



Offwell Village Defibrillator

Offwell Parish Council alongside The Community Heartbeat Trust, have installed a defibrillator (AED) in the village telephone box. The AED is housed inside the yellow box, this is now ready to be used by anyone within the community to deal with a sudden cardiac arrest. To gain entry to the box and access the defibrillator, the caller will be given the code by the ambulance service, having dialled 999.

Offwell now has a group of volunteers, that after dialling 999, you can call on 565911, who will fetch the defibrillator and assist you with resuscitation.

A defibrillator is a computerised medical device that delivers an electrical current through the chest which aims to shock the heart back into a normal rhythm allowing it to pump again. Rapid response using automated technology can significantly improve the quality of life of a survivor, as the longer the brain is starved of oxygen, the more damage occurs. An AED is a portable defibrillator especially designed for people with little or no medical background.

The UK Resuscitation Council guidelines indicate that community defibrillators (AEDs) should be able to be used by members of the public with or without any formal training. This is because the equipment is very easy to be used, and when you have called 999, the ambulance service operator will normally stay on the telephone to assist you. The modern AED equipment is also designed to talk to you and tell you what to do. When applied to the victim, voice commands and screen messages will guide the user step-by-step through the process and its intelligent technology will only allow it to shock a 'shockable' heart rhythm. AED technology opens a window for the public to take on a key role to support emergency services who would otherwise be hindered by the time it takes to reach the victim. It is argued that AEDs should be as broadly deployed as fire extinguishers and first aid kits.

How is the defibrillator activated?

In all cases dial 999 first. It is really important the professionals are on their way. Your local ambulance service will notify you if there is a box near to you and, if it is easily accessible, give you the access code to the box. If you are willing, they will ask you to get the unit, or you can call the VETS team to get the unit and commence the relevant actions. Always dial 999 ambulance.

VETS Volunteers

Offwell has now got a group of volunteers that can assist pending the arrival of the Ambulance. A third of all 999 calls are from lone rescuers, so getting help to them quickly is important. VETS is a community run system and enables the volunteers to fetch the defibrillator and assist with a sudden cardiac arrest. The caller is played a simple message before VETS volunteers answer. If no volunteers are available, the caller will be told this and reassured that having already rung 999 – the ambulance is on its way. Continue CPR until help or the ambulance arrives.

How It Works

You may ask the Ambulance responder to call the VETS number for you to summon Assistance.

The Ambulance responder may release the call, allowing you to then dial the VETS number.

On ringing the 01404 565911 Offwell VETS number, the call will go through to all the volunteers, the 1st volunteer to answer the call, will be notified of your call and on acceptance will be connected to you. Tell them clearly, your name & where you live. They will then collect the defibrillator and come to you. They will then assist in CPR and using the Defibrillator.