



Bentham Town Council

Defibrillator (AED) Policy

Adopted: May 2026

Minuted: 20.5

Review date: May 2029

Applies to: Any Automated External Defibrillator (AED) provided or managed by Bentham Town Council.

Purpose

Bentham Town Council recognises the vital role that a publicly accessible Automated External Defibrillator (AED) can play in improving survival rates following sudden cardiac arrest. This policy sets out the Council's approach to the placement, maintenance, training, access and incident response for any AEDs it provides or manages.

Scope

This policy covers all Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs) owned, managed, installed or maintained by Bentham Town Council (BTC). This includes AEDs located at Bentham Town Hall and any other sites where BTC has accepted responsibility for the device or its cabinet.

It applies to:

- AEDs fully owned by BTC
- AEDs purchased through grants or donations but for which BTC has agreed to manage, maintain, or host
- Any AEDs where BTC has a shared or delegated responsibility established through a written agreement

Legal & Guidance Basis

Although no specific statutory duty compels the Council to provide an AED, the Council will follow best practice guidance from recognised bodies (for example, British Heart Foundation guidance, NHS guidance and The Circuit) when implementing and operating AEDs.

Roles & Responsibilities

Council (Corporate Responsibility)

- Ensure appropriate funding, insurance cover and governance for AED provision and maintenance
- Approve locations for AED installation and any cabinet/defibrillator purchases

Responsible Officer (RO) — nominated by the Council (e.g. Town Clerk)

- Oversee implementation of this policy
- Maintain the AED Asset Register and ensure records are kept up to date
- Arrange for maintenance, battery/pad replacement and annual reviews
- Ensure all AEDs are registered on The Circuit
- Receive notifications from The Circuit following any reported use and coordinate follow-up actions

- Liaise with emergency services and local community groups
- Carry out routine visual checks (monthly) and log checks in the Maintenance Log
- Report any faults, low battery/pad expiry or cabinet damage to the Council immediately and act accordingly to ensure the AED is usable

AED Siting & Accessibility

- The Council will locate AED(s) where they can be reached quickly from areas of public use. When choosing locations the following will be considered:
 - o Visibility and signage from main public areas
 - o 24/7 access (ideally)
 - o Protection from weather and vandalism (secure heated or ventilated cabinets if outdoors)
 - o Proximity to power supply (if required) and adequate lighting
- All AEDs will be registered on **The Circuit**, making them visible to the North West Ambulance Service and other emergency responders.
- Where cabinets are access-controlled, members of the public must **dial 999 to obtain the access code**.
- The exact location of the AED will also be written on the AED unit itself to assist identification and return.

Training & Public Awareness

- The Council will support training for staff, councillors and volunteers willing to act as responders. Training should include CPR and AED use
- The Council will promote AED awareness through:
 - o The Council website
 - o Social media
 - o Community newsletters
 - o The Community Emergency Plan
- Public information will include:
 - o AED locations
 - o What3Words (W3W) references
 - o Maps and/or clear written descriptions
 - o Instructions to call 999 in an emergency

Maintenance, Inspection & Testing

- Monthly visual check (by AED Custodian):
 - o Cabinet condition
 - o AED present
 - o No obvious damage or tampering
 - o Status indicator operational
 - o Pad/battery expiry dates
- Monthly functional check: in line with manufacturer guidance
- Battery & pad replacement:
 - o In line with expiry dates or after any use
- Annual service: where recommended

- **Post-use procedure:**

- o The AED will be removed from service immediately after use or potential use
- o Consumables must be replaced
- o The device must be checked and made ready for reuse

- **Return requirement:**

The expectation is that, where possible, the AED is returned to its original cabinet location after use

- **The Circuit status update:**

- o The AED will be marked as unavailable (offline) following reported use
- o The Responsible Officer will ensure it is checked, restocked, and updated on The Circuit
- o This process will be completed within **48 hours**

All maintenance and checks must be recorded and retained for a minimum of 5 years.

Incident Reporting & Data Handling

- Following any AED use:

- o The Circuit will automatically send an email notification to the Town Clerk
- o An Incident Report Form must be completed within 48 hours

- Reports should include:

- o Date/time/location
- o Responders and EMS attendance (if known)
- o AED serial number and consumables used
- o Actions taken

- Medical confidentiality will be maintained in line with Data Protection legislation

Insurance & Liability

- The Council will maintain appropriate public liability insurance
- Use of an AED in an emergency is generally protected under 'Good Samaritan principles'

The Social Action, Responsibility and Heroism (SARAH) Act 2015

Courts will consider whether a person:

- Acted for the benefit of society
- Acted responsibly
- Acted heroically in an emergency

This provides reassurance and protection for responders.

Funding & Replacement

- The Council will budget annually for:

- o Maintenance
- o Consumables

- o Training

- o Signage

- o Replacement AEDs

- Donated or grant-funded AEDs must have clear ownership and responsibility agreements

Public Access Defibrillator (PAD) Cabinet & Signage

- Cabinets must be clearly signed and visible

- Signage will include:

- o 999 instructions (including access code process)

- o Location guidance
- o Fault reporting contact

Security & Vandalism

- Risk assessments will be carried out for vandalism
- Incidents must be reported to police and recorded