

Hearts and Minds

THE HERTBEATS NEWSLETTER



St Albans and District Cardiac Support Group
Established 1997

Affiliated to the British Heart Foundation and Arrhythmia Alliance

secretary@hertbeats.org.uk
[Website: www.hertbeats.org.uk](http://www.hertbeats.org.uk)



Where's Grandad?

December 2017-January 2018

FORTHCOMING ATTRACTIONS

- 16th January **Ralph Evershed**
The story of a St Albans family printing business: how Eversheds came to have their printing works in St Albans for over 50 years and what they printed for businesses throughout the UK.
- 20th February **Hedley Jenkins**
Climate Change: a talk concerning global warming and its consequences.
- 20th March **Doctors' Evening**
Once again, our Vice Presidents, the consultant cardiologists from the West Herts Hospitals group, will be on hand to answer your questions and present the latest developments in cardiology.
- 17th April **Caroline Stroud Cinnamon Trust**
A national charity for the elderly, terminally ill and their pets.
- 15th May **AGM**
- 19th June **Strawberry Evening**
With Entertainment

All Tuesday meetings (unless otherwise stated) will be held in the Hall of St Mary Marshalswick, Sherwood Avenue at **8.00** (Hall available from 7.45).

PUBLISHED BY HERTBEATS, a Cardiac Support Group formed in 1997 to provide practical advice, information and help to cardiac patients and their families within the St. Albans, Harpenden, Welwyn Garden City and Hatfield areas. It is also an informal social group that arranges a variety of outings, exercise classes, regular friendly gatherings with interesting speakers and the opportunity to meet new and old friends. Hertbeats does not offer formal medical advice, but members often learn much about their ailments, and the practical means of coping with them, by talking to other members who have had similar experiences.

Any opinions expressed in *Hearts and Minds* are those of the authors and not necessarily those of the Editor nor of Hertbeats.

My thanks to John Versey for supplying the cartoon on the cover. After he'd sent it to me, John realised that it had appeared in *Hearts and Minds* before. Well anyway, I cannot remember it and I think it's funny, so here it is again. When I received it from John, I was staggered to realise that the next issue (ie this one) would be the last issue before Christmas and that I had been doing the job of editing *Hearts and Minds* for a year. Despite my scientific education, I refuse to believe that time is linear – it surely goes more quickly the older one gets. Maybe that's what Einstein found, but I have never really understood general relativity anyway.

I don't want to steal our chairman's thunder, but I would like to add my two-pennyworth and express my horror at the creeping privatisation of the NHS (*our* NHS). Despite some optimism expressed at the time, the Cameron government's reform of a few years ago seems to be turning out to be an unmitigated disaster. I think the writing was on the wall when I, as your then secretary, wrote to Nicholas Small, chairman of the newly-created clinical commissioning group, requesting that Hertbeats make inputs to its decision making. I did not receive a reply.

On a brighter note, I should like to wish you all a happy Christmas but, more importantly, a healthy new year.

John Coad
Editor

NEWS FROM THE CHAIR

I am writing these notes just after Remembrance weekend. Like so many of Hertbeats' current members I was born around the time of the Second World War. I don't know if you saw the moving interview with the 99 years old veteran able to attend the ceremony at the Cenotaph for the very first time. Among other things, he asked 'why do we still have street fights and racial prejudice'? Then he said that we fought the war to end such things. Hertbeats of course is just one beneficiary able to do what we do because of the freedoms defended at that time

Recently among places where your Committee members have represented Hertbeats and our activities have been the Harpenden Seniors Forum (Brian Gibson, Gareth Huxtable, John Versey) and the Harvey House Surgery 'Patient Participation Group' (me). In terms of publicity Brian Gibson, our Life President, has again come up trumps. Following his work to get new Hertbeats' Patient Identity Cards and the now famous 'Hertbeats' Light Pens', he has had produced a new Hertbeats mug. The mugs are on sale to members and will make nice Christmas presents. None of these things happens by magic of course and our sincere thanks go to Brian for all of his continued work for us.

On a more gloomy note, the Committee is worried about the future of our exercise classes in the Maple Physiotherapy Unit Gym in the hospital. As you know (from their visits to our meetings), Herts Valleys Clinical Commissioning Group (HVCCG) commissions and pays for health services, including the hospitals, in West Herts.

Following the failed privatisations by the HVCCG involving Concordia (to do echocardiograms, etc. outside hospital), we saw, even more seriously, the inadequate performance of the 'Private Ambulance Service', which affected some Hertbeats members as well as so many others left stranded at home or hospital. HVCCG was going to give this company the sack at the end of the contract, but the company went into administration. Volunteer drivers and the regular ambulance service have been left to pick up the pieces.

We now know that HVCCG has not accepted a bid to keep 'musculoskeletal services' in-house with the NHS, but given a contract to 'Connect'. These services include physiotherapy. This could be another worrying privatisation and further fragmentation of what is supposed to be a 'National Health Service'.

HVCCG has been unable to give assurance to Hertbeats that we shall be able to continue to run our four exercise classes a week in the Maple Physiotherapy Unit at St Albans Hospital as we do not know where Connect will locate physiotherapy services for St Albans! Hardly a clear contract? Further there is no guarantee that the gym where the classes take place in the hospital will remain. Hertbeats pays considerable rent to use the gym (for over 20 years now) so that heart patients who have completed their rehab can continue exercising. The NHS itself does not provide exercise classes beyond rehab.

At the moment we are carrying on exercising in the hospital as usual. The privatisation contract does not kick in until sometime in the New Year. We are still short of exercisers for the 6.00 pm classes on Tuesdays and Wednesdays so please contact me if you would like to join. (My details are on the back page.)

As we look forward to the New Year, Michael Utteridge has yet again produced an exciting list of theatre trips and visits for 2018. I would like to thank not only Michael, but also of course all Committee members, and editor of *Hearts and Minds*, John Coad, who work so hard to make Hertbeats the success it is.

Finally, Christmas. As you know, our traditional Christmas Dinner has now been replaced with a New Year's Dinner (to liven up what some call the 'dead month of January'). You will see elsewhere the details of this Dinner to be held at Woollams on 11 January. Thanks to Brian for doing much of the organising for this. My only grouse is this is the date of my granddaughter's birthday. Any advice on how one can divide oneself into two to be in two places at once?

Enough of grouching. A very Happy Christmas and prosperous New Year to all Hertbeats' members, families and friends.

Brian York

SECRETARY REPORT

Current Membership: As at 11th November 2017, Hertbeats membership stands at 355. We have gained 16 new members since the 1st April 2017.

New Members: Since the last newsletter, Carol van Leemputten, Patrick & Eileen Lintott, Gordon Johnson and Jenny Tyler have joined Hertbeats. Welcome aboard.

CPR Courses: Jean Sharpe is looking into setting up a further batch of CPR Courses, starting in the late Spring or early Summer.

Travel Insurance: After Christmas, Jean Sharpe will review the information she has on travel insurance. For this, Jean rings the companies up to verify telephone numbers and terms & conditions. If you have information on GOOD insurers or information on DISAPPOINTING insurers, then please email a short expose to Jean who is collating such information for all of us.

Roger Miller

HERTBEATS WALKING GROUP

The 8th November saw ten of the intrepid Hertbeats walking group set out on a 3-mile walk. The night before had seen some rain so the going was a bit



[Photo: RogerM]

slippery in places. We set off from the Heartwood Forest car park in Sandridge up the slope and turning well before the railway embankment. Continuing to turn back towards the car park we came, quite unexpectedly for me, on the wooden arch. So we had to stop for a photo. Must do some research to find out more about the arch.

We won't be walking in December as it's usually too busy with other activities. From January, all walks are planned to be on a **Wednesday, starting at 10:00 am**. The proposed walks are as follows.

	3-Mile Walks	5-Mile Walks
January	3 rd	17 th
February	7 th	21 st
March	7 th	21 st
April	4 th	18 th

Ed Jones, our walks organiser, contacts interested walkers about one week before the walk, letting them know the meeting place. They can then decide if they want to take part and let him know.

If you are interested in joining us on the walks please contact Ed:
Tel: 01727 850165 Mob: 07745 295691
Email: etnajones@gmail.com

Roger Miller

EXERCISE CLASSES – UPDATES

MAPLE UNIT

Currently we still need to fill the vacancies for classes at 6.00pm on Tuesdays and Wednesdays in the Maple Unit. Please do let me know if you would like to join a Maple Unit class whether you have recently completed 'rehab', or would like to start exercising anyway. If the latter, you will need a note from your GP confirming basic fitness to exercise. (Contact details on the back page.) All exercisers go at their own pace, supervised by an appropriately qualified physiotherapist/instructor, Elaine, Sarah, Debbie, Eleanor.

MAPLE UNIT MEMBERSHIP RULES

- Must be fully paid-up members of Hertbeats.
- Evidence must be provided confirming your fitness to exercise, e.g. your discharge note from Cardiac Re-hab or a doctor's note.
- You are required to sign a Hertbeats Disclaimer Form. As a support group Hertbeats is unable to accept responsibility for your medical condition.
- A 'medical condition/medicines taken' form must also be completed. The physiotherapist in charge of each class will determine whether to allow any member to exercise especially at his or her first attendance, or following illness or injury.
- Potential members may attend for two initial exercise sessions, on a trial basis without payment, before deciding whether to join a class permanently.

- Maximum number of 12 members is permitted in each class.
- Fees are payable in advance for each 13-week period and payments will only be returned because of a member's sickness or injury beyond the first three missed sessions.

ADDENDA

- All exercise classes are undertaken by qualified instructors as approved by Hertbeats.
- Each class has an agreed representative to provide a link with the Hertbeats Committee.

ANTONELLA McMILLIN'S EXERCISE CLASSES

All members are welcome at Antonella's classes.

The Hertbeats classes are at Westminster Lodge on Mondays at 2.30 and at the Harpenden Leisure Centre on Wednesdays at 1.00.

Antonella's other classes include:

Group classes:

Batchwood	Tuesday 11.30 am
London Colney	Wednesday 11.00 am
Harpenden	Wednesday 1.00 pm

Gym classes

Harpenden	Monday 12.20 to 13.50 and Friday 12.30 to 14.00
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Brian York

WESTMINSTER LODGE

Monday 2.30 to 3.30, £3.40 per session held in Dance Studio 2

(Note free parking for the first two hours but you must display a ticket on windscreen)

Numbers for the last 9 weeks to 6th November 2017 -

Highest 15, lowest 9, averaged at 12

If any member is interested in joining our happy friendly class please contact me for a chat on 01727 852610 or email cjh@stalbansherts.myzen.co.uk.

Christine Hill

JERSEY FARM

Our year of exercise and fun is nearing its end and heading towards the Christmas break. The final session will be on December 19th and we go again on January 2nd. For those of you who are currently not part of our group but are thinking of joining us for some exercise and fun, we meet for an hour at 6pm on Tuesdays at the Jersey Farm Community Centre in St Brelades Place AL4 9RG, where we are loosely controlled by Jacquie, a very experienced instructor who's been with us for many years. We undertake a variety of exercises, mainly aerobic and waving weights around. The hall we use is very

large and we have plenty of room for more members. Each session costs £4 on the night, there's free off-road parking, and we're only twenty yards from Tesco and the pub, should you want to make a night of it (and some of our members occasionally do). If you are interested and want to find out more, give me a ring, the number's on the back page.

Tony Day

HERTFORDSHIRE HEALTH WALKS

The present brochure from Hertfordshire Health Walks outlines the free, regular and volunteer-led walks offered across Hertfordshire up to the end of December 2017. The brochures for the first three months of 2018 will be available soon. The present brochures are available from Doctors' surgeries as well as Information Points at St Albans District Council and Harpenden Council offices. On-line information is at the website:

hertfordshire.gov.uk/healthwalks, or telephone 01992 588433.

If you are a twitterer try: **twitter.com/hertshealthwalk.**

The shortest walks are 20-30minutes [A] on flat and even ground. Longer walks take up to 90 minutes [C]. Health Walks are an ideal way of taking exercise. The brochure notes they are suitable for all ages and abilities; they are local, short and free. Other points are they are social – you meet people – and all walks are led by trained volunteers.

Here are some of the walks listed in our immediate area:

Highfield Park: Charters Health Club car park, Hill End Lane [Opposite Spar]. AL4 0DB: Walks a week: Every Monday 9.30am [not Dec 25th or Jan 1st!], or every Tuesday at 1.30pm: About 60 minutes [B]. Local transport and refreshments available.

Hatching Green: Redbourn Lane, Harpenden AL5 2JP: Parking on side road: Every Thursday at 10.30am. About 90 minutes with slopes [C]. Local transport with refreshments nearby.

Greenwood Park: Meet at Greenwood Park Community Centre, Tippendell Lane, Chiswell Green, AL2 3HW. Every Friday at 2pm: About 60 minutes [B].

Wheathampstead: Meet at the public car park behind The Bull, East Lane, AL4 8BL:

Every Tuesday at 10.30am First steps plus B to C - up to one hour. Local transport and refreshments nearby

If it is your first walk get a reference number from the web-site or turn up 10 minutes early to see the group leader. Good shoes or boots needed, plus wet-weather clothing, in case. It is recommended one carries a bottle of water.

Love to Dance?

A Hertbeats Member handed me a leaflet for 'Love to Dance?' at the last Meeting. Apparently, no partner is required! The blurb then goes on: 'Discover this exciting programme of multiple dance styles. It notes that classes run weekly and are delivered in a fun and friendly atmosphere by experienced and qualified teachers. There is a list of places given such as St Albans and Harpenden, but no specific venues. Sponsors are noted as Hertfordshire C.C., Saracens Sport Foundation and Herts Sports Partnership. For more information, the brochure says: 'Visit our website for times and venues, or call **01707 284229**'. The website is: **lovetodance.org.uk** or email: **info@lovetodance.org.uk**.

John Versey

OUT AND ABOUT - TRAVEL

Our last Outing for this year was to the Dominion Theatre in London to see "An American in Paris", which was a brilliant fusion of Broadway musicals and modern ballet built around some of the Gershwin's best known songs and eye catching staging which moved the show along at a cracking pace.

I promised in the last *Hearts and Minds* to keep you up to date with the plans for next year's Outings which the Committee agreed to at our last Meeting. The brief details of the planned Outings are:

"Hedda Gabler" at Milton Keynes - Wednesday, 28th February 2018

Please note that all the tickets have been bought for the Ibsen play and, unfortunately, I cannot accept any further bookings.

"Crazy for You" at Milton Keynes - Wednesday, 21st March 2018

The same situation applies to this Outing as for "Hedda Gabler".

St. Paul's Cathedral and the Postal Museum - Wednesday, 18th April 2018

We will make a visit to St. Paul's in the morning, and in the afternoon travel to the Postal Museum at Mount Pleasant to visit the Galleries covering the history of the postal service, and take a ride on the newly refurbished "Mail Rail". The underground railway was used to carry mail between the main London stations and sorting offices and has now been converted to take passengers as it is no longer used by Royal Mail.



The cost of the outing is £38 per person as we have to pay admission charges for both the Cathedral and the Museum.

"The Case of the Frightened Lady" - Wednesday, 23rd May 2018

The murder mystery is one of Edgar Wallace's most celebrated works. When Inspector Tanner is called to investigate a ruthless murder, he discovers that nothing is what it seems. As he moves closer to the heart of the mystery, he uncovers a closely guarded secret.....

The cost of the outing is £36 per person.

Hughenden and Greys Court - Wednesday, 20th June 2018



Our outing takes us to two National Trust properties. The first is a morning visit to the home of Benjamin Disraeli, and in the afternoon to Greys Court, the picturesque home of the Brunner family. The property also has a series of walled gardens set amid medieval ruins.



The estimated cost of the outing is £12 for National Trust members and £32 for non-members.

The National Stud and Heritage Centre at Newmarket - Wednesday, 18th July 2018



A day in Newmarket and the "Sport of Kings" visiting the National Stud in the morning and learning about the breeding and training of champions, followed by a "Soup and Sandwiches" lunch before a visit to the Heritage Centre, which has been refurbished to incorporate the Horse Racing Museum.

The cost of the outing is £42 per person.

Althorp House - August date to be confirmed.

The home of the Spencer family, with nineteen rooms to discover and their collections of paintings, furniture and china. We will have plenty of time to wander round the Gardens and Arboretum and enjoy a Cream Tea included in the price of the outing.

The estimated cost of the outing is £30 per person.



Flower Show at RHS, Wisley - Wednesday, 5th September 2018

A long overdue return visit to the RHS Gardens at Wisley to coincide with their renowned Flower Show.

The cost of the outing is £22 per person.



Full details of each Outing and a Booking Form will be emailed to everyone on the emailing list well in advance of each Outing. Where I have only been able to give an estimated cost for an Outing, the final cost will be confirmed in the mailing.

Please do not email me to reserve places on Outings in advance of the normal mailings as I can only accept bookings with the booking form and your cheque. The purpose of this article is to give everyone an idea of the forthcoming programme and dates.

If you are not on the mailing list and would like to join us on any of the Outings, please contact me - my details are on the back of the Newsletter.

I wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year and look forward to seeing you on next year's Outings.

Michael Utteridge

IN THE GARDEN

It's now time for the final clearing of the summer display in the borders and prepare for the spring flowering of the bulbs. After removing the old plants go over the ground and dig out the weeds with a hand fork. Any roots left in the soil will lay dormant ready to grow again after the cold weather.

Tulip bulbs can still be planted but do it as soon as possible and plant them deep.

I expect that your patio containers have been prepared, but did you raise them an inch or so from the ground to allow drainage during wet weather? If not, the water may freeze and cause damage to bulbs.

Don't forget to clear the leaves and other rubbish from the pond while the water temperature is still bearable and check any fish protection that there is.

The grass has had its last cut for this year, but to keep it looking tidy for the next few months trim the edges and sweep debris off. Try not to walk on it during frosty or snowy conditions.

Scan the seed catalogues to select next year's display. The easier way to obtain plants is to buy plugs from the local nurseries or from firms like Gardening Direct or any seed sellers. I use this method regularly, but I don't advise buying the smallest seedlings, especially if your fingers are like mine, tree trunks.

Keep the birds well fed over winter and make sure that boxes are ready for new nests.

I hope you enjoy Christmas and the New Year.

Bill Whitehead

Hertbeats Post-Christmas Dinner

An announcement was made in an earlier issue of *Herts and Minds* that the Committee had decided that it would be better to have a Dinner in the 'quieter month' of January as so many people have so many commitments in the run-up to Christmas!

A Dinner has been arranged for Thursday, January 11th 2018, at Woollams, Harpenden Road - the venue for previous successful events. Plenty of parking available.

Time: 7pm for 7.30pm. A welcome drink of Prosecco, or soft alternative, will be offered.

Menu: A two course dinner has been arranged.

First course: A turkey dinner with usual trimmings. A vegetarian option will be available.

Second Course: Chocolate Orange Roulade or Ice Cream.
Tea/Coffee.

A bar will be available for other drinks purchased.

Cost: Hertbeats Members: £20 per person. Guests: £25 per person.

A flyer is enclosed in this issue of Hearts and Minds. This should be completed and sent to Dave Tarrant, Treasurer, 22 Gresford Close, St Albans, Herts, AL4 0UB.

Cheques payable to Hertbeats.

In the meantime

~ Merry Christmas ~

Recipes

Now the wintery weather is upon us, why not try these easy soup recipes to warm the body. They take no time to prepare and cook, taste delicious and freeze beautifully for future use. A lot of recipes advise to cook all the vegetables in oil first. I have found that this method adds nothing to the flavour of the finished result, only adding extra calories and time to the cooking. Why not freeze any leftover Christmas turkey bones and meat to make a great stock for use at a later date?

Celery and Blue Cheese Soup

1 head of celery
1 onion
1 small potato
1 teaspoon fennel seeds (optional)
1 pint stock or water
75 grams (3 ounces) blue cheese (St Agur is good)
Seasoning

Wash and roughly chop the celery, including the green leaves, and place in a saucepan with the chopped onion, potato, fennel seeds (if using) and stock. Marigold powdered vegetable stock is very good but stock cubes are fine. If using just water, more seasoning may be needed. Bring to the boil then simmer till cooked (about 20 minutes). Remove from the heat, add the cheese then blitz with a hand-held blender or liquidizer. Taste and adjust seasoning if necessary.

Serve and enjoy with good bread.

Mildly Curried Butternut Squash Soup

1 butternut squash
1 onion
1 small can coconut cream
1 tablespoon mild curry powder
1.5 pints stock or water
Salt and pepper if necessary.

The hardest part of this recipe is peeling and chopping the squash! Discard the pips and place the flesh in a saucepan with the diced onion, spices and stock. Bring to the boil then add the coconut cream, and simmer for 20 minutes or so. Blitz and adjust seasoning: it will probably need salt and pepper. Delicious if served with a swirl of mango chutney and naan bread for a take on curry night.

An alternative is to use 1 kilo of carrots instead of the squash.

Frances Tarrant

NHS NEWS

Problems with the non-urgent ambulance service

As reported elsewhere in the newsletter, problems have arisen with the patient ambulance service provided by a private company. They have now given up the contract and, as a temporary measure until a new contract is awarded, the East of England Ambulance NHS Trust together with volunteer car drivers have maintained this service which appears to be working well.

NHS Community Trust News

Faced with a significant reduction in the money it receives from the Clinical Commissioning Group to provide a wide range of NHS Community services in this area, the Hertfordshire Community NHS Trust has had a major rethink about the way it provides these. For example, the Rapid Response team is now subsumed into working within the whole staff team, which has an aim of reducing the number of patients needing to go to local hospitals for A&E and acute care – known as “Prevention of Admissions”

My thanks go to Charlie Cadogan of the Trust for providing us with the following statement:

The most important message is that the Community services are renamed, and have transformed over the summer to be working smarter for our patients and GPs. We will be more responsive to those we serve, more proactive in patient care and case management, and have become leaner to align with our new resourcing. We go live today [6th November], and so far the teams are using the new processes well. We welcome thoughts and ideas, and look forward to meaningful reporting to patient groups and GPs.

John Blandford

DID YOU KNOW?

- Only two words in English end in ‘gry’: angry and hungry.
- ‘Princes’ is the only word which can be made singular by adding an ‘s’: princess.
- Two words which have no rhyming words in English are ‘diamond’ and ‘pint’.
- Glow-worms are not worms, they are beetles.
- There is no word in Albanian for headache. [Unless you are an Old Albanian and get kicked in the head playing rugby!]
- Venetian blinds were invented in Japan.
- A hybrid of a zebra and a donkey is a zeedonk.
- Panino is the singular of panini. There is no such word as ‘paninis’ in the Italian language.
- ‘The five boxing wizards jump quickly’ contains all 26 letters of the alphabet.
- The Hawaiian language has only 12 letters, and no word in Hawaiian ends in a consonant.
- Sixty-six countries, including America, have English as their official language.

OFFICERS & COMMITTEE MEMBERS – 2016/2017

HONORARY OFFICERS

LIFE PRESIDENT	Brian Gibson	01727 859127
LIFE VICE-PRESIDENTS	Dr John Bayliss Dr John Versey	01582 764852
VICE PRESIDENTS	Dr Masood Khan Dr Philip Moore Dr Niall Keenan	

OFFICERS

CHAIRMAN	Brian York chairman@hertbeats.org.uk	01727 854072
TREASURER	Dave Tarrant treasurer@hertbeats.org.uk	01727 858396
SECRETARY	Roger Miller secretary@hertbeats.org.uk	01727 766278

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CARE AND WELFARE	Ann Gibson	01727 859127
MONTHLY SPEAKERS	Jim Green speakers@hertbeats.org.uk	01727 830191
INFORMATION & PUBLICITY	Brian Gibson Gareth Huxtable publicity@hertbeats.org.uk	01727 859127 01582 768004
REHAB LIAISON TALKS	Dave Tarrant	01727 858396
TRIPS AND VISITS	Michael Utteridge tripsandvisits@hertbeats.org.uk	07931 342808
TRAVEL INSURANCE COLLATOR	Jean Sharpe	01727 838193
NHS LIAISON	John Blandford (Co-opted)	01727 859913
AND...	June Gibbs	01582 763526

EXERCISE CO-ORDINATORS

MAPLE UNIT	exercise@hertbeats.org.uk	
WESTMINSTER LODGE	Brian York	01727 854072
HARPENDEN & BATCHWOOD	Christine Hill	01727 852610
JERSEY FARM	Antonella McMillin Tony Day	01582 715615 01727 866751

OTHER ACTIVITIES

GOLF SOCIETY	Vernon Clough golf@hertbeats.org.uk	01582 713080
HERTBEATS WALKS	Ed Jones walks@hertbeats.org.uk	01727 850165 07745 295691
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Please send contributions for the next issue to me by **15th January at the latest** – if possible as **Word** or **Excel** attachments rather than embedded in emails. Thank you.