

Defibrillators deployed over 100 times and have saved lives

3 years ago



Community conscious HLA Services has so far fitted 16 life-saving defibrillators across South Tyneside and Wearside, having teamed up with Red Sky Foundation.

Since it was awarded full charitable status in March 2020, Red Sky Foundation has worked with a number of kind hearted businesses including HLA Services, to supply and install defibrillators throughout the North East.

So far, 47 of the 110 defibrillators have been deployed 118 times.

Following the death of their friend and fellow businessman, Jon Woodhouse, of West Boldon, directors at HLA Services, Paul Smith and Neil Henry, teamed up with the charity to help with the supply and installation of life-saving machines.

Red Sky Foundation's public access defibrillators can be spotted across the region and 16 of those locations include East Boldon Infant School, Funky Buddha Café, South Shields, West Park Bowling Club, Grey Horse, East Boldon, Ticket Office, Black Cats Stadium of Light and South Shield's Ashley Pub.

Other locations where HLA and Red Sky Foundation have collaborated include Colonel Prior, Sunderland, Alberta Social Club, Jarrow, and a defibrillator installed outside of Cleadon Village Pharmacy, which saved the life of a local man after he collapsed at home having suffered a life-threatening sudden cardiac arrest, in December 2021.

Red Sky Foundation provide life-saving defibrillators for local schools and public spaces, offer educational sessions to the general public on the use of the equipment and cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR)

through to advanced support for babies, children and adults with heart conditions and their families.

HLA Services is one of the North East's leading full-mechanical, air conditioning, climate change and temperature control specialists. Employing more than 100 people, it has satellite offices in Cumbria and North Yorkshire and has recently established a new office in Teesside to meet growing demand for its services.

Neil Henry, director, HLA Services, said: "There is nothing more precious than life and we are delighted to play our part in helping to protect the people of South Tyneside and Wearside.

"When experiencing a heart attack, time is everything. We know that those with access to community defibrillators have a better chance of recovering as they strengthen the chain of survival.

"While regular CPR keeps blood flowing artificially, a defibrillator is the only way to restart the heart and return it back to a healthy rhythm. Terrifyingly, the chances of a victim's survival decrease by as much as 10% with every minute they do not receive rapid defibrillation. The loss of our friend, Jon Woodhouse, and the education we have since received from closely assisting Red Sky Foundation, means that as a business in a position to help, we will continue to offer our services because it is the right thing to do."

Sergio Petrucci, who founded Red Sky Foundation with his wife Emma after their daughter received life-saving heart surgery at Newcastle's Freeman Hospital, said: "Like all charities, we rely heavily upon the support of businesses such as HLA Services, to ensure we can carry out our mission of saving as many lives as possible.

"In 2016, we began fundraising to help other babies and children with heart conditions and we have raised well over £600,000. This has meant we have been able to fund amazing cardiac projects, helping heart units in hospitals across the North East and placed over 110 defibrillators within communities with many more in the pipeline.

"My wife, Emma, and I are eternally grateful to the NHS and Red Sky Foundation is our way of giving something back to support the many people who need our help. It's gone from strength-to-strength and we will continue to help the people of the North East and beyond and our thanks goes to HLA and all other businesses that continue to assist us to achieve our goal – to save lives."