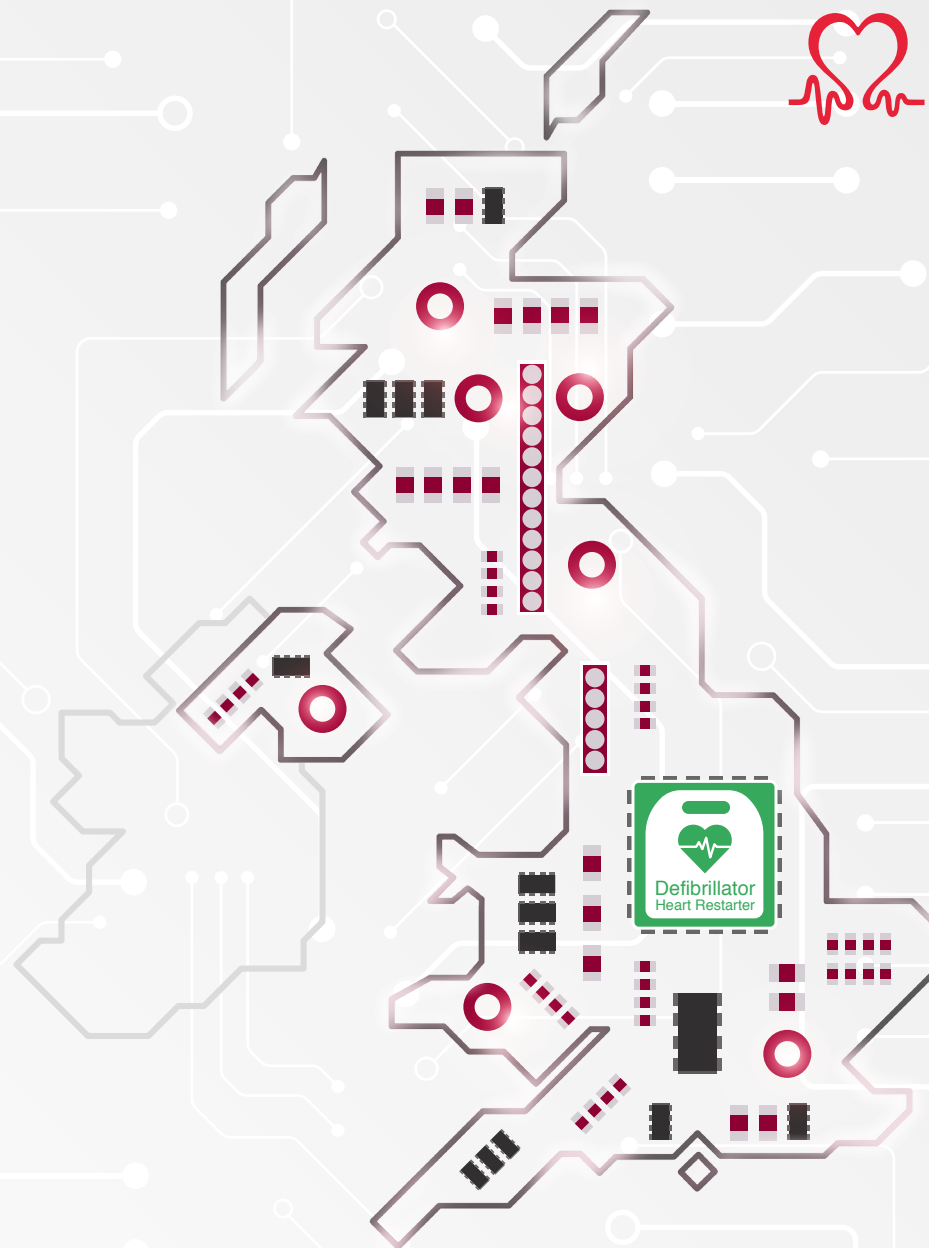


What. When. Why...

A Guardian's guide to The Circuit

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**In 2025 Omaze raised funds for British Heart Foundation
that will help to power The Circuit for two years.**

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Welcome

Welcome to your Guardian's Guide to The Circuit. The Circuit is the National Defibrillator Network, a pioneering database developed by The British Heart Foundation, Association of Ambulance Chief Executives, The Resuscitation Council UK, and St John Ambulance.

We have a shared goal to increase survival rates from cardiac arrest. Low survival rates are likely because 999 call handlers aren't always aware there's a defibrillator nearby. So, they can't direct a bystander to one while the bystanders waits for the ambulance to arrive.

The Circuit makes it easier to find the nearest defibrillator; it combines what were previously separate regional databases managed by the 14 ambulance services. Combining these allows ambulance services to direct people to the nearest defibrillator when somebody is having a cardiac arrest, wherever they are. It saves time so could increase survival rates.

However, The Circuit only knows where defibrillators are if people looking after a defib - like you - register them. The Circuit also acts as a means of communicating the defib's status between you and the ambulance service. The more you use it, the easier being a Guardian will be. It ensures accuracy of the information and increases the chances of saving a life.

We've designed a simple menu for The Circuit, but this document acts as your companion guide. This Guide is for single Guardians managing up to 10 defibs in one account. Thanks for being a defib Guardian and using The Circuit.

Simon Dunn
Head of Circuit Operations



A Guardian's Journey



The Circuit supports you at every stage of a Guardian's journey, from registering a single defib to adding devices and Supporting Guardians to decommissioning a defib.

Our Guardian's Guide to The Circuit explains what you need to do at each stage of this journey, including:

- What you need to do
- Why you should do it
- When you need to do it
- How to do it.

It's not intended to be a step-by-step guide but will direct you to the entry point in The Circuit, where the onscreen prompts will guide you through the tasks.

Create an account

Registering with The Circuit is vital because the ambulance service needs a named Guardian responsible for keeping the defib emergency-ready.

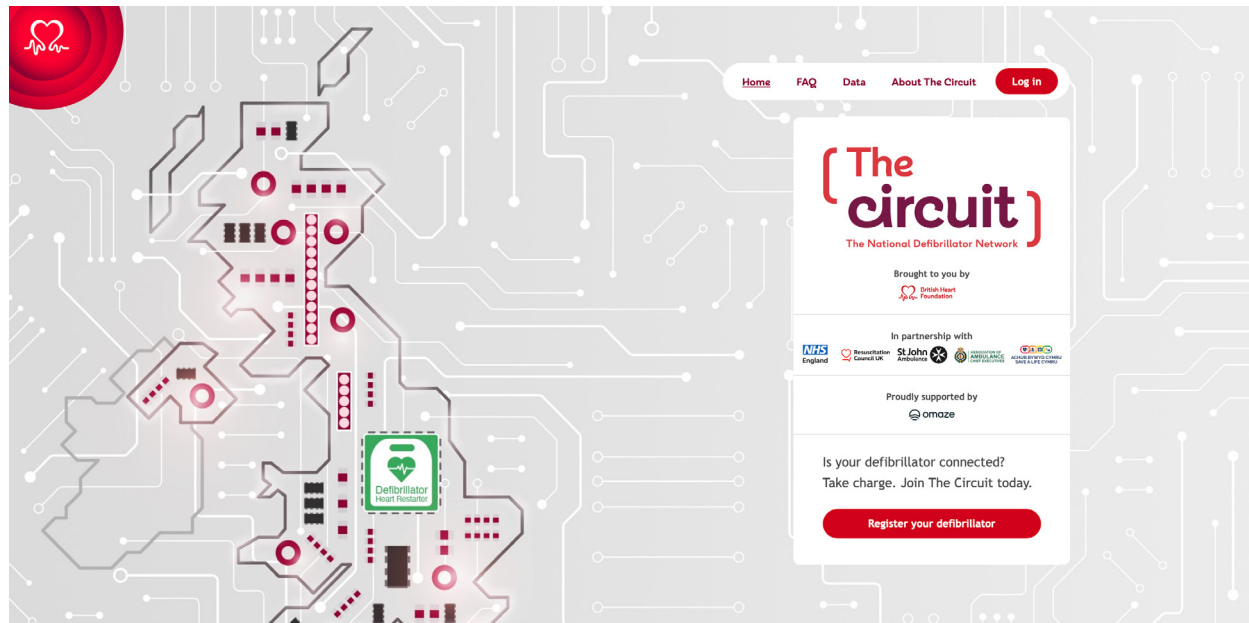
You can create an account before you have bought a defib. Simply go to The Circuit's home page www.thecircuit.uk

You'll see two different types of accounts, a Single and a Multiple Guardians' account (click the red down arrow to reveal these options).

A 'Single' Guardian account is for one person or a small group managing one or a small number of defibrillators. You can register defibrillators one by one.

The 'Multiple' Guardians option is for organisations with larger numbers of defibrillators, typically across multiple sites where more than one Guardian takes care of them.

This companion guide is for people who have or are registering a Single Guardian account.



For Multiple Guardian accounts we have the following guides available:

Organisation Administrator Guide:
www.bhf.org.uk/orgadminguide

Organisation Guardian Guide:
www.bhf.org.uk/orgguardianguide

You'll need to accept the Terms and Conditions. Note that these vary slightly from any you may have previously accepted if you registered a defib with a regional ambulance service, so you must confirm these terms.

Register a defib with 24/7 availability

Registering a defib with The Circuit makes it visible to ambulance services.

By registering, you're adding your defib to the National Defibrillator Network' The database stores locations and vital information relating to defibs registered with it. Registering increases the chances of your defib being used in a life-threatening emergency (cardiac arrest) because the ambulance service knows where it is and can quickly direct a bystander to it.

Ideally, a defib will be available 24/7, so it's there when needed.

How to register the defib

Registering a defib that is available every day is the most basic and easiest option (you can amend details later if this is no longer the case).

Go to www.thecircuit.uk and log in to your account to register a defib. You'll need the following details about your defib:

- The location of the defibrillator,
 - Firstly the nearest postal address to help in plotting the location
 - Secondly a description, so the 999 call handler can describe how to find it to a bystander who is going to retrieve it
- The brand, model and serial number of your defib
- When the defibrillator is accessible
- When the pads expire
- Confirm that the self-test and battery life display indicates that everything is ok (this may be a green light, a tick, OK or another symbol - check your user handbook).

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Ideally, a defib will be available 24/7, so it's there when needed.

Register a defib with variable availability

Not all defibs are available 24/7. For example, your defib might be inside a community centre that's only open during set hours or weekdays.

Or you may be a business with a defib to support your staff and visitors, when open Monday to Friday during office hours.

What's important is that The Circuit reflects your defib's availability accurately so that if an emergency occurs outside office hours, the ambulance service doesn't waste valuable minutes trying to access your defib and instead directs a bystander to the next nearest one.

The Circuit can accommodate varying degrees of availability, whether it's regular building closures, times of the day or longer periods when the device is unavailable.

Log in to your The Circuit account and click on **My Defibrillators** to add or amend availability. **Select a device.** You can check 24 hours, 7 days a week or not always accessible.

Where your defib is not always accessible, add details in the boxes provided.

How many defibs in your area?



Find out if your defib is the only one in your local area by checking www.defibfinder.uk

If it is, consider whether your defib could be made available 24/7 by installing an external cabinet on an outside wall, railings or post. It can still be close enough for your staff and visitors, but it could also save a life in the community when your premises are closed.

Register a defib with restricted access

Just as it's essential to know when a defib is available, it's equally vital to know where to find it.

For example, your defib may be on the side of a building with unrestricted access, but many defibs are inside and could be in a shared space behind a reception area.

Access to these areas could be restricted. For example, you may need a valid pass to gain entry. Therefore, it may not be viable for a bystander to access it from the street. That may mean that it'll take more time to reach your defib than another that may be slightly further away. So, please provide as much information as possible regarding access to your defib.

Log in to your The Circuit account and click on **My Defibrillators** to add or amend access. Scroll down to the heading Access type and click **Restricted**. Add a brief, clear description of why access is restricted. Your description will help the ambulance service call handler to decide on whether your defib is the best option for this incident and then describe to the bystander what they need to do to gain access.

Access type

☐ Public ☒ Restricted

Additional Access Information

Please include descriptive access information such as "Inside first aid room on 2nd floor - door key at reception" or "Use intercom on right hand side of front door to speak with reception/security for entry". Please do not include personal details here

you need to ask the security guard for access to get in.

Top tip



For setting the accessibility times for a school, sports club or office, we have some handy videos to show you how to do this available on The Circuit website: www.thecircuit.uk/home/learnMore

Add additional defibs to your account

If you are taking responsibility for another defib in your community, you also need to add it to the Guardian account so that the ambulance services know it is there.

For example, you could be taking over a currently orphaned defib (one that doesn't have an owner), or you may have bought another defib to improve coverage in your community.

A Single Guardian account allows you to manage up to ten defibs.

Registering makes it easy to find your defib quickly in an emergency and increases the chances of survival when someone has a cardiac arrest.

You can register additional defibs anytime. To start, click on My Defibrillators, scroll to the bottom of the page, and click Register a defibrillator.

Register a defibrillator



Add a postal address

When a defib is needed, it's needed fast. Every minute counts, so the ambulance service must know the location of your defib so that the call handler can direct a bystander to it – remembering that the bystander may not be familiar with the area.

When registering a defib, you should add the address details, including the location. Use the postcode search function and select your address, or enter it manually if not listed (you can change these anytime if the defib changes location).

Helping people find your defib

You can also use the map view to more accurately locate your defib. To do this, click on the button marked **Add map location**. Then, you can click and drag the pin to locate the defib more accurately. For example, you may have a defib situated in a train station – but only one. The defib could be one side of the station identified by a landmark, e.g., the side where the pub is, or on the side by the central car park. You can drag the pin towards the pub, say.

There's also a field for adding details such as "on the pub side". Arguably, this is more useful than a street name as not everyone will be local and local people don't always know street names. Also, when someone is rushing in an emergency, and under stress, so the easier you can make it for the ambulance services to direct them using landmarks, the better.

Note that there is a character limit on instructions, so be as concise as possible. The word limit is necessary as the instructions are displayed on the 999 call handlers monitor along with other vital information so only a certain amount of space on the screen can be taken up by the defib location instructions.

Change of location

You can amend the address details anytime. Should your defib move location, you should update the details as soon as possible so that the ambulance service knows where to find it.

To do this, click on **My Defibrillators**, enter a postcode and any additional information that will help someone quickly locate the device.

Top tip



Test out the directions on a volunteer to check they're intuitive before the defib is needed. A test will draw out issues you may not have thought of, such as visibility. For example, a defib might be visible when approached from one direction but harder to find from another.

Good signage can help bystanders locate a defib quickly, so try approaching the defib location from different directions. The cabinet may be enough to draw attention to the defib but additional signage will help.

We recommend the Resuscitation Council's www.resus.org.uk/defib-sign-guidance

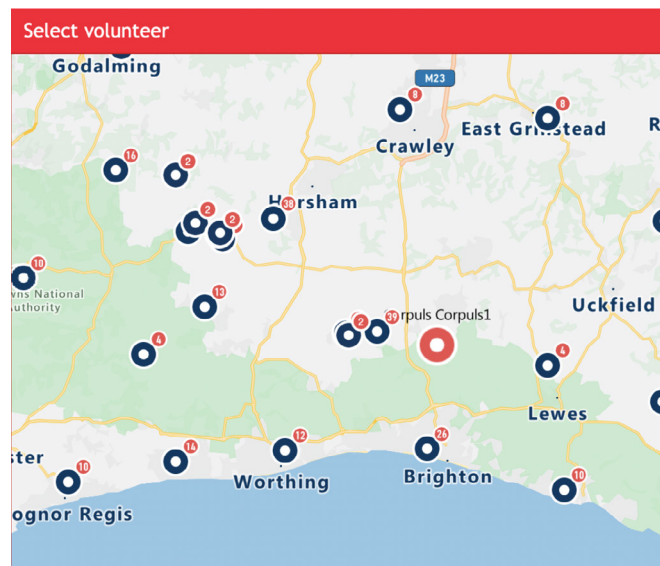
Nominate a support Guardian

Looking after a defib isn't hugely time-consuming, but sometimes you may not be available to carry out necessary tasks.

To help you look after your defib the Circuit enables you to nominate a Support Guardian. If you're on holiday or unwell then they can carry out and record checks or check the defib after a deployment and return it to emergency ready. This ensures there is continuity in looking after the defib.

To set up a Support Guardian, click on **My defibrillators** and **Ask for Support**. You may be a member of a community group and know the person who has agreed to act as a Support Guardian. Just click Invite someone to help and enter their email address. Alternatively, click Ask The Circuit to help.

You'll see a map of volunteers in your area. Click one. The Circuit will ask if you're sure you want to add the person as a Support Guardian, click yes, and they will receive a request to act as a Supporting Guardian. You can ask for help anytime.



Map of volunteers in your area

Guardian Defibrillator status check emails

Supporting Guardians receive many of the same emails from The Circuit as Primary Guardians, including:

- Emails about manual removal of a device from The Circuit
- An email when a defibrillator is manually decommissioned
- Emails regarding Pad expiry
- Emails when a defibrillator has been deployed

Support other Guardians

You can also support other Guardians by becoming a Support Guardian. To do this, again click on My Defibrillators and Ask for Help.

Record a defib status check

You should regularly record a physical check of your defib on the Circuit.

Checks should be made in line with the manufacturer's recommendations but we would recommend this is done at least monthly. Recording this on The Circuit gives confidence to the ambulance service that your defib is emergency-ready.

You should check the defib is there and that everything is in the kit that's usually stored with it. The kit may include:

- heavy duty scissors for cutting away clothing so electrode pads can be placed on the patient
- a towelette for drying away moisture to ensure the pads adhere
- a safety razor (for shaving hairy chests, if needed)
- a face shield (for performing CPR)

To record the check on The Circuit, click on **My Defibrillators** and then **Status check**. Next, you can click on the calendar to enter the date of your latest check and confirm that the defib is showing as, Yes, emergency-ready.



Status check

Confirm your battery and pad status

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We recommend doing a physical check of your defib every month

Record pad expiry dates

The Circuit will prompt you to enter the pad expiry dates when registering a defib.

They have an expiry date printed on the label or embossed into the foil packaging and will usually need replacing within three years.

However, you'll need to replace pads post-emergency if the pads packaging has been opened.

To record the expiry dates of new pads, click on **My Defibrillators** and scroll down to When do the pads expire. You can use the calendar tool to add a new date for any replacement or new pads. Before these pads expire, The Circuit will send you an email reminder that expiration is approaching. The reminder email will arrive 30-days before the expiry date.



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Return your defib to emergency-ready (post-deployment)

When the ambulance service deploys your defib, you'll receive an email from The Circuit letting you know and prompting you to check it.

Deployment doesn't necessarily mean that the defib was used, but you should check it anyway.

Replace any consumed items and then it's critical that you return your defibs system status to "emergency-ready". This is because post-deployment, it will be marked as "unavailable" to prevent the ambulance service sending another bystander to your defib when it might not be ready for use.

To do this, click on **My Defibrillators**, **Status**, and tick **Yes, emergency ready**.

Do this as soon as you can following receipt of the email.

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Make a defib temporarily unavailable

You should make a defib unavailable if it's not emergency-ready.

For example, you may be awaiting delivery of replacement pads. Or it may be that the device is in a closed building, during school holidays, for example.

Changing the status means that the ambulance service is not wasting valuable time sending a bystander to a device that isn't operational.

To make your device temporarily unavailable, click on **My defibrillators**, and then **Remove from service**. You can then select the relevant option of why you're removing the defibrillator from service temporarily.

Reason for removing from service

Please choose one

- ☐ Deployed by public/bystander responder
- ☐ Vandalised
- ☐ Moving to a new location
- ☐ Recalled by manufacturer
- ☐ Accidental Damage/Malfunction
- ☐ Awaiting replacement parts
- ☐ Contaminated/awaiting cleaning
- ☐ Removed by the ambulance service
- ☐ Deployed by ambulance service
- ☐ Temporary location closure
- ☒ Other

Please provide a reason for removing this defibrillator from service.

Remaining characters: 100

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Decommission a defib

You may wish to remove a defib from your account permanently, perhaps, because the defib is now obsolete or damaged beyond repair and is being replaced by a new one.

To decommission a device, click on **My defibrillators**, and then Decommission.



Decommission

Permanently remove your defibrillator from
The Circuit

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Transfer a defib to a new Guardian

You may be passing a defib on for someone else to look after. For example, let's say you're stepping down from a Council or volunteer group role and someone else is stepping in.

The Circuit makes transferring a defib simple. First, click on **My Defibrillators**, **Ask for Help** and select the option to **Transfer a Defibrillator**. Next, enter the person's email address.

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Close a Guardian account

Where you are no longer acting as a Guardian, you can close your account.

To do this, select the small red person icon, which will reveal your account details and select Delete your account.

Before you close your account please ensure you have transferred your defib to another Guardian or invited someone to become a Guardian.

The Circuit, the national defibrillator network was developed by British Heart Foundation (BHF) in partnership with Resuscitation Council UK, St John Ambulance, the Association of Ambulance Chief Executives, NHS England and Safe a life Cymru.

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