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29 July 2024

Dear Community Safety Committee Members

With regards to the new AED the council have placed on The Green, (Near the Pond), Gainsborough Drive, Gunton, opposite Gunton Primary School.

Firstly, I would like to apologise having to trace as to who placed the Unit via Facebook, but there is no name, as to who to contact on the unit, so I had no other option. If I offended anyone then apologies that was not my intention, but I am very concerned that this unit has been placed so close to an already registered 24/7 unit, which is a serious waste of resources and became a topic, others were interested in. (This could easily be placed at the other end of the road, on one of the side roads or Gunton Church Lane, giving the public a better ability to quickly access an AED.)

On speaking to the Council, it was explained that you do not advertise that the Council is responsible for the units, to avoid issues with regards to any not being rescue ready and any fall out that may cause to the council. However, I believe that could cause more issues than you are hoping to avoid.

For example – Although you are checking the unit regularly, even if they are being checked weekly, if a unit is vandalised in-between and there is no information on the unit to enable someone to contact the guardian and report an issue. Members of the public may not bother with the effort of trying to find the guardian and the vandalism therefore not get reported. If the Circuit then gives out the code for a member of the public and it is not rescue ready, that could mean a life is lost and be worse with regards to bad publicity, than the unit just being offline. If it can be reported by a member of the public straight away, at least the Council can immediately take it off the Circuit, as no longer being rescue ready and avoid the delay in mobilising a rescue ready AED. Proving due diligence is vital.



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If there is a system in place to check and report any issues with an AED, methods to record those checks, due diligence can be proved. If there is no way a member of the public can immediately report an issue with a unit, I cannot see how the Council can prove their due diligence with regards to ensuring units being rescue ready to the best of their ability.

With regards to the AED at Gunton Primary School –

From the 6 May 2023 I have been the official guardian of the Gunton Primary School AED. I took over the guardianship as there had been a few issues with getting the unit back up on the Circuit after being deployed over weekends and school holidays. As their first aid training provider, we offered to look after the unit along with two others we support on the Gunton Estate and recently one on the Whitton Estate. In that time, I have checked the unit late evenings, early hours of the morning, weekends and holidays. I have never not been able to access the school. Speaking to the school on Friday, 12th July, to double check this, they assure me that since having the unit as a public access AED, the school gates have never been locked.

Jen Jones, who I believe is a member of the community safety committee, stated in a post that the Schools AED was not accessible to an individual post COVID when calling 999, due to there being chains on the gate. Firstly, if this was the case, why was the school not advised of this and or myself advised? There is a chain on the vehicle access gate, but if you look it has no padlock! And never has. (So, I assume in the stress of the situation the person sent to get the schools unit on this occasion took one look at the vehicle access gates, with a chain and did not even try either gate.) If we had been advised of this incident, we would have edited the instructions on the Circuit to ensure the ambulance controller could explain any misplaced access issues to individuals in the future. The pedestrian gate has never had any chain or lock on it according to the school and certainly from my experience since being guardian.

Jen Jones stated that she spoke to Jayne Biggs (from the Heart2Heart Norfolk Charity) regarding this and Jayne was going to speak to Matt Jordan at the school. I speak with Jayne regularly and she has not spoken to Jen for at least 3 years, and on her last conversation advised Jen that the gates where not locked, so was this new unit sited on information collected up to 3 years ago?



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Andy Pearce stated that the Unit was placed on the Green by the pond as it is used for events a couple of times a year and occasional work parties. He also states that as a local resident himself, he would suggest that it is not widely known that the schools AED is available to the public. As a committee surely you have a responsibility to ensure that monies spent are spent wisely and to serve as many of the community you possibly can! Therefore, the AED sign on the school gate is an indication that an AED is available, a visit, email or phone call to the school, would have confirmed that the unit is registered on the Circuit as available 24/7. This is also easily checked by going on the following website - <https://www.defibfinder.uk/>

As a committee I would have thought there should have been more checks with regards to the location of all units you intend to place as means of justifying monies spent.

I have been advised to put to rest any concerns regarding the Schools unit being unavailable. Obviously unfortunately any unit can be unavailable at times. The council are aware of that, units can be left in people's homes, end up at ambulance stations and therefore not returned for days, weeks or even longer. With the School, their unit had a fault and had to be returned for repair, we immediately replaced it with one of our own, so it was not unavailable at all. Someone commented on the Facebook thread that the school may need to lock their gates to stop possible vandalism. Again, unfortunately vandalism can happen anywhere.

But again, if there was an issue that the School had to consider locking its gates, we would look at an access code for a padlock for the pedestrian gate and the Ambulance Service given full instructions, or we could even consider moving the unit to the front of the school gates. This covers most possible scenarios, including immediate replacement of the AED which most other public access units do not have the ability to cover.

With regards to the unit placed on the Green in Gunton, by the Councils committee.

Firstly, it is too low. According to the 'Community Heartbeat Trust' (CHT) website, the providers of this unit. They state that the height of the box should be 1.10m – 1.30m from the ground, currently it is 0.5m from the ground.



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Again, to comply with safety and other regulations, cabinets should be available for access by disabled people and be placed so that the cabinet is approx. 1.10m from the ground, and no more than 1.30m. It should be clearly identified by correct signage.

Mounting bolts should be appropriate for the location, be strong enough to comply with Public Liability to prevent the cabinet from coming off the wall, even if climbed on and be of stainless steel, not brass. Always use an RCD device with an isolator switch. Cabinets must adhere to BS7671 for safety and carry warning symbols. Your electrician must supply a certificate of conformity on installation.

Someone driving could easily pass it by as it is not easily seen from a car it's below the car's window level.

The CHT also give guidance on the location of the box, as below -

Regardless of the type of location a key thing to note, however, is that all Ambulance Services have an activation radius for community defibrillators ranging from 200 - 1600 metres depending on the area. In effect, this means that if a 999 call is made outside of this area, the unit may not show up on their systems, and thus the defib will not be activated in a rescue.

Therefore, by putting the Council funded unit 100 yards from the Schools unit is completely pointless and complete waste of resources.

On discussion with regards to the cabinet itself. It has no power to it; I was advised this is a solar powered cabinet. Apparently, the committee is purchasing these for the Council as it enables them to put them out in the community without having to worry regarding power supply and issues with sites. Is this the case? On speaking to the CHT today, 15th July, they advised me they no longer supply solar powered cabinets as they were deemed not effective enough and too costly. Is this an old-style unit purchased some while ago?

Or is this one of their heavily insulated cabinets, with thermal bag, with a Zoll AED 3, AED? If so, that would mean the unit does not need a power supply and mean it is easily moved to a better site.

Finally, why is there a notice on the public notice board that the AED cabinet is attached to stating, 'Important AED not in service, in an emergency dial 999 ambulance.'



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My request is –

- That you seriously consider moving the Public Access AED unit from the Green, in Gunton to a better suited place to benefit the wider community.
- It is placed at the appropriate height.
- You can assure me that the cabinet is appropriate to keep the AED at the correct temperature, as otherwise again the unit can become unusable again a waste of funds.
- If there are further funds you look at up to date information regarding AED's already available. Which can be easily accessed on the Defib Finder website, before placing further AED's.

If required I can supply photos of –

- The gates to the Gunton Primary School, proving that they are not locked. Photos of the unit you have placed and the inappropriate height.
- Also, photo of the notice board.

If you would like any assistance in finding suitable sites, please let us know, we would be more than happy to help.

Yours sincerely

REDACTED

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