



PRESS RELEASE

**Crowborough, East Sussex
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Crowborough Community First Responders receives the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service

Crowborough Community First Responders, a group of volunteers based in Crowborough in East Sussex, have been honoured with the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service, the highest award a voluntary group can receive in the UK.

The team's volunteers are specially trained to respond to emergency as 999 calls as directed by South East Coast Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust. They also run the charity behind the scheme, fundraise for public access defibrillators and run free sessions that members of the public can attend to learn some basic lifesaving skills.

Representatives from the team attended Buckingham Palace in May, along with other recipients of this year's Award.

Crowborough Community First Responders is one of 281 charities, social enterprises and voluntary groups to receive the prestigious award this year. The number of nominations and awards has increased year on year since the awards were introduced in 2002, showing that the voluntary sector is thriving and full of innovative ideas to make life better for those around them.

The Queen's Award for Voluntary Service aims to recognise outstanding work by volunteer groups to benefit their local communities. It was created in 2002 to celebrate the Queen's Golden Jubilee. Winners are announced each year on 2 June – the anniversary of the Queen's Coronation. Award winners this year are wonderfully diverse. They include volunteers helping people overcome mental health problems through sport, volunteers using caravans as mobile cafe/information centres in geographically remote locations and another group mentoring children who have a parent in prison.

Representatives of Crowborough Community First Responders attended a garden party at Buckingham Palace last month, and the group will receive the award from Peter Field, Lord Lieutenant of East Sussex later this summer.



Senior CFR Team Leader (South East Coast Ambulance Service – Paddock Wood OU) and Crowborough Community First Responder’s Team Leader, Leigh Westwood says:

We are incredibly honoured to have received this Award. I am very proud of the team who work tirelessly in our local communities, entirely on a voluntary basis. It is tremendous recognition of all the hard work and contribution that the team make to the success of our charity.

Crowborough Community First Responder’s Deputy Team Leader and South East Coast Ambulance Service Public Governor (East Sussex), Nicki Pointer says:

I am full of pride that the team has received this award. I would like to thank our frontline Community First Responders and Fundraising team for all their dedication to the community. Thank you also to the community we serve as volunteers, for all their support since our group was formed.

END

Notes to editors

1. Lord Lieutenants represent the monarch in each of the UK’s ceremonial counties.
2. This year there were 281 winners of The Queen’s Award Voluntary Service from across the UK. More information on the winners and the Award can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/queens-award-for-voluntary-service>
3. Any group of two or more people that has participated in voluntary work for more than three years can be nominated for the award. Full details on how to nominate are available at <http://qavs.direct.gov.uk/>
4. Nominations for the 2020 awards close on 13 September 2019.
5. Crowborough Community First Responders was formed in 2010 and became a charity in 2014 (No. 1157368).
6. The Crowborough Community First Responder and Fundraising team comprises of 14 volunteers (9 frontline CFRs and 5 fundraisers), with a further 3 frontline CFRs about to commence training
7. The volunteers operate from their homes, supported by a team facility where admin is undertaken and team meetings held.
8. The Crowborough Community First Responder website can be found at www.crowborough-cfr.co.uk

Media if not attached is available on request.