

Defibrillator Access in Rotherham



About us

Healthwatch Rotherham:

We are the independent champion for people who use health and social care services in Rotherham. We are here to make sure that those running services put people at the heart of care.

Our sole purpose is to understand the needs, experiences and concerns of people who use health and social care services and to speak out on their behalf. We focus on ensuring that peoples' worries and concerns about current services are addressed and work to get services right for the future.

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What is a defibrillator?

A defibrillator is a device that gives a high energy electric shock to the heart of someone who is in cardiac arrest. This high energy shock is called defibrillation, and it's an essential part in trying to save the life of someone who's in cardiac arrest. A defibrillator may also be called a 'defib', an AED (Automated External Defibrillator) or a PAD (Public Access Defibrillator). (British Heart Foundation, 2022).¹

What we heard:

Healthwatch Rotherham was contacted in May 2022 about an incident that had occurred in Rotherham Town Centre. This involved a member of the public being unable to access a defibrillator as instructed by the 999 operator, due to its location being locked, despite the defibrillator being advertised as available 24 hours of the day, and the incident taking place in working hours.

This then required the member of the public to find another defibrillator. This may be a few minutes away from their current location, and could be a matter of life or death. For every minute it takes for the defibrillator to reach someone and deliver a shock, their chances of survival reduce. We believe this is totally unacceptable, and everyone should have access to defibrillators 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

What we did:

We began to investigate the defibrillators in Rotherham town centre, where they were located and who was responsible for them. It is worth noting there are other defibrillators located in Rotherham, but we have currently just been focusing on the town centre, as this is where the incident occurred.

Finding a defibrillator:

<https://www.defibfinder.uk/> is a website that allows you to see all the registered defibrillators in your local area. **It is advised you do not use this in an emergency.** If you are requiring the use of a defibrillator, **please ring 999** and they will advise you of your nearest one and guide you through the process.

Upon looking at this website, we were able to see a number of defibrillators registered in Rotherham Town Centre. Unfortunately, almost half of these were showing as 'not available now' despite being advertised as 24/7 accessibility. We decided to contact those listed as being responsible for them, which was mainly Rotherham Council.

We were able to get in touch with a local councillor in Rotherham who has been successfully campaigning locally to get an additional 10 defibrillators in his local area. He has also pushed for any future large housing developments in Rotherham to incorporate a defibrillator into the development.

He has also found an opportunity to site defibrillator cabinets onto certain lampposts in Rotherham. This means that defibrillators will have a place to be stored and accessed even when businesses are unwilling to own one or are unable to.

¹ <https://www.bhf.org.uk/how-you-can-help/how-to-save-a-life/defibrillators>

Outcome:

The councillor contacted Rotherham council and those responsible for the defibrillators, to ensure that there were weekly website updates to maintain the 'active' status of the defibrillators, and that people could access them should they be required to.

Defibrillator locations:

Our engagement officer went into Rotherham and photographed some of the defibrillators featured in Rotherham town centre. We will label the locations below. This may help familiarise you with what a defibrillator looks like, and typically how it is displayed inside and outside public buildings, on lampposts and businesses. This is not an exhaustive list, but is an example of what to expect. Please visit the 'Find a Defib' website mentioned previously to locate the nearest defibrillators in your area.

Rotherham Town Hall:

Close up of defibrillator



Exterior of building: Defibrillator to the right of the black door



Tesco Express: Moorgate Road. Defibrillator located inside the red telephone box.



Tesco Extra, Drummond Street - next to the Customer Service desk



Shiloh: Located outside the building



Clifton Park: The Garden House:



Resources:

Leaflets:

We appreciate that not everybody is aware of defibrillators, what they are for and how potentially life-saving they can be. Many people may be unsure of how to use one, and would be scared if they were put into a situation where they were required to use one. Some businesses may be unaware of the benefits of purchasing one, or feel that they do not require one.

To raise awareness of defibrillators, we created the below posters:



Why should I get a defibrillator?

By having a defibrillator available to you and by training people in CPR, you can play an important part in saving more lives and showing you care. Having a public access defibrillator available in an emergency can be life saving. (British Heart Foundation, 2022)

Communities:

Public access defibrillators are often bought by parish councils, residents' groups, social clubs and churches. Funds can be raised through business sponsorship, donations and fundraising activities like car washes or bake sales.

Workplaces:

Consider:

- how many people may be passing through, or near, your workplace (chances of cardiac arrest increases with more people)
- the age of those people (cardiac arrest is more likely as you get older)
- Location (this may affect emergency service response times).

Some businesses choose to have defibrillators without a needs assessment because they want to show their commitment to keeping their colleagues and local community safe.

How can I get a defibrillator?

Prices start from £900

You can browse models on the St John's Ambulance website here: <https://www.sja.org.uk/first-aid-supplies/defibrillators-accessories-and-training-models/defibrillator-models/>



Defibrillators in Rotherham:

A defibrillator should be used when a person is in **cardiac arrest**. CPR should be done until you can get a defibrillator.

If you see someone having a cardiac arrest, **call 999, start CPR and get someone to find a defibrillator.**

How to find your nearest Defibrillator:

The emergency operator can advise you if you cannot find one.

Visit <https://www.defibfinder.uk/> to familiarise yourself with the locations of your nearest defibrillator in Rotherham.



Training:

The British Heart Foundation offer 15 minutes of free online CPR training. The training teaches you how to save a life and you will receive your own CPR certificate at the end. You can find the training on the British Heart Foundation website here:

https://www.bhf.org.uk/revivr?gclid=CjwKCAjwu_mSBhAYEiwA5BBmf9nMAfTz8QBQBFsSZPIxtWL_FQL_OAe110i5LCHt6COtxr8wS54mV7BoCP7EQAvD_BwE&gclsrc=aw.ds

The British Heart Foundation also offer a step-by-step guide on how to use a defibrillator, which can be found on their website here: <https://www.bhf.org.uk/how-you-can-help/how-to-save-a-life/defibrillators>

St John's Ambulance have also provided a video on how to use a defibrillator. This is available on Youtube and can be viewed here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UFvL7wTFzI0>

Additionally, St John's Ambulance also offers in-depth 3 hour training courses on how to use a defibrillator and basic life support. You will receive a St John's Ambulance certificate on completion of the course that is valid for 3 years. To check your nearest location, and training costs, please visit the St John's Ambulance website here:

<https://www.sja.org.uk/courses/workplace-first-aid/defibrillator-cpr-training/book-aed/>

You will also have the opportunity to purchase a defibrillator to use on your premises going forward.

It should be noted that the nearest St John's Ambulance training to Rotherham is available in Sheffield, and is priced at £144 per person.

Future Plans:

Healthwatch Rotherham is currently in the process of sourcing external funding to provide this training in Rotherham for up to 30 members of the public to increase public responses to cardiac instances and increase positive outcomes. Alongside this training, Healthwatch would like to gain funds for a new defibrillator for Rotherham Town centre, and be maintained for five years. Please continue to look out for updates on this via our website and social media in the coming months, or if you feel you could support us, please contact us. Our contact details are listed at the bottom of this report, or can be found on our website here:

<https://healthwatchrotherham.org.uk/contact-us> We will use our social media and mailing lists to promote the above free courses and resources to continue to raise awareness and educate in this field to increase public awareness.

References:

1 <https://www.bhf.org.uk/how-you-can-help/how-to-save-a-life/defibrillators> - British Heart Foundation website

<https://www.defibfinder.uk> - Find a defibrillator website

https://www.bhf.org.uk/revivr?gclid=CjwKCAjwu_mSBhAYEiwA5BBmf9nMAfTZ8QBQBFsSZPIxtWL%20FQL_OAe110i5LCHt6COtxr8wS54mV7BoCP7EQAvD_BwE&gclsrc=aw.ds - British Heart Foundation CPR training

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UFvL7wTFzI0> - How to Use a Defibrillator (AED) - First Aid Training - St John Ambulance

<https://www.sja.org.uk/courses/workplace-first-aid/defibrillator-cpr-training/book-aed/> - St John's Ambulance CPR and Defibrillator training

Acknowledgements:

We would like to thank everyone who contributed in this report, and for alerting us to this issue back in May. It is feedback on issues such as this that allow us to improve health and social care services for those in Rotherham.

Contact us:

If you have been affected by anything mentioned in this report, or would like to speak to us to find out more about defibrillators, purchasing one or training, please contact us on: E-mail: info@healthwatchrotherham.org.uk Call: 01709 717130 Website: <https://healthwatchrotherham.org.uk/contact-us>