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



Summer 2020

From the Editor, Steve Gledhill

Sadly Hertbeats events are not happening except for exercise classes online. On page 11 you can read about the classes and Zoom video conferencing. They are run by our regular instructor since 2004, Antonella McMillin, a Phase IV Cardiac Rehabilitation Exercise Instructor (photo on right).



To keep in touch with our club join the Hertbeats **WhatsApp group**, to join send an email to **whats@hertbeats.org.uk**. Also visit our website which is regularly updated to give news items **www.hertbeats.org.uk**.

I am guilty of nepotism! One of my daughters took the cover rainbow photo from her flat in Erith which overlooks the Thames, near the Dartford crossing.

Minimising the risk of a serious virus infection



Graham Phillips of 'ProLongevity' had been booked to give a talk to Hertbeats in September. I asked him to write a short piece for 'Hearts & Minds'. He writes:

The better your immune system, the lower your chance of getting COVID-19 and the higher your chance of making an uneventful recovery.

More Sleep: Getting eight-hours sleep is the best way to prepare your immune system and it is effective within a day or two.

Exercise: Walking is healthy and helps with immunity. If you can do a few minutes of brisk walking (get properly puffed) so much the better.

Diet: Eat the Rainbow! Eat vegetables with lots of colours and lots of variety. A rich and varied diet will be very beneficial. Banish sugars, carbohydrates and processed foods, this will also minimise the risk of diabetes.

Stress relief: Stress raises cortisol which in turn raises blood sugar and blood pressure. Focus on whatever stressbusters work best for you and apply it whenever you can.

Vitamins: Supplements are no substitute for a healthy diet. Most people will benefit from supplementing Vitamin D and Vitamin C in high doses. Both Magnesium and Selenium are worth considering.

Keep Taking the Tablets. Ignore the social media scare-stories about paracetamol, ibuprofen and some blood-pressure medicines. In particular if your GP prescribes medication for a long-term condition don't miss any doses. Do discuss any concerns with your pharmacist.

News from Chairman Brian York

For reasons of space, the current situation affecting us all and the need to include in this Newsletter my Chairman's Report, which would have gone to our postponed AGM, this report is very brief. All Hertbeats' normal activities are suspended. Our lives are dominated by regulations and efforts to avoid the virus.

Hertbeats has made a donation of £500 to support staff looking after patients fighting the virus mainly at Watford General Hospital. We have received thank you messages from Drs Sehmi and Khan (Vice-Presidents/Cardiologists).

If you need help in any way please contact:

Herts Help on 0300 123 4044, or Communities First 020 8386 4006.

I hope you are in a 'buddying' group keeping in touch with some of your Hertbeats' friends.

As I write, we are just about to celebrate VE Day. We can win. We will resume Hertbeats normal activities as soon as we can.

Above all keep safe, stay well and, as always in Hertbeats, be kind.

Our Chairman sends the following which was widely spread on social media.

And the People Stayed Home, a prose poem by Kitty O'Meara

And the people stayed home.

And read books, and listened, and rested,

and exercised, and made art, and played games, and learned new ways of being, and were still.

And listened more deeply.

Some meditated, some prayed, some danced.

Some met their shadows.

And the people began to think differently.

And the people healed.

And, in the absence of people living in ignorant,

dangerous, mindless, and heartless ways,

the earth began to heal.

And when the danger passed, and the people joined together again, they grieved their losses, and made new choices, and dreamed new images, and created new ways to live and heal the earth fully, as they had been healed.

Chairman's AGM Report Brian York

Under our constitution this report should have been made to the AGM in May. Due to limitations on Hertbeats' activities, this year it is appearing first in this Newsletter. We do not know when we will be able to hold the 2020 AGM.

During 2019 and until late February 2020 all Hertbeats' activities were thriving. There were important developments. For example Graham Imber (taking over from me) essentially filled all four exercise classes held in the Maple Unit at the hospital and began a fifth course on Monday evenings.

Our website was rejuvenated by Steve Gledhill, who also took over editorship of *Hearts and Minds*. From the April/May 2020 edition this is now printed in colour in an exciting format.

Holding a post-Christmas lunch (as opposed to a dinner) was highly successful at a new venue, the *Plough and Harrow*, and organised by Jim and Doris Green. Jim continues to do a tremendous amount of work for Hertbeats including arranging all speakers for meetings. The lunches and dinners at Oaklands College, organised by Rita Atkins, have continued to thrive.

In February all Hertbeats' activities came to a halt due to the Corona Virus pandemic. Hertbeats set up 'buddying groups' to enable us to stay in contact with Hertbeats' friends and near neighbours, and helped with information on how to get help. Nevertheless the Hertbeats Committee has kept going as best we could. In particular, given our sound financial position with receipt of public body grants to us since 2015, a grant of £500 was made to support NHS staff working with COVID-19 patients, essentially at Watford General Hospital.

Since 2016 Hertbeats has received £5,000 (£1,000 each year) from the Herts Community Foundation to support our activities. It has also allowed the annual subscription to be kept at £7.50. That grant has now ended. If members know of sources of future possible grants, please let the Committee know.

Committee members, with a few additional people, provide the *heart* of Hertbeats. Without them we could achieve little. However, a concern since the AGM of 2018, has been to find a sufficient number of members to take on responsibilities for Hertbeats' activities. During the last year the Committee has lost the membership of stalwarts Michael Utteridge and Gareth Huxtable, though the latter continues to do sterling work for Hertbeats in publicity and NHS liaison. Michael gave notice that 2020 would be his last in organising outings. Despite appeals for a successor, no members have come forward.

Without a volunteer our outings have probably come to an end. Our Life Vice-President John Versey has retired from attending Committee meetings. His outstanding work for Hertbeats over two decades and more was recognised at the New Year's lunch with the presentation of a heart-shaped bowl by Brian Gibson, our Life-President. June Gibbs has announced her intention to stand down from the Committee at the AGM. We thank them all for their contributions to Hertbeats.

However, new blood has been co-opted on to the Committee: Graham Imber, Elaine O'Brien (who has become Minutes Secretary) and Trevor Gurd. It is hoped that you will make them elected members at the AGM whenever it can be held. At least two other members have volunteered.







Graham Imber

Elaine O'Brien

Trevor Gurd.

Special mention should be made of the extensive work of the Secretary and Treasurer, key roles for any organisation. We all recognise the energy and breadth of Roger Miller's organisational work. Dave Tarrant over the last 10 years has been meticulous, detailed – and humorous - in husbanding our finances which he made and retained in such a healthy state.



Dave gave a year's notice at the 2019 AGM that he would be stepping down in spring 2020. He is still in post temporarily and our thanks go to him. Rowena D'Rosario (photo on left) volunteered to take over as Treasurer.

I am sure she will get your support at the AGM.

If re-elected as chairman at this year's AGM, this will be my last year as I will be standing down next year. I cannot recall offhand how long I have been in the chair (7or 8 years?). I shall shortly be entering my 80th year and still have one or two health issues. If anyone is able to take on the chairmanship before May 2021, please do let me know.

Finally at this time of writing, May 2020, please stay safe, keep well and be kind.

Treasurer Report, Dave Tarrant

With the absence of an AGM to discuss the accounts, I am unfortunately having to bore you in writing instead.

For those of you who have never attended our AGMs I will briefly explain our three bank accounts.

- 1. Main Account This is supported by our membership income together with members giving a little extra to help with costs. Expenditure covers the rent of the hall, together with speaker costs for our monthly meetings. Magazine costs relate to the cost of printing the magazine plus postage and stationery. Planned other costs include one off expenditure such as print cartridges, postage, stationery and gifts such as flowers or long-service awards. The costs have been offset by the surplus that Michael Utteridge has managed to obtain from the deals he has arranged for the outings.
- 2. Exercise Account Revenue is made of fees from the members who participate in the sessions. Expenditure comes from the rental of the Maple Unit from the NHS together with payments to the various qualified leaders who take the sessions. The golf section is self-financing and is run with true efficiency by Vernon Clough and gives me no extra work at all.
- 3. **Deposit Account**. Income is derived mainly from personal, or company (Waitrose) donations together with any grants that we have received. Costs are items relating to publicity, social events, and one-off third party gifts and donations, which are analysed for supporting our grants.

Main Account figures show this to be a very good year with a surplus of over £1000. Thanks to the members of our committee who have worked hard to keep costs well below our budgeted figures. Special thanks should go to Jim Green, John Versey, Roger Miller, and of course Michael Utteridge.

Exercise Account shows a deficit of £338 which has been increased due to the abrupt stoppage of sessions due to the current virus problems. This deficit would have been considerably higher but for the excellent work of Graham Imber, who during the year took over the running of the exercise sessions and during his time had brought the existing classes to a maximum capacity and had to start a brand new session on Monday evenings, and was in the process of making that, pay its way.

It was anticipated that this year the exercise account would have broken even, and possibly made a surplus, which in my ten years as treasurer has never occurred before.

I have often been asked why we continued to fund the exercise sessions at a deficit.

My response, and also that of the committee, is that Hertbeats was formed so that those members who have heart problems can continue to exercise in a comfortable, friendly and -perhaps more importantly - understanding of members' requirements.

Our auditor, Stephen Lindsay, has reviewed the figures over the past year and has expressed his belief that they are a true and accurate record. He has also stated that Hertbeats should have sufficient reserves to cover the impact of Coronavirus.

Steve has agreed to remain as auditor for the coming year. Many thanks.

I have been on the committee for ten years as the club's treasurer and have decided to step down and let younger blood look after the finances.

I am very pleased to announce that as soon as lockdown has been loosened Rowena D'Rosario will be taking over the treasury function.

I thank you for being "interested" listeners to my diatribes over the years and I know you will give Rowena the support that you so kindly gave me.

| | | Total Bank / | Cash Book Balances | | |
|---------------------|------------------|-----------------|---------------------------|-----------------|-----------|
| | | Bank | | | Cash book |
| Total Bank Balance | 31/03/2019 | £12,593. | Total Cash Book Balance | 31/03/2019 | £4,653.54 |
| Total Bank Balance | 31/03/2020 | £11,383. | Total Cash Book Balance | 31/03/2020 | £6,313.53 |
| Movement in period: | : Increase/(Decr | rease) -£1,210. | Movement in period: Incre | ease/(Decrease) | £1,659.99 |

| | | Main Account | | | |
|----------------|--------------|-----------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Period | | 31/03/2020 | £ | £ | |
| | 12 Months | | Bank | Provision | Cash Book |
| Balances Bro | ught Forwa | rd 01/04/2019 | £8,395.46 | £5,268.00 | £3,127.46 |
| Income | | | | | |
| Membership: | -382 paid u | members | | | £2,865.00 |
| Donations to | costs | | | | £112.00 |
| Expenditure | | | | | |
| Meetings | | | | | £532.22 |
| Magazine Cos | sts | | | | £1,394.80 |
| Outings | | | | | £392.50 |
| Planned/Othe | r Costs | | | | -£341.70 |
| | | | | | £5,268.00 |
| Surplus/(Defic | cit) in Year | | | | £1,100.78 |
| NET Amounts | received th | is Period re ne | xt Period | £959.45 | |
| | | | | | |
| Balances Ca | rried Forwa | rd 31/03/2020 | 5187.69 | 959.45 | 4,228.24 |
| | | | Bank | Provision | Cash Book |

Accounts Summary



| | | Exercise Accoun | ıt | | |
|-----------|-------------------|-------------------------|-----------|----------------|----------------|
| Pe | eriod to #REF! | 31/03/2020 | £ Bank | £ Provision | £ Cash Book |
| Balances | Brought Forw | vard 01/04/2019 | £2,392.51 | £2,672.00 | -£279.49 |
| Income | | | | | |
| Members | hip. | | | | £8,446.00 |
| Expendit | ure | | | | |
| Gym Ren | tal | | | | £1,750.00 |
| Instructo | r Costs | | | | -£7,035.00 |
| Golf Mov | ement | | | | £0.79 |
| Amounts | Paid this Year | re Last Year | | | -£338.21 |
| Surplus/(| Deficit) in Year | Deficit prior Virus £69 | | | -£338.21 |
| Amounts | to be Paid Nex | t Period re This Period | | -£4,110.50 | |
| Ralances | Carried Forwa | ord 34/03/2020 | £3,492.80 | £4 110 50 | -£617.70 |
| Daidlices | carried Forwa | 114 31/03/2020 | Bank | | Cash Book |

| | Deposit Account | | |
|-----------------------|-------------------------------|-----------|-----------|
| Period to | 31/03/2020 | | |
| Bank & Cash Book B | alances Brought Forward 01/04 | /2019 | £1,805.57 |
| Prior Year Member D | Oonation Included above | £268.00 | |
| Movement in Year to | date | | |
| Waitrose Donations | +Donation V Pearson | | £1,040.00 |
| Publicity Costs (inc. | Web Costs £85) | | -£857.86 |
| Christmas, Strawber | ry Evening. Costs | | -£153.55 |
| Interest | | | £0.83 |
| Community Garden | | -£132.00 | |
| St Albans Funding | | £1,000.00 | |
| Bank & Cash Book B | 2020 | £2,702.99 | |

Secretary Report, Roger Miller

Current Membership. As at 9th May 2020 Hertbeats membership stands at 381, a reduction of 7 members.

New Members. Since the last newsletter our only new member is Anthony Askham. It is unfortunate that he joined just as we have been forced to cancel all our activities. I hope he can hang in there until we return to normal.

Annual Membership Renewals 1st April 2020. I had assumed that the lock down would provide lots of spare time to catch up on the admin. However some 209 (58%) of renewal fees are still outstanding which comes as a surprise. An email reminder was sent out 7th May so I am hopeful that the renewals will now come in thick and fast. A printed reminder will be included with this Hearts & Minds for any fees still outstanding at the time of the posting of the newsletter. Apologies for any that "cross in the post".

'All that Jazz' by Brian York

Ron Brown does a very efficient job opening, arranging and closing St Mary's Church Hall for Hertbeats' monthly group meetings. You may not know that Ron, Ivy Pearson and I regularly attend the Mid-Herts Jazz Orchestra concerts in the Sandridge Rovers FC pavilion. Ron usually does the driving.

For the concert last November Ron arranged to pick Ivy and me up. I waited outside my house (in the cold) for fifteen minutes but there was no sign of Ron. I was getting worried because he is always on time so I drove to his house to find his car outside. After considerable knocking on the door Ron appeared looking rather weary, but all was well. He had fallen asleep watching the TV, an experience which most of us have probably had!

By this time It was just after 8.00pm when the concert was due to begin! I drove to Sandridge as fast as speed limits would allow! Every parking space was full!.

We could hear the orchestra, which at 17 strong is extremely loud, but the door to the Hall was accidentally locked. Ron set off around the building to try to alert someone inside.

Meanwhile Ivy and I were enduring the cold, but discovered a door bell to ring. There was no reaction from inside the Hall. 'We'll have to wait until the music stops', I suggested. When it did, we pressed the bell continuously and eventually

someone appeared. At last all three of us got into the warm to be greeted by taunts of 'where have you been?' The band leader was more welcoming as we filled up the back row.

Ron by now was fully awake and went off to get the beer, but for himself and Ivy he returned with hot coffee instead of his usual half of Guinness — and followed by the barman carrying my shandy. After that we just enjoyed the jazz (including one piece by my favourite British jazz musician, the late Johnny Dankworth).

For future concerts beforehand we telephone Ron to ensure that he hasn't got the TV on! Ron is a lovely man and Hertbeats' member!

Exercise Classes – Where Next?

Report from *Graham Imber, Hertbeats Committee member for exercise*I hope you've all been keeping fit and healthy over the past few weeks.

I'm sure many of you have been doing your best to continue to exercise using the many TV and online sessions that have sprung up. I have mainly relied on vigorous gardening and walking. Fortunately the time of year is on our side and it's been lovely to get outside.

I'm sure you'll appreciate that external factors will continue to dictate what when and how our classes restart. In general terms though the criteria for restarting will depend largely on where the classes are held.

Daytime classes are all hosted at Leisure Centres around the district and as they are mostly not organised by Hertbeats they will likely restart when those leisure centres reopen in accordance with the prevailing safety guidelines.

The evening classes at The Maple Unit will only restart once we are satisfied that the normal Cardiac Rehab classes run by the hospital have safely restarted. You could temporarily try a daytime class if they restart before the Maple classes. Sarah Claridge, who normally takes the Wednesday Maple class, will send you, free of charge, an on-line exercise regime to be done at your leisure via a phone, tablet or PC app called PhysioApp. You can get details by emailing Sarah on info@meadowphysioandpilates.com with your name and age.

Antonella McMillin who takes the daytime classes has recently launched a paid for online exercise class via Zoom for Hertbeats members, see page 11.

Please note these programmes/classes are not covered by Heartbeats insurance so are at your own risk.

Whatever methods you use to keep yourself fit and healthy keep on doing it!!

Antonella's Zoom Cardiac Fitness Classes

Antonella has taken our cardiac fitness classes at Harpenden, Batchwood and London Colney for many years starting way back in 2004. Her classes are continuing now online using Zoom video conferencing which is now all the rage. It's very simple to participate as long as you have a computer with a loudspeaker. A microphone is optional so you can chat to the participants before the work begins. To participate you simply send her an email at antonellamcm@aol.com asking to join and on what date. The cost for a one hour session is £5.00 – you pay by bank transfer. There are typically a dozen participants.

You enter the 'Meeting ID' and Password: at the start you see a screen like the one on the right. Antonella is top left and you and your colleagues can be seen. You may use bottles or cans of beans instead of weights.



When the classes begin you switch view on your computer screen and Antonella is displayed in full screen, the others are "thumbnails". She speaks the instructions and shows you what to do.

There are three classes a week. Other groups such as Probus join in.

The Thursday class is mainly for Hertbeats. Anyone can join.



Tuesday 12.00 noon Thursday 11.00 am Friday 11.00 am

Contact Antonella, it's easy and fun and keeps you fit!



Outings to Look Forward to

A number of interesting outings had been booked for this summer and it is hoped to book them again when possible

Unfortunately the outing to view the Tutankhamun Exhibition at the Saatchi Gallery in London may never happen again. It was held to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the discovery of Tutankhamun's tomb, and was billed as the final chance to see the artefacts before they return to Egypt forever.

The Saatchi website states, "With regards to potentially re-opening, we will continue to monitor the situation closely and take our guidance from the government and Public Health England." Who knows?



Three outings to look forward to. Fingers crossed!

- Ham House: A stunning National Trust property near Richmond-upon-Thames.
- Thames cruise from Windsor followed by a visit to Bekonscot Model Village
- City of Ely: See the city with scheduled visit to Oliver Cromwell's House and tour of the cathedral

If you are not on the email list advising of all future outings please contact Michael Utteridge, Tel: 07931 342808, email: outings@hertbeats.org.uk

Golf Society, Vernon Clough



Sadly the Golf Society Spring meeting had to be cancelled, hopes now live with an Autumn meeting. Here is a photo of a Spring meeting about seven years ago - a combined group of Hertbeats and Heart-to-Herts members.

Vernon writes, "If you are lucky enough to have a garden, have a few swings from time to time and even practice a little chipping from an old door mat.

The photo on the previous page was taken on the occasion of the Golf Society's 10th anniversary in 2013. Hard to believe it was that long ago! Heart-to-Herts (H2H) is the Hemel Hempstead cardiac support group with whose golf section we joined forces.

Happy days, even though sadly some of our members are no longer with us." If you would like to know more about the golf society do please contact Vernon Clough Tel: 01582 713080 or email: golf@hertbeats.org.uk

Recipes, Frances Tarrant

Medley of summer vegetables

This is a simple and delicious use of fresh vegetables which goes with salmon, barbecued meats or simply on toast with crumbled feta.

Ideally all the vegetables should be fresh but frozen peas and broad beans are

excellent.

Ingredients

- Runner beans chopped
- Peas podded
- Broad beans podded
- Plenty of fresh chopped mint
- Vinaigrette



Vinaigrette is made with 1 tsp Dijon mustard, 1 tsp honey, 1 tsp balsamic vinegar, pinch of sea salt, 2 tbs olive oil, 1 tbs water and a crushed clove of garlic if liked.

Cook the vegetables separately in lightly salted water. Drain and skin the broad beans revealing the bright green bean inside, a fiddly job but well worth doing. Mix the vegetables together and whilst still warm stir in the vinaigrette and mint. Serve warm or at room temperature.

Walking Group



Ed Jones sent an email to the group, "I noticed the Zoom exercise classes, which is great news, but Zoom walks are tricky!!

Tina and I went on the Childwickbury walk, the rhododendrons are out in full bloom and it is a magnificent sight! See photo.

You can park in Toulmin Drive St Albans and walk there or just drive into Childwickbury and walk around the estate."

Ed's photos and many others are on the Hertbeats website. Select the **Activities** menu and then **Walking Group**.

Doris Carwell-Cooke



Doris Carwell-Cooke, who was a Hertbeats member, died recently. Her granddaughter, Tami, wrote to Hertbeats.

"My nan, Doris, passed away in Devon on the 4th April. She moved from Sandridge in 2014 due to increasing frailty that old age can bring about. I was very close to my nan and so she came to live in a nearby residential home where I live in Devon."

When she was in Sandridge she attended Heartbeats. She used to enjoy coming to your gatherings and she is the lady holding the cheque in your picture of people in red T-shirts on your website!"

We have found the photo referred to and cropped to highlight Doris.

Doris' family have made a donation to Hertbeats in her memory. The club has thanked them and offered our condolences.

In the Garden, Bill Whitehead

"It's always a good time to do something in the garden" writes Bill. Here are his wise bits of advice,

- For those of you with tomato seedlings already, now is a great time to start hardening them off by bringing them outside in the day and inside at night for a week or two if you plan to grow them outside.
- Continue to gradually increase their pot size as well, burying the stem up to the lower leaves, especially if they are 'leggy' from not being in bright light.
- If you don't have a pot, you can cut a milk carton in half just remember to poke holes in the bottom of anything you use for the water to drain out.
- If you're looking to start something new from seed for your garden, now is the perfect time to sow beans, either direct in the soil or in little pots (even loo roll will do) ready to plant out next to a bamboo cane or similar for support in a couple of weeks.
- Something really simple you can grow at any time indoors even without soil
 or compost are cress from seed. You can use any shallow container, just
 dampen some paper towel and scatter the seeds onto it, keeping it moist (a
 clear lid is useful) until they germinate; enjoy on your egg sandwiches!

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.

The group is run by volunteers and is guided by a committee. 'Additionally there are a number of Honorary Officers. Life President is Brian Gibson and Life Vice-President Dr John Versey. Cardiac consultants Dr Masood Khan, Dr Philip Moore and Dr Johan Sehmi are Vice-Presidents with Dr John Bayliss (retired) a Life Vice-President.

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

Hertbeats Volunteers

Principal Committee Members

| Time par committee internacio | | | | | | |
|-------------------------------|---------------------|--------------|----------------------------|-----------------|--|--|
| | Chairman | Brian York | chairman@hertbeats.org.uk | 01727 854072 | | |
| | Secretary | Roger Miller | secretary@hertbeats.org.uk | 01727 766278 | | |
| 1 | Treasurer | Dave Tarrant | treasurer@hertbeats.org.uk | 01727 858396 | | |
| | Speakers | Jim Green | speakers@hertbeats.org.uk | 01727 830191 | | |
| | Exercise Classes | Graham Imber | exercise@hertbeats.org.uk | 01727 834907 | | |

Committee Members

| Care and Welfare | Ann Gibson | 01727 859127 |
|------------------|-------------|--------------|
| Travel Insurance | Jean Sharpe | 01727 838193 |
| Trusted Traders | Jean Sharpe | 01727 838193 |
| Committee Member | June Gibbs | 01582 763526 |

Organisers

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publicity@hertbeats.org.uk

Outings Michael Utteridge 07931 342808

outings@hertbeats.org.uk

Website & Newsletter Steve Gledhill 07785 381912

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Please send your contributions for the next issue by 15th August 2020 to editor@hertbeats.org.uk