossible for the remaining committee members to put on a full programme of events. As well as providing opportunities for members and friends to get-together and socialise, our social events also help towards raising much-needed funds for Upbeat, without which we could not continue to function, so please support the events if possible. Please let us know if you are able to help in any way.

Thank you.

Hilary

UPBEAT EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

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WEB SITE CO-ORDINATOR/MEDICARD

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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.

MAGAZINE EDITOR

David AXTON e-mail: axeditor@btinternet.com

POST

Unfortunately, Treatts who have been so kind to us for the past few years by posting our letters no longer have their franking machine. As we now have to cover the cost of posting we are asking for your help.

We know that many of you like the magazine as it keeps you in touch with Upbeat, particularly if you cannot get to any venues, and it has interesting articles.

We generally have three postings a year - early January (100 Club, annual lunch, membership renewal every three years), March – (Spring magazine and AGM papers), and September/October – (Autumn magazine and any other information).

The current cost of posting a 40-page magazine plus 1 or 2 sheets of paper is £0.85. Anymore and it would cost £1.55, so David will keep the magazine to no more than 40 pages or do a newsletter such as he did during Covid.

So, ways in which you can help:

Can you collect your magazine from a venue and maybe take those for members who live near you and deliver them?

Can you receive your magazine and papers by email only?

Can you send a donation to help cover postage?

If you no longer wish to receive Upbeat post and would like to be removed from our membership list, please let me know.

For any of the above please contact me:

Valerie Axton 01284 747238 or text 07931 512676

treasurer@upbeatheartsupport.org.uk

Vistri Vale, Old Hall Lane, Fornham St. Martin,
Bury St. Edmunds, Suffolk IP31 1SS.

CHARITY BUSKING IN BURY ST EDMUNDS

On the 15th October, 2024, Giles Washbourn and friends generously gave their time and talents to do some busking in behalf of charity. They set up their music stands and sound equipment outside Marks & Spencer's store in Bury's Buttermarket and spent several hours entertaining passers by.

They managed to raise £152 which was split between St Nicholas Hospice and Upbeat. Well done, Gentlemen, and thank you!



OUR 'HIGH STREET HERO' - TOAST COFFEE HOUSE IN SUDBURY

- *more than just a 'coffee shop'...*



That's part of Toast's slogan, and the company certainly live up to it. On their website they state: "We support local communities and organisations by donating a coffee for every coffee we serve. A way of giving back." That is their mantra.

Toast's claim that they are 'proud supporters of charities, and organisations who work tirelessly to help others' is certainly no idle boast.

One of our members, Linda, from the Long Melford group, heard about the coffee shop donating tea and coffee to local charities and approached them on Upbeat's behalf. They were delighted to help and she turned up to one of our Tuesday sessions with an armful of teabags and coffee with the promise that when we needed more, we should let them know. They have also donated supplies for use at our Southgate Coffee Mornings.

Such generous support from the company is very much appreciated and so we want to acknowledge all that they continue to do for us and others in the community. They really have an amazing community spirit!

You can find them at 10 Market Place, Sudbury, as well as in Braintree, Chelmsford, Witham, and Colchester. They've won numerous awards and been finalists in the 'High Street Hero' Category. We're happy to say that they're heroes to us at Upbeat!

Thank you, Toast!

Reflections from our Nurse Shirley



Having recently done two Wednesday sessions at New Bury Centre, I hope I'm no longer a strange face to most of you. As I was explaining my background to some of the Wednesday regulars, it made me reflect upon my time with Upbeat.

Apart from the first five months following my qualification as a nurse, my nursing career has been spent in cardiology, either on a cardiac ward or a cardiac care unit. Due to working solely in an acute cardiac setting, I have seen patients in their worst health (whether that has been heart attack, heart failure, or valve replacement etc). This obviously impacts how a person behaves, and although I've seen patients interacting with their visitors, it has always been in an artificial setting, the hospital. As nurses on the ward we also did not get any follow-up on the patients we sent to Papworth.

Whilst I enjoyed the acute side of nursing, one of the things that drew me to Upbeat was the chance to see people outside of that acute setting. Watching members exercising in groups, enjoying the social interaction, having a drink together and generally making friends and having a purpose, is so heart-warming (pardon the pun). It is really wonderful to see the support and care you give each other, so I would like to applaud you all for having the courage to join Upbeat, improve your physical and mental health, and bring joy to this cardiac nurse.

Thank you.

Shirley

- AND STILL GOING STRONG !

2025 sees Upbeat celebrating 30 years since its inception. It was formed in July 1995 as a self-help support group and set up by ex-cardiac patients to provide exercise, social, and health educational activities for those who have suffered heart attacks or had other heart problems.

Its aim was to encourage and support patients and, importantly, their carers to get back to leading as normal a life as possible, encouraging a healthy life style and through mutual support provide our members with the confidence to enjoy an active and rewarding life.

The original members: Mike Dawson (Chairman), Michael Smart (Treasurer), Jill Brooks (Secretary), Rodney Johnson, Brian Mason, and Selwyn Prime, created the group as a Registered Charity and the British Heart Foundation provided £100 to set up the group. A constitution was drawn up and exists today with only very small amendments along the way.

The first meetings and sessions were held at Bury St Edmunds Leisure Centre and uniquely amongst Heart Support Groups we provided a qualified Exercise Instructor, Sarah Linton, and a Cardiac Nurse, Ali Shorten, to provide the highest quality care and advice for our members' conditions. We still offer the same degree of care and attention with a nurse and qualified instructor in place at every session.

Upbeat is affiliated to the British Heart Foundation and the Arrhythmia Alliance – the heart rhythm charity - and is recognised by hospitals, GPs and health organisations throughout the area. Our exercise sessions consist of either Circuit Training, Low Impact Aerobics, or a special seated exercise for the less able, all under the supervision of Phase IV cardiac-trained instructors.

As the group grew quickly it was decided to find larger and more suitable accommodation for our meetings so we moved to St John's Hall, the old, and then the new, New Bury Centres in Bury St Edmunds. On Friday evenings we had sessions at Hardwick Middle School and then Sexton's Manor Primary School. In Sudbury we were located initially, in March 1999, at the Town Hall and then the Delphi Centre before moving to our present venue at Long Melford Old School Community Centre.

As well as our exercise sessions it was felt that a social side should also be incorporated in the group to enable members to mix and enjoy the camaraderie and fun of trips, events, and functions. During the last thirty years we have enjoyed trips abroad to Italy, Switzerland, Amsterdam, Bruges, Brussels, Keukenhof Botanical Gardens, and in this country to Plymouth and the Eden Project, Warwick Castle, annual visits to The Royal Albert Hall, and the Christmas Shows at Thursford, plus many West End Shows (all with the kind help of Presy and Dennis Seager, and Sylvia Bambridge).



Exercise at The Delphi, Sudbury 2012

Under our own steam we visited regional theatres, historic houses and gardens, had river trips, dinner dances, annual lunches, pantomimes at Ipswich and latterly Bury St Edmunds, and so much more – all great fun and totally memorable. The group also run a Coffee Morning on alternate Thursday mornings at Bury St Edmunds for those that just want a friendly chat and a coffee. Members may also just come to any of our sessions for a coffee and chat as well.



Christmas Party 2011: Dancing Girls



Annual Lunch March 2016



River Wensum Trip 2004



Beer Festival Cheque Presentation 2014

To keep Upbeat going requires finance and Upbeat has run many varied and innovative fund-raising activities from Strawberry Teas to Quiz Nights, Race Nights, and so much more. The main source of funding has been via donations, generously given over the years by members and supporters, sponsorship events such as the Three Peaks Challenge, Sky Diving, Marathons, Abseiling, Wing Walking, etc. The largest funds have come with grants which have been diligently chased and with much hard work to put our case and provide the information required. Our current Secretary, Hilary Neeves, has played a huge part in this and has been largely responsible for the stable financial

position that we are in. We are, however, acutely aware that this can soon be eroded if we don't continue to run fund-raising activities and to apply for further grant funding on a regular basis.

During all this time we have only had a minimal number of Officers on the Upbeat Committee. There have been only three Chairpersons: Mike Dawson, Jill Brooks, and Sylvia Baker, four Treasurers: Michael Smart, Rodney Johnson, David Camp, and Valerie Axton, and five Secretaries: Jill Brooks, David Camp, Rita Howell, Brian Bagnell, and Hilary Neeves. Our thanks must go to them all, together with all those who have served on the Executive Committee and the Social Committees over the years and indeed to all those who have helped, and continue to help, to make this wonderful organisation survive and prosper.

We also run a very professional and informative website: www.upbeatheartsupport.org.uk which was designed and continues to be managed completely voluntarily by Steve Dennington. After nearly twenty continuous years, it gives latest news, information about Upbeat and events which have taken place, together with many photographs and videos. A huge thank you, Steve.

We also provide a free magazine giving latest news and comment which is superbly edited and designed by David Axton. This started as a one page newsletter in the early days and gradually evolved into an A5 magazine in black and white with photocopied photographs. That in turn changed to a printed magazine with a few pages in colour and we introduced advertising to help cover the costs. Sadly, the advertising ceased with the advent of Covid and so far has not resumed. However, through David's flair and expertise, we now produce the excellent full-colour magazine that we see today which is sent out to all members and is distributed to doctors' surgeries etc. to spread our message.

The group has won two prestigious awards. In May 2017 the High



Web-designer, Steve, featured on the cover of a previous issue of our magazine

Sheriff of Suffolk, Geoffrey Probert, presented Upbeat Officers with the High Sheriff's Certificate Of Recognition Award, based on "a token of appreciation on behalf of Suffolk and all those who have benefited from the hard work and service".

In 2018 we even surpassed that with The Queen's Award For Voluntary Service. Our Chairman, Sylvia Baker, and Secretary, Hilary Neeves, attended a Garden Party at Buckingham Palace with Queen Elizabeth II in attendance. In November 2018 we were presented with the award by Clare, Countess Of Euston and Lord Lieutenant of Suffolk, in front of a packed hall at the New Bury Centre - a wonderful honour for all the voluntary hard work and for all that Upbeat has achieved.



The Queen's Award for Voluntary Service



Sylvia and Hilary at Buckingham Palace Garden Party Summer 2018

It has been a fascinating and eventful thirty years. We are proud that the organisation with its original ideals and ethos is still going strong and continuing to help so many people. We have had over 2,200 members since we started and the current membership stands at over 560. We must be doing something right!

Here's to the next 30 years! Have fun and enjoy!

David Camp

BE WARNED!

Upbeat Committee member David Byatt hopes we will learn from his unpleasant experience.

Something happened to me last year which so incensed me that I thought it was worth warning other members about it

Needing a new battery for my car, I decided to go to Halfords in Bury St Edmunds. I had a deal with them to fit it free of charge, which they did in about half an hour. Everything was fine until a couple of weeks later when I received a bill for £100 from Euro Car Parks for the time my car was being repaired in their car park without a ticket!!

It turned out that Euro Car Parks had bought the place a few weeks before, and when I went in to Halfords to have it out with them (Euro Car Parks aren't very keen on talking to anybody), there were three people in front of me with the same complaint!!!

Those of you who know the Halfords/TK MAX car park in Bury will know that Halfords have a personalised covered parking space right outside their doors, and that's where they do their fitting and repairs all day, every day. To all intents and purposes it is their bay, and that's how it's been treated for quite a few years.

I eventually agreed with the car park people a £60 charge for my half hour stay. It's still a sore point, but I wasn't going to get any further and life's too short!

There, I feel better now, and I just hope this little story helps prevent someone else from falling into the same expensive trap.

Of course, many people using the car park don't go to Halfords, and they presumably buy a ticket in the normal way at the machines, so are not affected as I was, but be careful! Once bitten twice shy!

David Byatt

Resistance Training: A Vital Tool for Cardiac Rehabilitation

By Peter Azzopardi MSc



When it comes to cardiac rehabilitation, resistance training is often overlooked in favour of aerobic exercise. However, the inclusion of resistance training in a well-rounded exercise programme offers immense benefits for heart health, overall strength, and independence. That's why I always include a full-body strengthening routine in my classes (and yes, I regularly remind participants of the benefits every single week!). This article explores the advantages of resistance training and provides practical guidance for incorporating it safely into your routine.

Why Resistance Training Matters for Cardiac Rehab

Research, including insights from Professor Paul Comfort of the University of Salford, shows that resistance training is both safe and effective for improving muscular strength and endurance in cardiac patients. The benefits are wide-ranging:

- **Improved Heart Health:** Resistance training places less strain on the heart compared to dynamic aerobic exercises, reducing ischemic responses and enhancing subendocardial perfusion (improved blood flow to the inner layer of the heart). For those with heart failure, it improves peripheral circulation, increasing exercise tolerance and reducing symptoms like fatigue.
- **Boosted Metabolism:** Building muscle mass raises your basal metabolic rate, aiding weight management and improving blood sugar control through enhanced insulin sensitivity.

- **Lower Blood Pressure:** Regular resistance training helps decrease blood pressure, a key factor in managing cardiovascular health.
- **Enhanced Functional Capacity:** Stronger muscles improve balance, coordination, and physical functioning, making daily activities such as climbing stairs or carrying groceries easier to perform.
- **Increased Independence:** Resistance training helps maintain functional independence in older adults, reducing the risk of falls.
- **Improved Psychological Well-being:** Resistance training reduces anxiety and depression, boosts self-esteem, and enhances quality of life.
- **Better Bone Health:** Resistance training helps maintain bone density, reducing the risk of osteoporosis—a vital consideration for older adults.

General Guidelines for Resistance Training in Cardiac Rehab

To ensure safety and effectiveness, follow these established guidelines:

- **Frequency (F):** 2–3 days per week.
- **Intensity (I):**
 - Begin with 10–15 repetitions per set using light to moderate resistance (40–70% of one-repetition maximum or 1RM), stopping before muscle fatigue.
 - Gradually increase resistance over time as you get stronger.
- **Duration (D):** Perform 1–3 sets of 8–10 exercises targeting major muscle groups.
- **Modality (M):** Use elastic bands, light free weights, dumbbells, weight machines, or bodyweight exercises.
- **Monitoring:**
 - Avoid holding your breath (Valsalva manoeuvre). Instead,

exhale during the effort phase of the exercise and inhale as you return to the starting position.

- **Gentle Leg Movement:** During upper-body exercises, incorporate light leg movements, such as seated or standing marching, to support venous return, stabilise blood pressure, and avoid excessive heart rate increases.
- Use slow, controlled movements, and stop immediately if you feel discomfort or unusual symptoms.
- Monitor your heart rate and blood pressure as needed.

Note: Resistance training should always complement, not replace, aerobic activity, as both are essential for comprehensive cardiac rehabilitation

Sample Resistance Training Routine

Each session begins with a 15-minute warm-up and concludes with a 10-minute cool-down. Warm-up and cool-down activities include light cardio (marching in place, arm circles, heel-toe walks), dynamic stretches, and low-intensity seated or standing joint mobility exercises.

Main Circuit (20–30 Minutes): Complete 1–3 sets of each exercise with 10–15 repetitions. Rest 30–60 seconds between exercises.

- **Seated Leg Extensions (Quadriceps)**
- **Arm Curls with Light Dumbbells (Biceps)** (Tip: Gently march your legs while curling to maintain circulation.)
- **Wall Push-Ups (Chest, Shoulders, Triceps)** (*Modification: Perform on a sturdy table or countertop for added ease.*)
- **Seated Rows with Resistance Bands (latissimus dorsi, rhomboids, and trapezius)** (*Keep your legs moving lightly to stabilise your heart rate.*)
- **Side Leg Raises (Hips, Glutes)**

- **Overhead Shoulder Press with Dumbbells (Deltoids, Triceps, and Trapezius)** (*Incorporate light marching to minimise heart strain.*)

- **Heel Raises (Gastrocnemius, Soleus)**

Cool-Down (10 Minutes):

- Light marching, heel digs, side steps, etc.
- Gentle stretches for all major muscle groups (e.g., hamstrings, quadriceps, chest, shoulders).
- Deep breathing exercises to promote relaxation.

Tips for Success

- **Start Light and Progress Gradually:** Begin with minimal resistance and increase intensity and duration as you build strength.
- **Focus on Form:** Prioritise correct technique to prevent injury and maximise results.
- **Listen to Your Body:** Stop immediately if you feel pain, dizziness, or shortness of breath.
- **Consult Your Team:** Always check with your cardiac rehab team before starting or adjusting your exercise programme.

Addressing Potential Concerns

You might be wondering, “Will lifting weights put too much strain on my heart?” or “What if I get injured?” These are valid concerns, but rest assured, resistance training is safe when performed correctly under the guidance of qualified professionals. The benefits of increased strength, improved cardiovascular health, and enhanced quality of life far outweigh any potential risks.

If you’re uncertain about how to get started or have specific concerns,

feel free to ask during class—I'm here to help!

Final Thoughts

Resistance training is more than just building muscle; it's a cornerstone of heart health and independence. By incorporating these exercises into your weekly routine, you'll not only improve your physical fitness but also enhance your overall quality of life. For those with heart failure, resistance training offers specific advantages, including improved circulation and reduced symptoms, leaving you feeling stronger and more energised. Start today—your heart (and future self) will thank you!

Many thanks,

Peter

For further information visit Peter's website at www.pmapersonaltraining.com

Have you Memories of Upbeat Over the Last 30 Years?

As you will have seen from David Camp's article on Pages 20 - 24 Upbeat is thirty years old this year and we feel that is a milestone well worth celebrating. A great deal has happened in the world, and in Upbeat, since those few inspired heart patients got together and came up with the idea of the organisation we now know and love so well.

In this 30th year it would be good to share members' memories of Upbeat days gone by. Have you any memories of Upbeat in the past that could be included in the next issue of our magazine? They can be short or long and can be written down or we can speak to you about them and then David will type them up for the magazine. Here

is what I recall from when David and I were first introduced to Upbeat.

David, my husband and our editor, had his first heart attack on a Saturday morning on 16th November, 1996. He was 54 and it was totally unexpected. When being rushed between A and E and the cardiac unit at West Suffolk Hospital he suffered a cardiac arrest. He could hardly have been in a better place for that to happen as all the necessary staff and equipment were on hand to give appropriate treatment. His heart was restarted and he was looked after that night by our own Kate Turner. He well remembers Kate coming on for night duty and applying lavender oil to his pillow to help him sleep!

Following his discharge he did rehab at the hospital for six sessions of two hours, covering exercise, talks, and relaxation. We were then introduced to, and joined, Upbeat in January 1997. Initially we attended classes at the Sports Centre, then later we joined the Friday night sessions at Hardwick Middle School. There were two quite large groups using both halls, one doing circuits and one doing faster, more aerobic exercise. It had been a very big shock having a heart attack but everyone was very friendly and encouraging, especially Rodney and Ella Johnson who greeted us at the door each time we attended.

Yvonne Galloway took one group, I remember. We started on Circuits and David never progressed much further than that as he was not keen on exercise! We stayed members but had difficulty getting to sessions as David worked away and drove home each Friday night from Leicester. He was tired and I had taken on a more challenging job, so it became difficult.

When the two of us retired, we became more involved again, with David taking over from David Williams in 2012 as Editor of the magazine and myself as Membership Secretary and Treasurer. I'm sure I'm not alone in thinking that Upbeat does a wonderful job in supporting its members, and long may it continue to do so.

What are your memories? Please contact David by email, phone, or letter for your memories to be included in the next magazine.

Valerie

New Members

Mr & Mrs Alan & Linda Pearman Mr & Mrs Daniel & Sarah Drew
 Mr & Mrs Mervyn & Mary Martin Mr Michael Collins
 Mr John McEvoy Mr & Mrs Timothy & Louise Brown
 Mr & Mrs Jonathan & Diana Hunt Mrs Yvonne Orriss
 Mr & Mrs Keith & Karen Griffiths Mr John Flower
 Mrs Margaret Underwood Mr Michael Williams
 Mr & Mrs Allen & Olivia Burbridge

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 list is correct only up to the end of January 2025. Members who joined after then will be shown in the next issue of the magazine in the autumn.

100 Club Winners

October 2024 1st Prize Miss R Currell £100.00 No. 248
 £25.00 donated to Upbeat
 2nd Prize Mrs S Stringer £47.00 No.66
 £47.00 donated to Upbeat

November 2024 1st Prize Mr & Mrs Alan Williamson £100.00 No. 154
 2nd Prize Mr Simon Parsons £47.00 No.200 donated to Upbeat

December 2024 1st Prize Mr Brian Penson £100 Number 17
 2nd Prize Mr Nick Baylie £47.00 Number 111.

January 2025 1st Prize Mr P Riches £100 Number 88
 2nd Prize Mr R Mountfort £47.00 Number 125

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

Southgate Coffee Mornings

Thursdays 2025 10.30 am

9 and 23 January
 13 and 27 February
 13 and 27 March
 10 and 24 April
 8 and 22 May
 12 and 26 June



10 and 24 July
 14 and 28 August
 11 and 25 September
 9 and 23 October
 13 and 27 November
 11 December

FUND-RAISING FOR UPBEAT

A kind and generous donation of £500 has been made by the 'Order of Buffaloes' at Bury St Edmunds to Upbeat Heart Support Group.

Upbeat member Ken James presented a cheque to our Chairperson, Sylvia Baker, and our Treasurer, Valerie Axton.



We are extremely grateful for this kind and very useful donation.

TOMBOLA STALL

On the 14th November at the Bury St Edmunds Christmas Lights switch-on Upbeat held a tombola stall on the market place. Thank you to our helpers for braving the cold. A total of £425 was raised towards Upbeat funds.

A big thank you from Upbeat for all the help and donations received for this event.



Our 'Inspirational' Nurse Kate

'Inspirational' - that's how Upbeat's lead nurse, Kate, was described at a ceremony held in February at the West Suffolk Hospital cardiac centre. The occasion was held to mark Kate's fifty years of service to the NHS and to present her with a glass trophy inscribed with the words 'with gratitude for your loyalty, dedication and service to the NHS'.

Kate said that she had always wanted to be a nurse, but when she left school aged fifteen with no qualifications she worked in a number of jobs before she had what she termed 'a realisation'. She recalls thinking, 'What am I doing?' so she phoned the 'old' hospital and said she would like to be a nurse. Following a meeting with the deputy matron and passing an exam seventeen year old Kate started work as a cadet and the following year began training to be a state enrolled nurse.



Colleagues gathered to show their appreciation for Nurse Kate.

Describing her early experiences Kate said, "On my first evening at the Nurses' Home I was told by the live-in home warden that I'd never make it without qualifications but I did, with determination and hard work. When I qualified I began in theatres, but then was in a pool of nurses, being sent where we were needed." Kate moved to the new West Suffolk Hospital when it opened fifty years ago, gaining experience in various wards before taking a post in gynaecology. Then in 1980 she moved to coronary care/intensive treatment unit (ITU).

She worked her way up and became a senior state enrolled nurse, but then in the 1990s, when the state enrolled nurse role was removed, she did the necessary training to become a registered general nurse.



Nurse Kate with colleagues including Tracy Wallace, who used to work with Upbeat.

Kate has now worked in cardiac rehabilitation for decades, and remembers when it used to be thought of as the poor relation. In the 1980s in coronary care the patients were mostly men, often recently retired. There was much less focus on rehabilitation and many of the patients would become deconditioned and lead a very limited life. Advances in cardiac care have led to the realisation that cardiac rehabilitation provides vital activity and support for heart patients, helping those with various cardiac conditions achieve knowledge, confidence and independence.

Dr Cameron, the Chief Executive, presenting Kate with the trophy said: "It is a real privilege to share this milestone with you. What a huge achievement! What has struck me has been the longevity and breadth of your career, in the hospital and community, across so many areas and finally the years in cardiac rehab. Over that time, you have impacted the lives of thousands of patients. This is a small token of our appreciation – thank you."

During Kate's years with Upbeat, countless members have benefited from her professional advice and caring approach and we must add our own heartfelt thanks for all that she has contributed to Upbeat.

Thank you, Kate!



Nurse Kate's long service award

Christmas Party at the Old School, Long Melford

We had one exercise class only on the last day, 17th December, which gave everyone time to get together and chat - not something that is always possible when two classes are exercising.

Members had brought in lots of delicious nibbles and food and John brought in his accordion so we had plenty of music, laughter, and enjoyable banter.



The lovely Val had organised the Christmas Raffle (what would we do without her?). Thanks must also go to Martyn who mostly resides in the very cold kitchen at Long Melford Old School, making copious amounts of tea and coffee for all of us. We love you, Martyn! (We must do to put up with your jokes!)



Ashlar House Christmas Lunch



4th December 2024 it was lovely to see so many members supporting the Christmas Lunch this year. The team at Ashlar House had really pushed the boat out with the decorations this year and the room looked resplendent with no fewer than seven twinkling Christmas Trees.



The food was very good and it was really delightful to see some old friends who, for one reason or another, are not able to come to the sessions anymore. Thank you for supporting this event.



Everyone had a good time and many thanks must go to Alan, David, and Nick, and their partners, Louise, Marianne, and Rosie for organising the whole thing and running the Raffle. Well done, everyone!



Photographs courtesy of Giles Washbourn

Do you shop on line?

Previously I've written about the company called **easyfundraising uk** which represents a very simple way to help Upbeat funds. I was reminded of how easy this can be and how helpful towards Upbeat funds when I just re-insured my car.

The reminder from my insurance company quoted a new premium which had increased greatly so I began looking on line at various comparison websites. After a while I found a quote which was more than £100 less than my present insurer's. I went to sign up for it and up came the easyfundraising notice: Did I want my payment to raise a donation towards Upbeat? Well, of course I did. I was then taken to the insurance company's website to complete my transaction. Having secured my car insurance I received an email telling me that I'd raised more than £19 for Upbeat as a result of my transaction. SIMPLE!

If you register Upbeat as your preferred charity, when you shop on line easyfundraising, through its partnership with many well-known companies and high street stores, will donate part of what you spend to Upbeat, as it did with my insurance. It doesn't cost you any extra as the cost is covered by the company with whom you're shopping. My £19 wasn't much but if every member who shopped on line brought in only a few pence, this would soon mount up. Many members have already registered Upbeat as their charity of choice and as a result **in 2024 Easy Fundraising donated to Upbeat £229.97.**

To register, log on to [easyfundraising.org.uk](https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk) and click on the box labelled 'Sign up and get started'. Type in the name of our group: Upbeat Heart Support, or enter our charity number, 1087415, to register Upbeat as your chosen charity and start helping our income. Remember, using easyfundraising only applies to shopping you do on line. Unfortunately, you can't use this way of donating when you do your weekly shop in person at the store! Thank you for helping Upbeat.

David

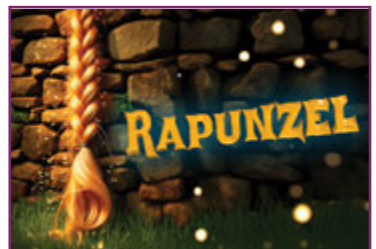
Aladdin at the Theatre Royal

December 17th saw a packed house at the Theatre Royal in Bury for the pantomime Aladdin. We had our usual boxes where we had the best view in town and the chatter of all the school children below us and around us was a sheer delight.



We were transported to the Grand Abanazer Hotel, 'the finest hotel in all of Arabia', where Aladdin worked as a bellboy alongside his jolly, browbeaten colleague, Washy – all under the watchful command of the ruthless boss, Abanazer. In true panto tradition there was some cross-dressing, with a dame, Sally Swankey, a penniless widow, dressed in outrageous outfits, played by a man, and Washy's role taken by a woman. Foreigners or those unused to pantomime must find it all quite confusing!

The superb cast gave us clever songs and dance, comedy, and a lively, modern take on a traditional story with plenty of chances for booing and shouting out. It was a joy and always seems to mark "the start" of Christmas. Thanks go to David for organising the trip, booking tickets, etc. Sadly, he has said that he will not be booking for this year's show as once again it was difficult to sell all the tickets he had bought. That's very disappointing but of course members can always book themselves for this year's panto - Rapunzel, - which will run from November through to January.



Hilary