



# Wrentham & District Community First Responders

Report Created by Chris Levett

Date 10<sup>th</sup> April 2024

Community first responders are volunteers who are trained by the ambulance service to attend certain types of emergency calls in the area they live or work. Their aim is to reach a potential life-threatening emergency in the first vital minutes before the ambulance crew arrives.

Their role is to stabilise the patient and provide the appropriate care until the more highly skilled ambulance crew arrives on scene to take over the treatment.

It is a voluntary role that was initially set up as a lifesaving force and for which the training now enables attendance at paediatric, mental health and first aid emergencies. Safeguarding children and vulnerable adults training also enables the detection of abuse at all levels. CFRs also now undertake 'Prevent' training and how to deal with violence and aggression. We are now all trained to attend non injury falls where the patient does need to attend hospital and can stay safely at home. We use a special chair (raizer) to assist getting the patient off the floor and back onto their feet. The groups raizer chair was purchased with the help of significant donations from the Original Factory Shop in Wrentham, of whom we are very grateful.

Practically everyday Responders from the area attend emergencies within the local communities. CFRs attend types of medical emergencies where it is essential for them to receive immediate life-saving care. This includes such categories as:

- Cardiac arrest
- Chest pain
- Breathing difficulties
- Unconscious patients
- Fitting/Seizures
- Stroke
- Catastrophic bleeding

All CFRs carry a full range of emergency equipment including an Automatic External Defibrillator (AED) and an oxygen cylinder.

When a 999-emergency call is received by the Ambulance Service, the call is prioritised to establish if it is suitable to send a CFR, if so the nearest CFR will be dispatched. As far as possible an Ambulance will be dispatched at the same time, though at times there have been considerable delays. Every CFR is equipped with an up-to-date mobile phone, which now has GPS technology to identify their exact location and pinpoint the destination to the patient with greater accuracy.

Once an ambulance, or in some cases the air ambulance arrives, the CFR hands over to the crew and may be asked to assist.

There are currently 6 CFRs in the group covering a radius of around 20 miles.

Between January 2023 and December 2023, the group have provided 11,892 hours on call and attended 378 calls, of which there were 31 Cardiac Arrests. Plus 57 stand downs (stood down before arrival at scene)

There were 18 calls in Wrentham which we attended. The importance of a fast response to an emergency in such a rural area is crucial as early intervention can literally make the difference of life and death, especially as the Ambulance Service and Hospitals, at times, continue to experience long handovers for patients.

The ambulance trust is very keen to use CFRs to teach the public life saving skills of doing CPR (Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation) and the safe use of an AED (Automatic External Defibrillator). If any group in Wrentham would like a free short training session, please contact Chris Levett on 07340816913, who will be happy to oblige.