

HFR are back on track to cover off-road events thanks to Friends

Donation allowed Hart First Response to buy ambulance

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COMMUNITY fundraisers have ensured a vital first aid ambulance charity can continue to help save lives.

Friends of Fleet Hospital has donated £10,000 to Hart First Response (HFR) so it could buy a 4x4 Land Rover Defender ambulance and provide driver training.

HFR is a first aid charity based in Fleet with 20 active members providing ambulance and first aid cover to about 70 events each year across the local community. Events range from village fairs to motor sport practice days and races.

A spokesman for the charity said: "HFR is run entirely on voluntary donations of time and money and to be given a donation such as this allows the continuation of our capability and level of care we give to our patients.

"Over the course of a

year, HFR expect to treat around 150 patients which will include participants in off-road adventure racing, orienteering and horse-riding tournaments.

"The replacement Land Rover ambulance allows us better and faster access to patients that sustain injuries on terrain inaccessible to the other HFR ambulances, allowing treatment to be delivered more promptly."

HFR's old 1967 Series 2A Land Rover ambulance was decommissioned in 2014 after becoming too unreliable to cover off-road events.

It meant the charity was unable to provide ambulance support at local trail-running, mountain biking and off-road motorbike events.

"This new 4x4 ambulance will also enable HFR to potentially support the NHS in extreme weather events and provide civil emergency cover across Hart," added the spokesman.

"It is already allowing us to support additional community events that are taking place off-road in and around Hart."

Dr Graham Brown, HFR chairman, said: "This fantastic donation will enable HFR to support many local events over the coming years and without the support of the Friends of Fleet Hospital this would simply not have been possible."

Set up in 1972, Friends of Fleet Hospital's primary aim is to provide additional equipment for patients at the Church Road building, above those funded and provided by the NHS.

Purchases have included patient televisions, a clinical chair, hoist and sling, book trolley, blood gas analyser, new garden umbrella, ENT head lamps, scanners, pressure cushions and scales.

A Friends spokesman said: "We were pleased to be able to donate and to

support the Hart First Response in the purchase of their Land Rover.

"Due to our fundraising events and donations we receive it is good that we are able to help support local charities."

Set up in 2001 and becoming a registered charity the following year, all its members are volunteers, ranging in age from 18 to 75, and no one receives payment for their time or skills.

HFR is based in Fleet, trains in Crondall once a week and has members who come from as far away as Tadley.

Most of the events it provides first aid cover for are within 15 miles of Fleet, although it has provided cover for events as far afield as Brighton and Bournemouth.

People interested in volunteering with the charity or who would like to have their event covered by HFR can find out more by visiting www.hartfirstresponse.org.uk.



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