



Sally Angell-James from Uppington with her dog, Masie.

A LIFE SAVING LEGACY

BY DANIEL MORRIS

For over a year the Covid-19 pandemic has dominated the headlines as one of the greatest health crises of our time. Though shining a spotlight on the fantastic work of the NHS, it has however diverted the attention of the public from other important health issues that have not disappeared, and sadly continue to claim many lives.

According to research from the British Heart Foundation, there are on average at least 30,000 out-of-hospital cardiac arrests in the UK each year. Without immediate treatment, an average of at least 90 per cent of these prove fatal. Unfortunately, data released from health experts First Aid For Life shows that of these 30,000 cardiac arrests, 20 per cent occur in public places, where the victim is at a high risk of death, unless they are able to reach an automated external defibrillator (AED) – a device that can analyse the heart and, if necessary, deliver an electrical shock to help it re-establish an effective rhythm.

Crucially however, according to Resuscitation Council (UK), only three per cent of cardiac arrests happen within the recommended retrieval distance of one of these potentially life-saving devices. More publicly accessible defibrillators are needed, and luckily, a local charity has made it its cause to help more areas in and around Shropshire get them.

Officially launched at the end of last year, the Henry Angell-James Memorial Trust has made it its mission to help put AEDs into places in the county and beyond where they are needed and in locations where a community has difficulty raising funds for them.

Following the tragic passing of her husband Henry from a cardiac arrest in 2017, trust founder Sally Angell-James has channelled her energy into making sure as few people as possible have to face a similar experience by helping more people have access to defibrillators should they be in trouble. A popular commercial



Sally Angell-James with Cliff Medicott of West Midlands Ambulance Service and Mother Yejide Peters, Vicar of the United Benefice of St Chad with St Mary and St Alkmund, Shrewsbury.

property developer, Henry had a great deal of friends in the industry who wished to honour his memory, and here was the genesis of Sally's fantastic work with her fellow trustees.

"When my husband died, the IAS – Industrial Agents Society – came to me," says Sally. "Henry was a commercial property developer and he was a well-known face within that world and he was a personality. The IAS said they would like to, in Henry's name, raise money and have a charity of my choice be the beneficiary. That's how it really started. I thought, 'where would Henry have wanted the money to go to?'. A friend of mine spoke to a cardiologist who said the biggest and the most straightforward thing you can do is to buy defibrillators.

"We realised that it was a tangible thing to raise money for, you can physically see them and they actually save a life."

Though they are sophisticated devices, AEDs can be straightforward to use as well as instrumental in aiding victims of cardiac arrest. When a person suffers a sudden cardiac arrest, their chance of survival decreases by up to 10 per cent for each minute that passes without defibrillation. According to research from First Aid For Life, use of a defibrillator within the first four minutes (in addition to quality CPR) can increase the odds of someone's survival from around six per cent to 74 per cent. As such, access to these machines – which are fitted on the exterior of buildings to allow public

use – can be the difference between a life saved and a life lost. The Covid-19 pandemic posed challenges for Sally in getting the trust up and running, however since it was launched, Sally and her fellow trustees have succeeded in rolling out five defibrillators across needed areas in Shropshire, and nearly 40 in the West Midlands and beyond. Over the past few months, the trust has ensured the installation of AEDs in locations including Shrewsbury, Bouldon near Craven Arms, Uppington near Telford, Nash near Clec Hill, and at Grinshill near Wem.

In following through with their vision, Sally and the other trustees have worked closely with West Midlands Ambulance Service and have had continued support from Henry's

associates at the IAS and other contacts within the commercial property world.

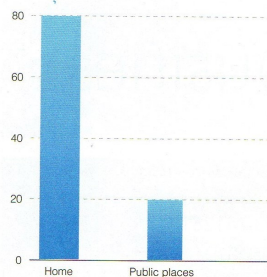
"Working with West Midlands Ambulance Service has been absolutely amazing," says Sally. "They have been fantastic. The IAS and all of these property companies have also been brilliant because they support me and they have been putting AEDs in their industrial sites which are in key locations."

Progress made by the Henry Angell-James Memorial Trust so far has been impressive, and there is no sign of its great work slowing down any time soon.

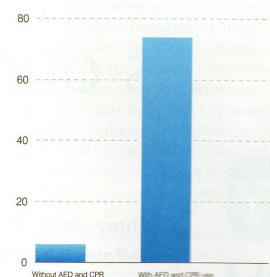
As Sally and her fellow trustees continue their important work for the county and beyond, the legacy that she hopes the trust will build is simple: "All I would like is for these to be everywhere," she says. "They are beginning to be in more places, but the fact is, they need to be everywhere, because you really only have a few minutes to get to one of these machines when you need one. If by doing this we can save lives, that is what is important."

"What happened to me and our family was completely devastating. If you wake up in the morning, and kiss your husband goodbye and then they never come back, that is a terrible, terrible thing. If I can save someone that experience through these little machines, then my husband's death will not have been in vain."

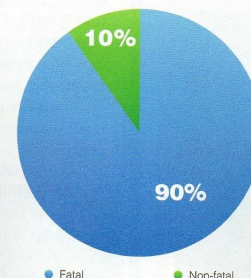
For more information on the Henry Angell-James Memorial Trust, email info@henryangelljamesmemorialtrust.co.uk



Percentages of where the average 30,000 out-of-hospital cardiac arrests in UK each year occur



Potential percentage chance of survival from out-of-hospital cardiac arrest with and without AED and CPR use within four minutes



Average percentage of cardiac arrests that prove fatal without immediate treatment