

HEALTH

# Rod ready to fight after prostate campaign uncovers his cancer

By Rob Helliwell  
 robert.helliwell@burtonmail.co.uk  
 @BMrobhelliwell  
 01283 245031

A ROTARIAN hopes the early discovery of his prostate cancer after a football club screening session will help him to fight back against his illness.

Rod Gent, 68, was among 113 men who took the opportunity to undergo a prostate examination at the Pirelli Stadium as part of a joint campaign between Burton Albion Community Trust and Burton's Queen's Hospital.

Prostate cancer was detected in eight of those who underwent the screening and they were referred for further treatment.

Mr Gent, of Alrewas, is the immediate past-president of Burton Rotary Club, which was also heavily involved in the campaign, and he himself was at the Pirelli Stadium helping to organise screenings ahead of his own.

Taking the chance to be tested himself, the discovery of his cancer has been a huge shock, but he hopes his story will encourage others to get themselves checked.

There is also the hope that funding might again be made available so that East Staffordshire locations like the Pirelli might hold more screenings in the future.

Mr Gent, who is married with children, said: "I had absolutely no idea anything was wrong and that's the case with many men when it comes to prostate cancer.

"It has been tough since and everything has moved very quickly. It was explained to

me what was happening and that I was going to need surgery."

Mr Gent went in for an operation yesterday to remove his prostate, just seven weeks after his screening at the stadium – something he described as 'incredible', as he praised doctors for the speed in which they had treated him.

He said: "It's all down to Burton Albion's community trust, to the hospital and to Jyoti and her team. If this hadn't been discovered until further down the line who knows what state I'd have been in."

The screenings were undertaken by staff from Queen's Hospital's urology department, led by consultant urological surgeon Jyoti Shah.

She said: "There are tests doctors can do but it isn't an exact science and prostate cancer can go undetected.

"It is no substitute for having a prostate actually felt for abnormalities by someone like me who spends my life treating people with prostate cancer.

"There were 17 men we checked that we felt needed a biopsy, which just shows the success of the campaign."

All the eight men since found to have cancer have been called in for further tests and treatment – and none of them reported feeling unwell ahead of the routine exam.

Mr Gent, speaking ahead of his surgery, added: "I'm hopeful and looking forward to getting on with life again. To others I'd say please just get yourself checked if you have the opportunity. I can't praise enough the care that I've been given since.



BREWERS chairman Ben Robinson, Sarah Minns and Jyoti Shah, of Burton's Queen's Hospital's urology department, and Andy Taylor, of the Burton Albion Community Trust, all paid a crucial part in making the screening session happen at the Pirelli Stadium.

"I think going into a hospital can make people feel uncomfortable so to have screening at a football ground is a great idea."

The hope now is that future screenings can be held. Miss Shah said: "There is certainly a real willingness in the community to come forward for the checks. We had to turn away 87 men who called the hospital and a further 50 who contacted Burton Albion as we were oversubscribed.

"We'll be appealing for the commissioners to provide the funding required to make this happen again. If anyone has any concerns about their prostate in the meantime they should go and have a discussion with their GP."

John Widdowson, of Burton Albion Community Trust, said: "We're looking at the next steps of how we support this again.

"It was a massive team effort to make this happen and the trust is behind any efforts to do this again and, if possible, expand it."

Comment this story and others on our website  
 Have your say at burtonmail.co.uk



PROSTATE cancer screenings have taken place at the Pirelli Stadium.

## SUCCESS FOR AWARENESS CAMPAIGN

A RECENT Men United march from Derby's iPro to Burton's Pirelli Stadium helped raise awareness of prostate cancer.

Led by Sky Sports television presenter Jeff Stelling, an army of Brewers and Rams fans completed the 21.6-kilometre walk in March.

Mr Stelling, famous for hosting Soccer Saturday, had teamed up with leading men's

health organisation Prostate Cancer UK to complete 10 walking marathons in 10 days from his boyhood club Hartlepool United to Wembley Stadium, in London.

As a result £365,000 was raised, with all the walkers from Burton and South Derbyshire helping to contribute to that effort.

Readers can still support the challenge by visiting [menunitedmarch.org](http://menunitedmarch.org)



Free Paintings & Watches Valuation  
 Wednesday 25 May  
 1pm - 4pm with expert  
 Adrian Rathbone

Entries invited for our Fine Watches Auction on 30 June and Picture Gallery Auction on 2 July  
 Entries close 1 June

Free Home Visits for large/multiple items, House Clearance & Downsizing advice  
 Probate & Insurance Valuations

**HANSONS**  
 Auctioneers and Valuers

Heage Lane, Etwell, Derbyshire DE65 6LS T: 01283 733988  
 service@hansonsauctioneers.co.uk  
 www.hansonsauctioneers.co.uk

