



June 2023 Chairman's Report

The past year has been something of a trial for me as you can imagine. By the time of the AGM last year I was having major problems with my diet and finding it increasingly difficult to digest food. My initial thoughts were that I was having a reflux problem but that was disproved after my first visit to Bedford hospital when they diagnosed cancer of the oesophagus. Many tests followed and I got to know the insides of some of our more notable hospitals quite well as a consequence.

A regime of chemotherapy was prescribed during the summer months which shrank the tumour and allowed me to enjoy food again. This was a major improvement and at least allowed me to enjoy meals out with our friends without the embarrassment of rushing for the toilets repeatedly. By October I had reached that monumental goal of being able to eat a Cornish pasty without issue. Believe me - for a Cornishman - this was no mean achievement. I had always known that the culmination of my treatment lay in a major operation and that I had to achieve a high level of fitness as a necessary pre-requisite so I attended those Cardiac Friends activities that were beneficial when I could, like the exercise group and Monday and Wednesday walks, but the NHS appointments often conspired against my regular attendance. The Sunday coffee mornings were also most welcome, where I could meet others and feel a little more "normal."

I had my operation in late November and then had to commence that trial of regaining my fitness for a second time, which I believe I have now achieved.

I am delighted to say that during the whole of this period the Cardiac Friends activities have very much carried on as normal, and are a testament to the calibre of your committee members and group leaders. Even the Christmas party went ahead in my absence thanks to Adam stepping in at short notice as my replacement.

I would like to end by expressing my gratitude to that committee and group leaders who have kept things running, and also to all of you, my Cardiac Friends, who have been so supportive to both Ruth and me over the past year. I'm not sure we could have done it without you!

Barry Brown

Notes from the Secretary

Well a lot has happened since May 2022!

I feel that I have now got to grips with the role.

I endeavour to keep the membership up to date with all the events with emails and of course our thrice-yearly newsletter; the next edition of which is due in the next couple of weeks. There is lots to update you all on as we are such an active group. Thanks again to all the

committee while Barry was undergoing his treatment, and Adam and Heather in particular in the lead up to the Christmas party.

We have had an influx of new members; Heather will update us on the membership straight after my report.

The group is thriving, long may it continue.

Ruth Brown

Membership Secretary.

The membership at the AGM (24/05/23) stood at 80, plus 48 associates. A total of 128 members. Thanks mainly to the appeal of our Blue Badge Guide, Kim Dewdney; we have gained 27 new members this year.

Thirty three people have yet to renew and I will follow them up.

Seven people have told me they are not renewing, they have moved on in life, or literally moved away.

Some members have passed away since the last newsletter; we have lost Terry Worboys - a former chairman, and Colin Pond. Dinah MacKellar attended the funeral of Terry Worboys on behalf of Cardiac Friends.

If anyone can update me on any friends we may not have heard from, please do contact me.

Heather Cotton

Monday Morning Walkers

This group has been going for a long time and is very popular with those that wish to do a short walk for whatever reason. We stay local as this seems to be easy with no worries about where the venue will be and what sort of parking.

STEVENAGE, Fairlands Lakes, Shephallbury Park and the area around the Bluebell woods.

HITCHIN, Hitchin Garden centre to walk part of the Letchworth Greenway and Walsworth Common/Purwell Meadow.

LANGFORD Cherry Lane Garden Centre with a pleasant walk by the river.

HENLOW is another walk opposite the 5 Bells Pub to walk along by Champneys.

The group is a very happy cheerful group who love to natter and socialise and I have to remind some of them that we should be walking! Anyone interested please contact Maggi.

Maggi Bullen



Tuesday Afternoon Swimmers.

Our little band gathers fortnightly on a Tuesday for a 2 o'clock swim except when the schools are on holiday (or on strike)!

It is impossible to have an enjoyable swim

when the pool is full of kids! Through Cardiac Friends you can stay in the pool as long as you like and it will cost you only £2.00. After the swim we gather in the café for a coffee and a natter.

Why not come and give it a try. Go to the Events Calendar on the website to find the dates. www.cardiacfriends.co.uk. **Pete Howard**

Peter Howard is also the Website Manager. The website is a useful tool for keeping abreast of all the Cardiac Friends' activities as well as informing the reader of its beginnings and there are also some interesting articles about members' previous 'lives'.

Wednesday Walks

The group continues to prosper, a number of new members have joined us since this time last year. The latest are Mike and Sarah Till and Duncan and Beverly Lummis. In October we did our annual sponsored walk, in aid of 'Children in Need' raising over £200 thanks to the generosity of the walkers. In December about 30 of us enjoyed a lovely Christmas Lunch at 'The Rising Sun'; the group were as ever very kind and gave me a basket of 'goodies', pate, preserves and beer etc. They also knew it was my wife Joyce's birthday so they presented her with a large box of chocolates.

We still have a number of members who either do a short walk or just come to lunch, so we are able to keep them on board socially.

Fortunately we still generally enjoy good weather for our outings. Sadly a number of our favourite venues are either closed or are on reduced opening times; which makes it difficult to provide a variety of walks. One pub in particular; which has reduced opening times, (Thursday - Sunday) although not open on Wednesday the landlord has agreed that he will do so for us (he cannot turn down 15-20 lunches!)

It has been a difficult year for me health wise, causing me to miss a number of the walks.

Since I wrote this report I went lame again and had to hobble for about a mile before being picked up by car. Fortunately I have magnificent support from my friends in our mini group (the Monday Walkers) who step up and fill the breach. Namely Cyril Savage, Ian Druce, Mike Morley and Peter Dawes, they in turn are supported by their 'carers' Janet, Christine and Jacqui. **Fred Maryon**

Exercise Group - Thursday Afternoons



This group meets every Thursday - except when there is no trainer! Attendance does vary week on week, but the membership is about twenty. There is a lot of fun, a lot of jaw exercise. Relaxation at the end of each session has been introduced on a regular basis. Ability is not an issue; everyone works at their own pace. Help is available if it were needed. The first session is free, the cost is £14.00 a month and if a surplus

of monies builds up, a free month is given.

Jackie Quinn

Heartsong - Friday Afternoons

The sessions take place every other month on the last Friday of that month. As usual we have met every two months on a Friday afternoon in Holwell Village Hall, a few miles north of Hitchin, but we missed one session when Katie was ill. Katie ensures that our 2-hour session is always fun and with a variety of songs - folk, pop (old and new) and some songs from across the globe, even occasionally in a foreign language. But you don't have to be a regular singer or be able to read music or be linguist to sing these songs as they are all taught by ear and there are lyrics sheets for the words. They are never so difficult that we can't sing them. We sometimes sing in 3 parts and we always surprise ourselves with the thrilling effect of these harmonies. It is a very healthy and therapeutic activity; good for the lungs and heart, and we would love to have more members, so do consider giving it a try - anybody and everybody can sing. The next session is on Friday 28th July. Further dates are on the website.

John Burden:

Petanque - Friday Afternoons

We have booked a summer season of Petanque games at the Family Golf Centre - Par 3 course at Willian Way, Letchworth.

They are held monthly and we have set the dates so as wherever possible we de-conflict with other Cardiac Friends activities, such as Sunday coffee mornings, Line dancing or Sunday London walks which would otherwise take place the same weekend. The session is always booked for 2.00 - 3.00 p.m. Although if you could arrive a little earlier; it makes it easier to arrange the teams.

The dates are sent out in the newsletters, and are also advised by email a week or so in advance. The next few games are booked for 16 Jun, 28 Jul and 18 Aug.

The cost is £4 per head which covers the cost of the Petanque pistes and boules.

If you've never played and want some fun with only a minimum of competitiveness, come along and give it a try. **Ruth Brown**

Line Dancing - Saturday Mornings.



Janet organises this activity very well, so all we have to do is turn up! We enjoy the dancing and the cake. This activity is not just for the ladies, men can join in too. This is a good all-round exercise, good for our brain, all round fitness as well as social interaction. We currently have 12 members but can always take new people, as not everyone turns up every week. Mary Davis is still happy to instruct. We have a 2-hr session every fortnight,

10.00 - 12.00, at Willian Village Hall, at a modest cost of £6.00, pay as you go.

Refreshments are provided with a rota for the cake. For further details, and as an interim measure, please contact;

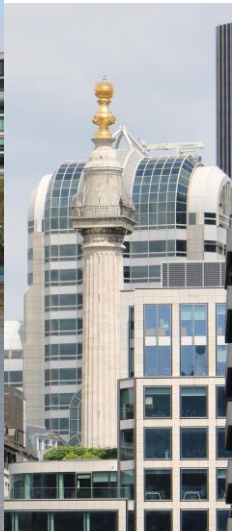
Ruth Brown

London Walks - Sundays

For over 21 years groups of Cardiac Friends members have taken a coach down to London and been introduced to fascinating places and facts. Kim Dewdney is our wonderful London Blue badge guide who has given us approximately 126 walks! And counting! That means lots of research, planning visits and telling amazing stories.

Many members have joined us on these Sundays walks (or should we say stroll!) and have had a very enjoyable, stimulating and friendly day out. As usual the four of us have met with Kim and between us have come up with a series of six walks which are very varied, both in area and topic. Don't be deceived, that's to keep you intrigued. And for those who are yet to join us, we eat at the Sir John Oldcastle pub in Farringdon; they give us very good service.

After the disruption caused by Covid-19, when we could only arrange a few walks, we are now up and running again and our first walk this year was jammed to the rafters. Unfortunately due to health and other circumstances we have lost certain regulars but it is so good to welcome new members and see new faces. Some of these decided to join Cardiac Friends because of these walks and are now also actively joining in various other activities.



Unfortunately the cost has gone up, like everything these days. The £30 covers the transport, Kim's payment and the headsets. But this is still less than a day return ticket into London.

So this year you may have missed Battersea but you could still come to Greenwich, Kew or even LOUSY LIMEHOUSE!! (A bit of an in joke!). Please send forms, cheques, and food choices as early as possible. The Coach Company and Headsets Company and pub need the information a week in advance!

We are open to suggestions for different venues and topics. We do not include venues that impose an entry charge.

Thanks to all of those who have supported this activity over the years. A lot of work is needed to get the slick presentation. If you believe that, you will believe anything! Please contact any of the four of us if you need information. **Gaynor Tinsdale.**

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| Walk 3 | Sunday 25 Jun - | It's not all gardens (A South London Village) |
| Walk 4 | Sunday 16 July - | Palaces, Potter & Puddles (It's a great day in Greenwich) |
| Walk 5 | Sunday 17 Sep - | "Lucky" Limehouse (for the 3 rd , or is it the 4 th time)? |

If you want more information, please contact us.

The London Walks Team:

Sunday- Monthly Coffee Mornings



These regular monthly meetings offer a means of getting together for some company and a chat with other Cardiac Friends, over a cup of tea/coffee and a cake, or even breakfast. Perhaps more importantly, they offer a means of socialising even if you are less mobile. All you need is the ability to get yourself there, and be willing to chat and/or listen. They have always been very popular and well-attended right from the start.

We always meet on a Sunday morning from 10.00 a.m. until midday, though there is no reason whatever why you should not stay longer if you so wish, for lunch perhaps. We use locations such as garden centres or amenable cafes, and rotate our attendance at these throughout the year. There will be a coffee morning EVERY month, but the locations have not been booked as yet.

The next booked coffee mornings are:

11 Jun at Family Golf Centre - Dimples Café, Letchworth.

9 Jul at Vanstone's Garden Centre. On the back road from Hitchin to Welwyn.

13 Aug at the 'Runway Café', Shuttleworth Collection. The café is FREE to enter. Post code for navigators is SG18 9EP

Barry Brown

Theatre Group

4 trips/events were organised in the year to 30th April 2023. In terms of participants one was a major success, one was a failure and two were partial successes.

June 2022 - Gardeners World at the NEC

39 Members originally booked but only 33 finally came on this trip.

September 2022 - The Mousetrap

Only 6 Members originally booked. This trip was cancelled.

February 2023 - & Juliet

25 Members originally booked but only 23 came on this trip.

April 2023 - Warner Leisure Hotels - Littlecote House

42 Members originally booked but only 39 came on this holiday.

It has been a more difficult year. Probably due to Covid-19, increasing costs due to inflation and perhaps because of mobility issues for some members. Also fewer attendees do increase the cost per person. I will plan a few more trips for this coming year.

Adam Kuzminski

STOP PRESS!

**THEATRE TRIP BY COACH TO SEE 'THE KING AND I'
THURSDAY 9 NOVEMBER 2023 - MILTON KEYNES THEATRE (MK)**

There is a booking form being sent (postal)/ attached (email) as a separate item.



Places of Interest

There are currently no places of interest trips planned although this will be reviewed when the weather improves.

Adam Kuzminski

From the Editor

The London Walks photographs are courtesy of Ian Druce - Thank you Ian! They are from our second walk - 'Disastrous London', where Kim told us about all the disasters (amusing and horrific) on and around the river Thames from Roman times until the present day.

As always, please feel free to send me any material which you think would be suitable for **YOUR** newsletter.

Ruth Brown

[05/06/2023](#)

