

IT'S YOURS
IT'S A CHARITY
KEEP IT FLYING

GREAT WESTERN AIR AMBULANCE CHARITY IMPACT REPORT 2017





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CHAIRMAN'S REPORT



I am pleased to report on another busy year for the charity. The Critical Care team carried out 1,824 missions in the year by helicopter and Critical Care Car, 5% up on the prior year and another record. Our charity office team put in another year of tremendous effort across a huge range of different activities to help raise the funds we need to keep the Critical Care service flying. My heartfelt thanks to everyone involved at every stage of the way.

The work done by our Consultants & Specialist Paramedics in Critical Care is almost always challenging and sometimes truly amazing for me to hear about. You will find information and stories about the work they do throughout this report. Well done team!

Our helicopter operations continue to be efficient and effective; thank you to our pilots for the great work they do and to Babcock for their service and support. We are still flying out of our original base at the old Filton Airfield, which has been closed to wider operations for over five years now. However, the future is now clearer; our new base at Almondsbury is under construction and we hope to be able to move into the facility towards the end of 2018.

It is our fundraising that keeps the charity driving along and 2017 was a good year in that respect. Our lottery continues to provide a strong income, but we could always do with more players. We were again grateful for support from County Air Ambulance Trust (CAAT) and received another large grant from the government LIBOR fund. However, neither CAAT or the LIBOR fund will be providing regular funding in 2018 so we will have our challenges in replacing those income flows.

We are therefore fortunate to have both a strong and energetic charity office team and a large group of wonderful volunteers including talk givers, Heart Starters, event volunteers and those who help in the charity office. We were for the second year running the lead charity at the Bristol International Balloon Fiesta which provides great profile but also calls upon all our staff and volunteer resources. Well done to everyone for the great work they do and thank you all.

I must mark 2017 as a year of great change and development for the charity team. John Christensen was the inspiration behind the setting up of the charity nearly ten years ago and, working with our medical team, has developed the service into a genuine leader in its field. In 2011 he became the charity's Chief Executive and led the development of the strong fundraising operation we have today - without which we wouldn't survive. During 2017 John retired from the post of CEO but continues to work with us on the single task of completing the delivery of the new base. John deserves huge thanks from all of us for the time and energy he has devoted to the charity for so many years. He will be missed. However, the world moves on and I am delighted with the appointment of Anna Perry as our new CEO.

Thanks must also go to Damion Barrington-Chappell who retired in the year after many years as a great trustee. We also remember Barry Johns who passed away during 2017, having given many years of wonderful help to the charity as both an adviser and latterly a trustee.

So onward to 2018 and we look forward to the continuing generous support of our many wonderful donors and hopefully to making many new friends.

Nigel Pickersgill
Chair of Trustees

CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT



I was delighted to join Great Western Air Ambulance Charity at the end of July 2017, and especially excited to take delivery of our new helicopter the very next day. The new helicopter provides enhanced comfort for passengers, can carry heavier loads and means we can fly further without needing to refuel.

I am now lucky enough to work with 35 exceptionally talented Consultants and Specialist Paramedics in Critical Care – our crew have been selected from the very best clinicians in the South West and form a team that provides some of the most advanced Pre-Hospital Emergency Medicine in the UK. It is always humbling to hear about the missions that our GWAAC Critical Care teams have been on, and what they have achieved. This is particularly poignant when it comes from the mouths of people who would not be alive, but for the skills of the team. In 2017 we heard the story of Chris Hickey, who suffered a cardiac arrest. His heart stopped for 68 minutes, but thanks to CPR performed by his wife, and the help from our Critical Care team, he was able to make a full recovery and even visit our air base in Filton.

I am also incredibly inspired by the volunteers that help us raise money to keep the service running. Their dedication and commitment to the charity, in all weathers and with a wide variety of demands, is seriously impressive. From dressing up in costumes, to giving talks to community groups to collecting money at the end of piers, our volunteers have done it all in 2017.

My principal role at GWAAC is to support our small but perfectly formed staff team, responsible for running the charity, helping people to raise money and spreading the word about what we do. In 2017, we said goodbye to some team members but were pleased to welcome new colleagues who have already made a considerable impact on GWAAC.

Looking forward to 2018, we have set ourselves some big challenges, but I am confident that our team will more than deliver.

Anna Perry
Chief Executive



CRITICAL CARE TEAM UPDATE

In 2017 we have once again seen the clinical team go from strength to strength. During this year we have completed a very successful recruitment process to add to the numbers of Specialist Paramedics in Critical Care (SPCCs). We were delighted to welcome Dee Gordon, Jack Kilminster and Mark Kinsella into our training programme. All three are currently undergoing intensive training delivered by our senior SPCCs and Critical Care Doctors. In addition they are all enrolled in an MSC in Pre Hospital Critical Care / Retrieval and Transfer and so are, shall we say, 'busy'. Congratulations to Charli Watkins who joined us in 2016 and is now a fully signed off SPCC. She is a great asset to the unit and is contributing a huge amount to clinical delivery and development.

One of the major developments of 2017 was the final approval for our planned new base at Almondsbury. The new base will allow us to maximise the unit's efficiency and will ensure the very best clinical response to our patients.

The clinical team are all very much looking forward to 2018 and being able to continue to serve the people within our region. We take great pride in being allowed to deliver Critical Care wherever it is needed. We couldn't undertake our work without our supporters and thank you all for enabling us to deliver the highest quality of care possible.

John Wood, Air Operations Officer



This year has been the busiest yet for the doctors of GWAAC. Averaging 5 missions a day we have continued to deliver the best Critical Care possible for our region. We have become an integral part of the major trauma network, which provides outstanding results. We also work closely with the Bristol Heart Institute, providing care for cardiac arrest patients from around the region.

This year, following the success of introducing blood, we also introduced plasma on the aircraft and our Critical Care Cars. Plasma contains all the components that promote blood clotting and can be life saving in the crucial "golden hour" of trauma. We also work to teach best practice to others, and in 2017 we held our first symposium for Critical Care in the region with over 100 academic attendees. We publish our academic work and deliver presentations at conferences around the country regularly.

We are a community facing unit, with regular base visits from our patients and their families, community groups and local dignitaries. Our Great Western Heart Starters team also go out to local schools, training 1,186 schoolchildren in 2017 on how to perform CPR.

We now look forward with anticipation to moving into our new home in Almondsbury where we plan to continue the great work of this amazing charity.

Matt Thomas, Lead Doctor



ABOUT GWAAC

We are the Great Western Air Ambulance Charity

We provide the Critical Care and Air Ambulance service for 2.1 million people across the counties of Bristol, Bath and North East Somerset, South Gloucestershire, Gloucestershire, North Somerset, and surrounding areas.

Our crew attend the most critical incidents across the region by helicopter or by one of our two Critical Care Cars. When someone is seriously ill or injured time is of the essence, and they need expert help fast.

This is where we come in.

A GWAAC Critical Care team consists of a Specialist Paramedic in Critical Care, a Critical Care Doctor and, if flying, a highly trained and experienced Pilot.

From emergency blood transfusions, to roadside amputations or treating cardiac arrests, our crew specialise in Pre-Hospital Emergency Medicine and Trauma Medicine, bringing the skills and expertise of an Accident and Emergency Department directly to the patient, when and where they need it most.

How we work

We operate 7 days a week, 365 days a year. The skill and dedication of our team means that we can provide life-saving support to those who need it most. 2017 was our busiest year yet, and we were dispatched to on average 5 missions a day. Despite the ever-increasing need for this vital service, we receive no day-to-day funding from the Government or National Lottery, relying on the people we serve to raise over £3 million which we need each year to stay operational.



NEW ARRIVALS

As well as a time of growth, 2017 was a year of change for the charity. Our founder and Chief Executive John Christensen retired, with Anna Perry joining to take the helm and lead us into a new era. John still remains very active with the charity, and received a fitting tribute for his hard work and dedication. In October he was recognised as a Great Western and had a new GWR locomotive named in his honour.

New Helicopter

We were excited to welcome our helicopter, a Eurocopter 135 T2+ (or EC 135 T2+ as it is more commonly known). The helicopter can now hold more fuel and heavier loads, allowing for a longer flying time, and enabling the crew to carry additional equipment too.

New Trainees

We are proud of our status as a training unit, taking on doctors and paramedics who have passed the rigorous selection process to train in specialist Pre-Hospital Emergency Medicine (PHEM). We are the only PHEM training unit in the South West. Medical interventions advance fast, and this ensures we are always utilising specialist equipment and new knowledge in the field, providing the very best possible care for patients. In 2017 Dr Andrew Holdstock joined us as a PHEM trainee paid for by the Severn Deanery. This year-long training includes a seven day course, funded by the charity, which is designed to put our new doctors and paramedics into major incident environments, helping to prepare them for the rigours of life as a HEMS crew member.



GREAT WESTERN HEART STARTERS

In 2017, our Great Western Heart Starters initiative went from strength to strength, teaching basic life support skills to secondary school pupils across our area. Our vision is to create a generation of heart starters who can confidently administer CPR and use an AED (Automated External Defibrillator) should they ever find themselves in a situation where it's needed.

When a person suffers a cardiac arrest, time is of the essence. Those minutes before our crew arrive could prove crucial for a patient fighting for their life. Administering effective CPR within 2 minutes could double their chances of survival. Sadly, currently only 8% of patients survive an out of hospital cardiac arrest. Less than half of bystanders will intervene when they see someone collapse, more often than not because they simply don't know what to do. This is why we work closely with secondary schools to deliver practical and engaging workshops.

Sarah Tester, one of our dedicated team of Heart Starters volunteers said: "Being able to help teach CPR/ recovery position in schools is vital. Education is key to helping people survive and to hopefully make a good recovery to leave hospital and return to family. I really enjoy being part of the heart starter's scheme."

By the end of the session pupils know how to recognise the signs of a cardiac arrest, and how to find out if someone's heart has stopped. We also provide all the training necessary to enable them to feel empowered to administer CPR when it's most needed.

Sadie Lupton, another one of our dedicated team of Heart Starters volunteers said: "It has been fantastic being part of a team that have built up my confidence and skill levels, while also being fun. I'm very proud to be part of GWAAC Heart Starters. It gives me great pride to be part of an initiative which saves lives."





AIR BASE UPDATE

As we move into our 10th year of operations, we are excited at the prospect of also moving into our new air operations base, which is set to open at the end of the year.

On a wet day in November, we gathered together with representatives from the National Police Air Service (NPAS) who will be sharing our new home, and BAE Systems who are funding the build, to witness the ground-breaking as work commenced on the new site in Almondsbury, South Gloucestershire.

This marks the end of a long planning process, in which over fifty sites were surveyed, and it also marks a new beginning for our Critical Care team who will have a modern base which is

fit-for-purpose, providing all the facilities they need to carry out their life-saving work.

Our Chief Executive Anna Perry explained: "Everyone at GWAAC is delighted to see the progress being made on the new base. The charity is desperately in need of a modern air base and this great location will mean that even when we cannot fly, our doctors and paramedics can get to patients quickly in our Critical Care Cars."

The new construction includes a purpose-built hangar, grassed final approach and take off area, car park and access road. A new entrance is also being built which will allow easy access onto the A38 and roads across our region.



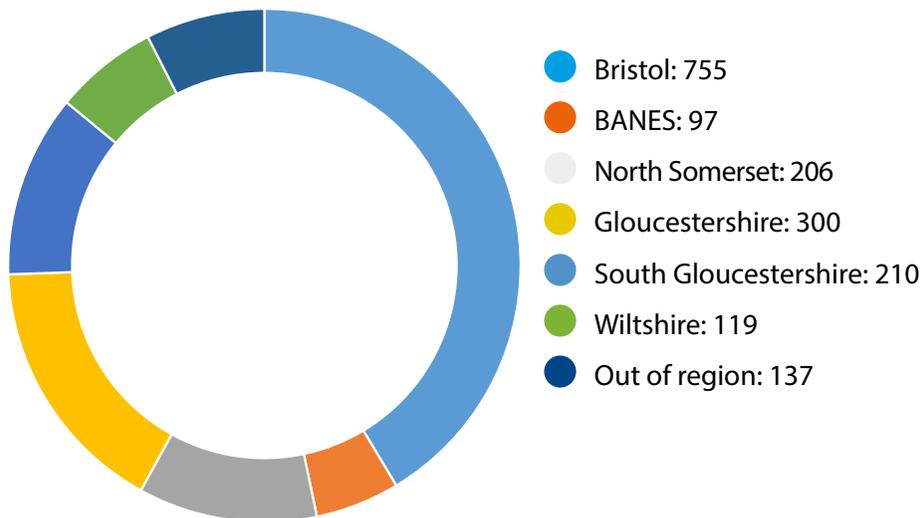


AIR SUPPORT

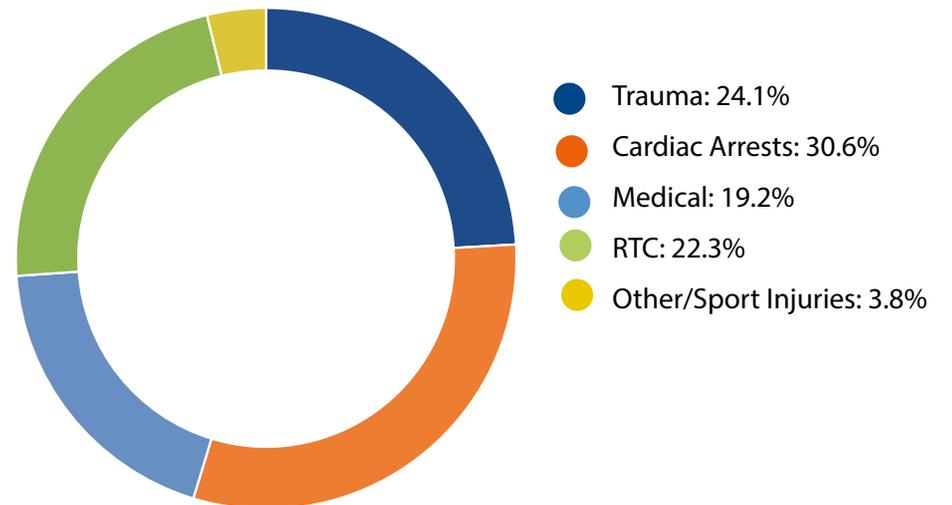
MISSIONS IN 2017

TOTAL: 1,824 JOBS BY HELICOPTER AND CRITICAL CARE CAR.

MISSIONS BY REGION:



TYPE OF JOB:



COSTS

Over £3m

THE TOTAL REVENUE WE
NEED TO RUN OUR SERVICE
EACH YEAR

£2,000

COST TO SEND A
TRAINEE ON A MAJOR
INCIDENT COURSE

£1,750

THE AVERAGE COST
OF EACH LIFE-
SAVING MISSION

£16

FOR EVERY MINUTE
THE ROTOR
BLADES TURN



OUR MISSION AND VALUES

Our mission is the relief of serious illnesses and injury by the provision of an Air Ambulance and a Critical Care Team to the counties of Gloucestershire, South Gloucestershire, Bristol, North Somerset, Bath and North East Somerset, and surrounding areas.

Our vision:

Our vision is that people in our area receive the best Pre-Hospital Emergency Care.

Our values:

We put people first.

We behave in an ethical manner.

We are inclusive and welcoming.

We are grateful for the support we receive.

OUR PATIENTS

Our patients are the reason we do what we do - providing life-saving support 365 days of the year. From young babies and children to older people, we are here for the most critically ill across the region, when they need us most.

We treat people from all walks of life, giving them the best possible chance of survival. We can only do this with your support.

Read on to learn the inspiring stories of just a handful of the patients we treated or re-connected with in 2017.

REBECCA & TREVOR'S STORY

“THANKS TO THE EXPERT CARE I RECEIVED MY CHILDREN STILL HAVE A DAD.”



In 2017 Trevor Hing's daughter Rebecca took on the challenge of a lifetime, trekking Mount Kilimanjaro alongside a team of our supporters, and raising thousands for the charity.

When Trevor suffered a cardiac arrest in 2014, our Critical Care team were on the scene within 12 minutes, and managed to stabilise him so that he could be transported to the BRI.

DAVID'S STORY

“I WAS BACK ON MY FEET IN A COUPLE OF WEEKS THANKS TO GWAAC.”



When David suffered a cardiac arrest, he knew he was in a life-threatening situation, having had one before in 1990. He and his wife acted fast, and our Critical Care team were dispatched by car, arriving less than 10 minutes later.

Our crew assessed his needs, and performed an electrical cardioversion before taking David to the BRI where he continued to receive the very best in care. David was back on his feet in two weeks.

AURORA-MAE'S STORY

“THEY WERE AMAZING.”



Little Aurora-Mae was watching her favourite television program with her dad, when she suffered a life-threatening seizure.

Our Critical Care team sped to the scene, arriving just a few minutes later. She was made comfortable and taken to the Bristol Children's Hospital, and is now home safe and sound, having made a full recovery.

WILL'S STORY

"EVERY MINUTE MADE A DIFFERENCE... THE CARE I GOT WAS FIRST RATE."

As a semi-professional cyclist, Will was out training in Mendip when he was involved in an accident which radically altered the course of his career.

Every minute made a difference, and the rapid response of our crew meant he didn't lose his leg. Will is now competing for Great Britain as a Paracyclist.



SALLYANNE'S STORY

"I'M BACK IN THE SADDLE, LEARNING TO RIDE PARA-DRESSAGE."

"I remember someone holding my hand, telling me it will be ok," said Sallyanne of the day she was in a horse riding accident which left her with life-altering injuries. Our helicopter was able to reach her quickly when she had the accident in a remote field, which left her with a broken back and spinal injury. Sallyanne is now back in the saddle, and visited our air base with her family, to meet our life-saving crew.



JERRY'S STORY

"THE RAPID RESPONSE AND EXCELLENT TREATMENT AT SCENE SAVED MY LIFE."

When Jerry went into cardiac arrest whilst driving on a roundabout, he found himself in a life-threatening situation. Remarkably he was able to pull over, and a bystander performed CPR.

Our specialist crew treated Jerry on the scene, stabilising his heart and protecting his brain before taking him to the Bristol Heart Institute, where he made a full recovery.



DYLAN'S STORY

"I AM SO GRATEFUL FOR EVERYTHING THAT THE CRITICAL CARE TEAM DID."

Every parent's worst nightmare became a reality for Tanya when her 4 year old son Dylan suffered a seizure at home, and found himself in need of urgent help from our team. Our doctors' and paramedics' specialist skills meant they could anaesthetise and stabilise Dylan, who has now made a full recovery and been able to visit our air base with his family.



LIFE-SAVING KIT & EDUCATION

Our Critical Care team of doctors and paramedics provide an unparalleled service to each and every patient that they see. From road traffic collisions to cardiac arrests or accidents at work, they never know what they will face from one day to the next. Their specialist skills and training mean that they are able to provide life-saving interventions above and beyond that of a regular ambulance crew.

It also means that they are able to administer anaesthetics at the scene of an incident. When time is of the essence, the ability to carry out such interventions could mean the difference between the patient living or dying. In order to do this life-saving work, our team need access to specialist equipment too, something which we as a charity are proud to be able to provide.



Fresh Frozen Plasma

2017 saw a leap forward in the Pre-Hospital Emergency Care that we are able to provide. Thanks to a grant from The Henry Surtees Foundation, we now carry Fresh Frozen Plasma (FFP), as well as blood, as part of our life-saving kit. Plasma contains the vital clotting factors needed to slow or stop ongoing bleeding. In cases of massive trauma, whilst the ability to carry out blood transfusions is important, in the worst instances, it is simply impossible to keep up with the rate of blood loss. Carrying plasma means our crew can significantly reduce this blood loss, giving patients a far greater chance of survival.

Less than one month after we started carrying plasma on board our Critical Care Cars and helicopter, our crew were required to put this into action. They were called out to a road traffic collision in Bridgwater, where the patient was trapped and losing blood fast. We were able to administer plasma together with two units of blood, stabilising the patient so that they could be transferred to Southmead by our helicopter. Without the specialist skills of our crew and the tools that we carry, the outcome of this incident could have been very different.



Education

Every incident our Critical Care team are called to is different, but with the right training, support and professional development, they are able to walk into any situation knowing that they are prepared and ready to spring into action.

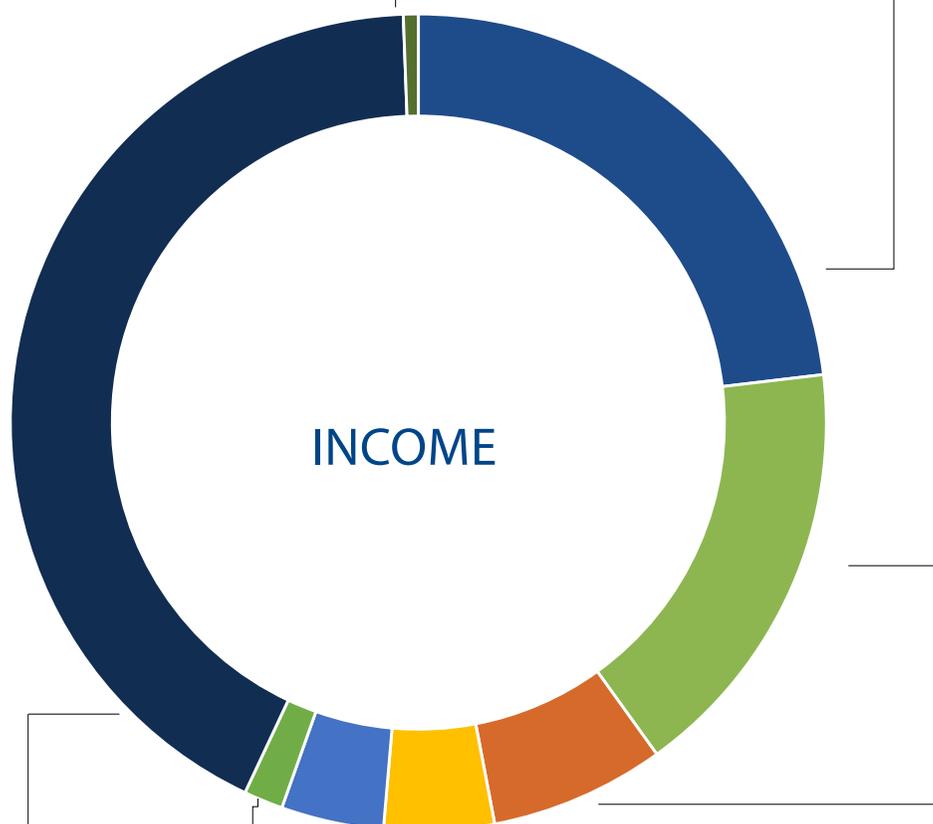
We strive to provide continuous training and development opportunities for our team, allowing us to stay at the forefront of our field. We provide the most cutting-edge equipment for our crew to use whilst on missions, but also for their training needs too. As a Pre-Hospital Emergency Medicine (PHEM) training unit for both paramedics and doctors, this is one of the things which sets us apart from other air ambulances in the region.

In 2017 we broadened the training equipment available, thanks to a donation from New Life, of premature baby manikins. When a baby is born early they are vulnerable and need highly specialist care from the outset. The manikins enable our crew to practice their skills at our air base, increasing the chances of survival should they be called to a seriously ill baby.

Project lead and Critical Care Doctor James Tooley explained: "When a baby is born at home and unexpectedly requires resuscitation, it is a very challenging situation for all concerned. When a baby is found to be extremely premature this adds a whole new level of unfamiliarity and technical challenges...having the opportunity for the team to enhance their clinical skills and undertake simulations using this wonderful new manikin will enhance our training as well as the clinical care we can offer to this group of patients."

OUR FINANCES

TOTAL
£4,324,658



INCOME

Other: £25,550
Donations: £732,713
Libor Grant: £1,000,000 (spent over 2017 & 2018)

CAAT Grant: £300,000

Legacies: £188,850

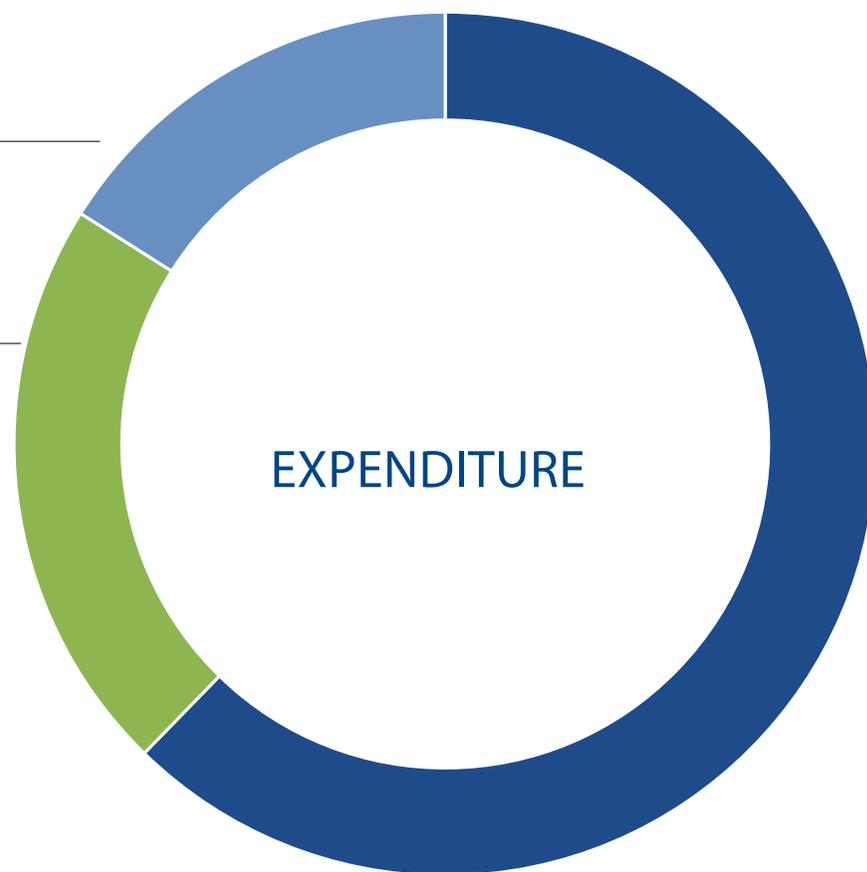
Lottery: £1,834,655

Collection Boxes: £67,200

Trusts: £175,690

Lottery (prize fund and agents costs): £687,948

Support costs allocated to activities: £509,214



EXPENDITURE

TOTAL
£3,175,197

Helicopter running costs: £1,978,035

OUR SUPPORTERS

We are thankful to have so many dedicated and generous supporters who make our work possible.

Our corporate supporters

We are passionate about creating partnerships with corporate organisations and ensuring that working with us is a rewarding and exciting experience. During 2017 we were delighted to be chosen as the charity partner for 18 local businesses who recognised the value that we provide to local communities. We hope these organisations enjoyed raising money for GWAAC, and we certainly had fun helping them!

Our community supporters

Many people feel proud to raise funds for us, and as a result we have a very strong fundraising programme within the communities we serve. Throughout 2017 people have really got behind us, and have organised events, taken on personal challenges, and run bucket collections at local supermarkets. Many shops, pubs and restaurants host our collection pots. As well as providing significant income, this also raises awareness of our vital work and our charitable status.

On behalf of everyone at Great Western Air Ambulance Charity, our patients and their families, we would like to say a heartfelt thank you to the many individuals, companies and trusts that have supported us. Our work simply wouldn't be possible without you.

Special thanks to:

Alder King	G C Gibson Charitable Trust	National Vintage Tractor
Association of Air Ambulances	Gloucestershire Haulers	North Gloucestershire FA
Barker Charitable Trust	Grosvenor Consultancy Ltd	Old Richians RFC
Bristol International Balloon Fiesta	Hangover Ball Hq	The Polo Charity Trust
Bristol Marriott Hotel City Centre	Henry Surtees Foundation	Rib Eye Clay Shoot
The Bristol Masonic Benevolent Institution	Independent Vetcare Ltd	Somerset Masonic Charity
Bristol Property Agents Association	James Tudor Foundation	St Lawrence Lodge
Cinderford and District Swim	John James Bristol Foundation	The Upper Bilson Inn
Coleford Town Council	Langdale Trust	Westonbirt School
County Air Ambulance Trust	Loungers Ltd	Yatton Skittles Club
David Thomas Charitable Trust	Masonic Charitable Foundation	Zurich Community Trust
Forest Aid Fundraising Shop	Medlock Trust	
	Mercedes-Benz Bristol	



For more information please contact our charity team, who will be happy to help you.
Registered charity number 1121300

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 GREAT WESTERN AIR AMBULANCE CHARITY

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