

Defibrillators for every Church of Scotland parish in the capital

The Presbytery of Edinburgh is investing £83,000 to buy 49 fully-automated defibrillators for the outside of its buildings across Edinburgh.

The life-saving equipment will then be available for use by anyone 24 hours a day seven days a week. Every year 3,500 people in Scotland suffer cardiac arrest. Beginning CPR as soon as possible and using a defibrillator if available gives anyone the best chance of survival.

Fifteen defibrillators which are sited inside churches will be moved to heated cabinets outside.

Project leader, Rev Michael Mair, who is minister at St David's Broomhouse Church said he is "delighted" that the "life transforming" project is going ahead.

He added : "This is a clear sign and symbol that the Church continues to fulfil the example and lead of Jesus as he offered to give life, and life in all its fullness."



Lynn Cleal with Rev Michael Mair

As part of the program, congregations and local communities will receive free training from St John Scotland volunteers in CPR and how to use the new equipment.

However, the defibrillators are designed so that in an emergency they can be used by anyone, even if they have not had formal training.

Each machine will be added to a central database that provides the Scottish Ambulance Service with the nearest location.

Rev Angus Mathieson, moderator of the Presbytery of Edinburgh said: "This is a great project for the Church to be involved in.

"It's about mission, being at the heart of the community and showing that the whole community matters.

"The presbytery is excited to be working with different partners to ensure a wider coverage for public access defibrillators.

"We have congregations in the presbytery which already have defibrillators installed and we want to learn from their experiences.

"Statistics show the difference that accessible defibrillators can make.

"This allows us to show in a practical way, that the Church's witness includes and goes beyond what happens in our buildings and that we can make a difference in life or death situations."

Volunteer Lynn Cleal, who leads the St John and the City defibrillator project on behalf of St John Scotland, said: "From our work helping provide defibrillators across Edinburgh, we know how important these machines, and the public awareness that comes with them, is in helping to save lives.

"We're delighted to support the Church of Scotland with this project to help reach more people across Edinburgh with life saving equipment and knowledge."