

MEDIA RELEASE

21 February 2007

STEYNING AREA NOW A SAFER PLACE THANKS TO NEW RESPONDER SERVICE

The communities of Steyning, Bramber and Upper Beeding are becoming a much safer place in which to live and work thanks to a service provided by local volunteers.

Recent statistics from the South East Coast Ambulance Service (SECAmb) show that the Steyning Area First Responders (known as SAFeR) had the second highest number of emergency responses for the quarter 1 November 2006 to 31 January 2007, totalling 120 for the period. These included visits to people in the area suffering from breathing problems, accidents, falls, convulsions, strokes and heart problems.

SAFeR responders are alerted at the same time as an NHS ambulance by the 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 equipped with defibrillators and other medical supplies (not drugs) and have been fully trained by SECAmb.

SAFeR has this week become a charitable trust and receives no funding apart from donations. Trustees, responders and everyone involved in the scheme give their time voluntarily and receive no payment.

"We were amazed when we saw the figures come in to show how many calls our responders went out to," says Martin Leigh-Pollitt, chairman of trustees for SAFeR, "it just goes to show how much this service is needed in more rural areas like Steyning – but we still need more responders and certainly more donations!"

If you would like to get involved, either by becoming a responder or by making a donation, contact Martin on 01903-812007.

ENDS

Editors' Note

For more information about this release, contact Jill Woolf, Chimera Communications, on 01903 812275 or 07791 764983.