



Billingshurst Emergency Assistance Team (BEAT)

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RURAL AREAS IN WEST SUSSEX AND SURREY BENEFIT FROM INCREASED EMERGENCY MEDICAL COVER.

The Billingshurst Emergency Assistance Team (BEAT) is Billingshurst's Community First Responder scheme. First responders are alerted to certain medical emergencies at the same time as an NHS ambulance by the South East Coast Ambulance Service (SECAMB) Control Centre, which receives emergency 999 calls. As responders are local people, they are already in the communities so can often get to patients first. It is in these first vital few minutes that lives can be saved by quick and appropriate action. Responders are mobilised at the same time as an ambulance, never instead of; an ambulance will always attend. Responders are equipped with defibrillators, oxygen and other medical supplies and have been fully trained by SECAMB.

Craig Stead is one of BEAT's newest members. Craig, who works as a Civil Servant, lives in Barns Green so covers a very rural area including Barns Green, Christs Hospital, Brooks Green, Billingshurst and many of the outlying areas in between. Craig has family connections in Haslemere, so he can often book on call there too. Since completing his training as a responder, Craig has attended 12 calls in the Billingshurst and Barns Green area and 15 calls in Haslemere. Craig says, " I enjoy the challenge of responding and putting something back into my local community". Craig's responder kit is one of 5 funded by BEAT's major supporter, Billingshurst Lions Club.

BEAT has another new member, Jane Price who lives in Plaistow. Jane is currently retraining to return to her role as an Intensive care nurse after having a few years off for family commitments. She will cover an area that includes Plaistow, Shillinglee, Ifold and Loxwood; all areas where an ambulance might take a little longer to arrive. Jane hopes that more volunteers in the area will be encouraged to join the team once they see how people can be helped by a faster response time.

Paul Berry, BEAT's chairman, says " Although BEAT was set up initially to cover the Billingshurst area it soon became apparent that members would be needed to cover many of the surrounding villages and outlying areas too. We are immensely grateful to have Craig and Jane on board as this helps BEAT to extend further the area that the group covers. There are many first responder schemes in West Sussex and I feel sure that BEAT now covers one of the biggest areas; because of Jane's location and Craig's links with Haslemere the group can now also extend its area to parts of Surrey too. We are very grateful to all of our sponsors but particularly Billingshurst Lions Club for its support. BEAT has just gone past its 500th call which is a huge milestone for the group; this would not have been possible without the support that the group receives." If anyone would like more information about BEAT they can visit www.BEATresponders.org or call 01403 786185.

ENDS

Editors' Notes

BEAT

The Billingshurst Emergency Assistance Team (BEAT) started providing emergency cover in February 2006 with six volunteers. The group, which is a registered charity, now has 15 members. BEAT covers a large area and as well as Billingshurst, has members based in Barns Green and Plaistow.

BEAT is a Registered Charity and is funded by donations from individuals, companies and local organisations. BEATs main supporter is Billingshurst Lions Club, which has donated 5 Responder kits.

BEAT is trained, monitored and dispatched by the South East Coast Ambulance Service NHS Trust.

Members of BEAT give their time voluntarily and without payment.

www.beatresponders.org

For more information about this release, contact Paul Berry on the numbers below.

Billingshurst Emergency Assistance Team (BEAT)
Paul Berry , 8 Nightingale Walk, Billingshurst, West Sussex, RH14 9TY.
e-mail paulberryadi@btinternet.com Telephone/Fax 01403 786185 Mobile 07880 507666.