



TICKER NEWS

Official newsletter of the North Gwent Cardiac Rehabilitation & Aftercare Charity

The results are in!

A big thank you to everyone who completed our Member Survey, sent out with the February issue of Ticker News. Here's what we've learned...

We had a really good response to our February Member Survey, so it's taken us a while to sift through all the data. Luckily for us, our Secretary and Trustee Tony Lowery, a former science teacher, has the skills to put it all in context. So he's crunched the numbers and helpfully pulled out the following key conclusions.

1 A whopping 88% of people who answered the survey say they value their cardiac rehab exercise classes either highly, or very highly. That's a big compliment to our instructors, and also clear evidence that we're doing something worthwhile!

2 The social aspect of classes is really important to you, with the majority of people saying they'd value having extra time at the end of classes for a relaxed cuppa and chat. The trustees will be looking into this some more to see what we can do.

3 We thought paying by monthly Direct Debit might be more convenient for you. But it turns out most people prefer to pay on a class-by-class basis, so there'll be no change there!

4 **Ticker News** is very well read. Some 70% of you read the newsletter

from cover to cover, and a further 25% read at least half the stories in each issue. The vast majority of you say you'd prefer to keep getting a printed copy, rather than alternatives such as an email or digital version. So paper it is!

5 We've also learned that, in general, you're not big users of things like Facebook or websites. In fact almost a quarter of you don't have access to the internet. Instead, you get most of your information about our classes and fundraising events from your instructors and the **Ticker News**. That's a really useful finding, and going forward we'll be sending out a monthly briefing to instructors, so they can share all our news with you.

6 And finally, you've told us you'd be keen to attend occasional talks presented by health experts. Most of you say you'd prefer a daytime event, so we're currently looking into venues, topics and speakers. If you have a suggestion, let us know. Otherwise watch this space!

► *If you have any suggestions for ways we can improve our service, please email info@cardiac-rehab.org.uk, call Tony on 07856 692148, or write to us at 56 Holywell Crescent, Abergavenny NP7 5LG.*



Above: our number-crunching Secretary Tony Lowery runs through the key findings of the survey at last month's Trustee meeting

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Mary's Monmouth Coffee Morning

Make a date with friends and head to the beautiful **Monmouth Priory** for the next of our fundraising coffee mornings, organised by our long-time member and supporter Mary Wakeling. Held in the light and airy main hall from 10am-midday, these mornings are always really enjoyable, with good company and delicious home-baked treats. Free entry.

► *The main hall is on the ground floor, with disabled access and WC. On-street parking available.*



Record entries for our Potato Challenge!

We've had record entries for this year's Potato Growing Challenge, with over 120 people signing up and helping us raise a **grand total of £708** (including an extra £78 in donations on top of the £5 entry fee). A big thank you to everyone who has signed up – and of course to the Abergavenny Garden Centre for sponsoring the event and so kindly allowing us to have a stall at the Centre back in March.

But of course the best part is still to come, with the **Grand Reveal and Weigh-in** at the Garden Centre on **24 June**, from 3pm. We've had a slow start to spring, so watering and feeding over the next few weeks will be crucial to success. On the day, remember to cut the leaves off your plants but leave the spuds undisturbed in their pots, ready for the official weigh-in and judging. We can't wait to see the results!



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DATES FOR THE DIARY

Enjoy a fun afternoon at our "Relove Sale"

Looking for a fun way to turn your unwanted nearly-new items into cash? Or do you enjoy hunting out a pre-loved bargain? Either way, our "Relove Sale", at Llanfoist Village Hall on Sunday 21 May, is the place to be.

For sellers...

- Tables cost £10 – but you'll need to be quick, because there are just a few left!
- **To reserve yours, call Suzanne on 07773 101 237 or email info@cardiac-rehab.org.uk.**
- Once you've booked a table, we'll send you some handy tips to make sure your afternoon's a success. And if you email us photos and details of your star buys ahead of the sale, we'll feature the best on our social media to whet buyers' appetites!

For buyers...

- Entry costs £1 (for children under 16 its free).
- Doors open promptly at 1:30pm, with the sale ending at 3:30pm.
- Don't forget to bring cash and your reusable shopping bags!
- Keep an eye on our **Ticker Network** Facebook page as we'll be showcasing some of the star buys in the run up to the sale!

For everyone...

We'll be serving up refreshments all afternoon – so whether you're selling or buying you can reward yourself with a cuppa and delicious piece of cake.



Sarah's trek of a lifetime to raise funds for us!

If you've joined us recently from Phase 3 Cardiac Rehab, you'll probably recognise nurse specialist Sarah Howard, Team Lead for Phase 3 at Abergavenny's Nevill Hall and the Aneurin Bevan Hospital in Ebbw Vale.

But what you might not know is that Sarah's a keen mountain walker. And now she's set herself the challenge of a lifetime, tackling the gruelling Inca Trail in Peru to raise vital funding for our classes.

Sarah's been training for the trek for the past 18 months with her sister Melanie, and the pair will fly out to South America on 12 June.

"The Inca Trail is something I've wanted to do since I was in my early 20s," says Sarah, who also runs the heart failure service in Blaenau Gwent.

"Given my day job is Cardiac Rehab, I know how important it is for heart patients to carry on exercising safely after they leave our hospital-based programme. So it makes sense to use this trip to raise funds for the North Gwent Cardiac Rehabilitation and Aftercare Charity.

"The charity provides an amazing service for people in our region, and the team does it without any NHS money. So I've set myself a target to raise £1,000 for them."

Sarah and Melanie will spend the first few days of their trip acclimatising to the high altitude at the starting point in Cusco. From there, the sisters will trek some 28 miles over four days, taking in high



"The Inca Trail is something I've wanted to do since I was in my early 20s"

cloud forests, thundering waterfalls and ancient Inca ruins. They'll eventually reach a height of 4,200m at the ominously named Dead Woman's Pass before descending into the famed lost city of Machu Picchu.

"The altitude is the big unknown," says Sarah. "I've done a lot of resistance and strength work to build my stamina, and here in the mountains I know I can walk all day long. But at that altitude there's

a lot less oxygen and I don't know how my body will react to that. I just hope I adapt quickly!"

► We'll be following Sarah's progress over the course of the trek and keeping you updated through our Ticker Network, Facebook group.

In the meantime, if you'd like to sponsor her, please visit her **Just Giving** page: <https://tinyurl.com/mr2778y4> or speak to Allen at your next class.



Tim Cross

We have some very sad news: Tim Cross, one of our long-time Monmouth Class members, has passed away after a short illness. Tim joined our classes in 2008, following surgery to repair his aortic valve.

A graduate of the London Business School, Tim spoke Russian and had an amazing career that took him all over the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, teaching marketing and business skills and providing consultancy services.

But he'd begun to find the extensive travelling tiring, so had been winding down his work commitments and, in his words, looking to "put something back". We were delighted when Tim volunteered earlier this year to become a trustee and were really looking forward to having him on our team.

Tim loved learning, and was studying Geology at the Open University, including modules in Physics, Chemistry and Earth Sciences. He also enjoyed creative writing, and we'll miss his occasional contributions to **Ticker News**. Rest in peace Tim.

Sweet tooth? Time to think again...

New research shows that people who eat a lot of sugar are more likely to have a heart attack or stroke and develop serious health conditions including obesity, diabetes, insulin resistance and non-alcoholic fatty liver disease.

So the recommendation for everyone is to consume **NO MORE** than 6 teaspoons (30g) of added sugar per day, and to limit sugar-sweetened drinks to **NO MORE** than one serving (200-355ml) per week.

Sugar occurs naturally in fruits, vegetables, dairy and grains. But the sugar in these kinds of "whole" unprocessed foods is digested slowly and gives a steady supply of energy. Plus these foods provide vitamins, minerals, fibre and antioxidants, which protect cells from damage.

The problem is **added sugar** – the stuff food manufacturers add to virtually all

ultra-processed foods to improve flavour and shelf life. Obvious culprits include soft drinks, sweets, biscuits and cakes. But you'll also find added sugar in everything from canned soups and regular sliced bread, to cured meats, ready-made pasta sauces and even apparently "healthy" options, such as fruit yogurts.

To complicate things further, the added sugar may be listed in the ingredients as fructose, glucose, dextrose and other types of sugar, such as corn syrup or concentrated fruit juice.

That can make it tricky to keep tabs on how much added sugar you're consuming in a day. But an easy way to cut back is to stop adding sugar to tea, coffee and breakfast cereals. You can also switch sugary cereals for plain wholegrain ones,

swap regular squash or soft drinks for the no-added-sugar kind, and opt for natural low-fat yogurt and add your own fresh or frozen fruit.

And of course, as the British Heart Foundation points out, ditching added sugar is a great way to help you maintain a healthy weight. Skip just one teaspoon of sugar a day and in three months you'll have cut 90 teaspoons of sugar and 1,440 calories from your diet. And that's a win all round!

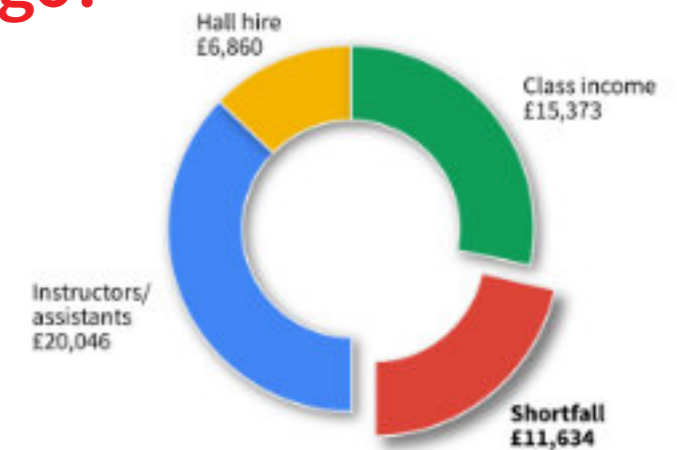


Where do your class fees go?

Ever wondered what happens to the £4 you pay for each class? As you can see from the breakdown opposite, class fees are an essential part of covering our costs – and we're grateful for every penny!

We make up the shortfall through fundraising, donations and grants. But did you know that there are some other really simple ways you can help support our work? Here are just three for starters – and two of them won't cost you a thing!

Class costs and income 2022-2023



1. GIFTAID IT

If you're a UK tax payer, the easiest way to help us raise money is to make sure you complete the **Gift Aid declaration** on your annual membership form. Simply by doing that, you allow us to claim an extra £2.50 a year on your £10 membership, and Gift Aid on any other donations you make to us in the course of the year.



3. SIGN UP TO EASYFUNDRAISING

If you regularly shop online with brands such as Boots, Tesco, M&S, Screwfix and John Lewis, this is a super-simple way to help us raise money at **NO COST** to yourself! Easyfundraising partners with over 7,000 brands who've agreed to donate a small percentage to your chosen charity every time you shop with them through Easyfundraising. It's easy to use, secure, and all you have to do is register on their website and choose us as your good cause. Go to easyfundraising.org.uk to sign up, or visit the **Get Involved** page of our website to find out more.



2. JOIN OUR 200+ CLUB!

This is our Charity lottery, drawn four times a year. There's an annual joining fee of £20 per number and each draw gives you a chance to win one of three cash prizes – £100, £75 or £50. To find out more and download an application form, visit the **Get Involved** page of our website, or call Owen Webber on 07955 257595.