

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



**THE GREAT WESTERN
AIR AMBULANCE CHARITY
IMPACT REPORT 2016**



CONTENTS

Page

Chairman's report 1

Chief Executive's report 2

Unit update 3

About GWAAC 4

One year of giving blood 5

A new home for GWAAC 6

An Hour To Save Your Life 7

Missions in 2016 10

Our mission and values 11

Our patients 12

Education 14

Our finances 16

Our supporters 17

OUR TRUSTEES

Nigel Pickersgill (Chairman)

Jonathan Benger

Jonathan Skeeles

Damion Barrington-Chappell

John Houlden

Caroline Peters

Barry Johns

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT



It's a great pleasure to report on the busiest year so far for the charity. GWAAC delivered its emergency medical service on 1735 missions by helicopter and Critical Care Car across our region comprising of Bristol, Gloucestershire, South Gloucestershire, Bath & North East Somerset, North Somerset and parts of Wiltshire. The amazing work done by our Critical Care Paramedics and Critical Care Doctors saving lives, relieving pain and giving comfort to many distressed patients 'out in the field' is a great credit to them and the NHS services overall. Thank you to all our medical staff and the area ambulance trust SWAST, and to our helicopter pilots and Babcock our helicopter provider, for your great work.

But, of course, we are a charity and this great service continues to depend on the raising of necessary funds from within the community we serve and I am delighted to say that we have again in 2016 been brilliantly well supported by all of you. Our fundraising sources spread wide across the region, from the many thousand playing our weekly lottery, to the community groups getting together and raising money in a great variety of local events. We are delighted by the generosity of people whose employers across the region have selected us as their charity of the year. Challenge events are an ever more popular route to fund raising with generous supporters taking on a whole range of tasks from marathons, assault courses and (huge) mountains to name but a few. Also 2016 saw our first Motorcycle Ride out event which was a great success in July. Once again, my thanks to all who have contributed in anyway during the year - all your efforts are greatly appreciated.

All of this and more is ably encouraged, facilitated and supported by our charity office team and our volunteers across the region. A particular highlight was our first year as the lead charity at the Bristol International Balloon Fiesta for which our office team recruited and lead a huge team of supporters across four long but enjoyable and rewarding days. I must thank our team for their endless energy and enthusiasm and also for the importance they place on our fund raising being ethical and considerate in a world that isn't always so.

Finally, I would like to pay tribute to two trustees who retired during the year. Jeanette Whitford and Stephen Hughes were both founder trustees along with John Christensen, and retire having completed their maximum allowed nine years of service. Over that time, they have both offered tremendous counsel and support and seen the charity grow from nothing to the thriving being that it is today. I am delighted that they are ably replaced by new trustees, solicitor John Houlden and senior police officer Caroline Peters.

Thank you again to all who have been involved with GWAAC over the course of the year. We look forward to another great year in 2017.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Nigel H Pickersgill'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial 'N' and a long, sweeping underline.

Nigel H Pickersgill
Chair of Trustees

CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT



As I look back over 2016 I feel a sense of pride at how the charity has grown and how much has been accomplished. We are a long way from where we were when I started the charity in 2008, and it is great that this advanced life-saving service is there for people should they need it. In the 8 years that we have been flying we have attended more than 16,500 incidents. This is a phenomenal achievement and makes us one of the busiest Air Ambulances in the UK.

One of the most important things for me has been relocating our operational base, and building a facility that is fit for purpose. During 2016 this took a big leap closer to reality when we were granted planning permission. Every day the crew put themselves in difficult situations, both physically and emotionally, in order to save lives. They deserve somewhere they can debrief, and rest between jobs. Our hangar on Filton Airfield was built during the First World War and is one of the oldest hangars in the UK, and is no longer an appropriate place to operate from. Our new base will be in Almondsbury, very close to the M4/M5 interchange. This will mean that the team will finally have a suitable base that meets the professional standard they deserve. We hope to be operational from the new site by the start of 2018, and I want to thank everyone who has supported us with this process.

Since the beginning of 2016 we have seen some exciting new developments. This year saw the commencement of remunerating doctors for the time they work for us. Historically the doctors were volunteers, giving up a few days a month to work with us. This now means that we are able to expand the service we offer and aim to have a doctor available 365 days a year.

One of my favourite parts of my job is meeting the people who fund our service. People like you, who donate to us and help us reach our fundraising target year on year. 2016 gave me an ideal opportunity to do this when we were the charity partner for the Bristol International Balloon Fiesta. I still remain humbled by the generosity and dedication of people across our region.

I would like to thank the team here at Great Western Air Ambulance Charity, the clinicians and the trustees for their passion, and dedication to the charity. Most importantly I would like to thank every single person who has donated to us, spread the word about what we do, and volunteered for us. Without you there would be no air ambulance.

2017 will bring some changes, as I will be stepping down as Chief Executive. With the charity's future looking bright it seemed like the perfect time for a new chief executive to take over and build on our success. GWAAC will always be a part of my life, and I will be carrying on in an advisory capacity as a volunteer. I look forward to seeing how the charity continues to grow.

John Christensen

John Christensen
Chief Executive.



UNIT UPDATE

Well what a year for the Critical Care Team! We have continued to increase the numbers of patients we have treated and extended the interventions we are able to deliver.

The close collaboration between our Critical Care Doctors and Critical Care Paramedics has resulted in the team being able to deliver blood to an increased number of our patients in 2016. The Team is now also carrying an ultrasound machine which allows us to 'see' inside a patient's body allowing for more accurate and timely diagnosis and treatment.

We are also very pleased to be able to welcome our new Critical Care Paramedic Charli Watkins. She came out top during a long and arduous selection process proving her ability and talent every step of the way. She is progressing well through her training and will become a full member of the team early in 2017.

Whilst every member of the clinical and charity teams are vitally important, we cannot continue our work without the continued generosity of our supporters. It is no exaggeration to say that your donations save lives and we thank you from the bottom of our hearts for your unstinting support.

Air Operations Officer/Critical Care Paramedic John Wood



The last year has been productive for the doctors on the air ambulance. We have had 2 further doctors successfully complete their training in Pre-hospital Emergency Medicine. Congratulations to Dr Jim Blackburn and Dr Greg Cranston.

The doctor team have continued to work closely with the specialist paramedics to deliver excellent critical care. Together the team performed over 200 prehospital anaesthetics and over 50 blood transfusions in 2016.

We have continued to have regular governance meetings and worked to maintain our good relationships with the NHS, the trauma and cardiac networks and the local acute hospital trusts.

This year has seen the introduction of a portable ultrasound machine, allowing us to perform advanced diagnostics in the pre-hospital environment.

Most importantly, the doctors and paramedics work closely as a team delivering first class critical care for the people of our region, This is done with a caring and compassionate attitude.

Lead Doctor Matt Thomas



ABOUT GWAAC

We are the Great Western Air Ambulance Charity (GWAAC).

We are a charity funded air ambulance service who are ready to save the lives of local people in Bristol, Bath and North East Somerset, Gloucestershire, South Gloucestershire, North Somerset and parts of Wiltshire.

Our crew attend serious incidents across the region by helicopter or by one of two Critical Care Cars.

We work seven days a week, 365 days a year to help critically ill and injured patients. Despite the great need for this service we receive no day to day funding from the Government or National Lottery, and rely on the support of the people we serve to raise the £2.6 million we need a year to stay operational.

How we work

When someone is seriously ill or injured time is of the essence, and they need expert help fast. This is where we come in.

Within five minutes of a 999 call to the GWAAC base in Filton, our aircraft takes off. We work to the Gold Standard Critical Care Model, which means we rush a Critical Care Paramedic and Critical Care Doctor straight to the scene. We arrive no more than 20 minutes later, anywhere in the region. Our average flight time is just 12 minutes.

The service we provide is reliant on our brilliant team of pilots, Critical Care Paramedics, and Critical Care Doctors who specialise in pre-hospital care and trauma medicine.

From pre-hospital blood transfusions, to roadside amputations, or treating cardiac arrests, it's the skill and dedication of our team that means one patient in five – a patient otherwise expected to die – survives.

We don't simply fly people to the nearest hospital. We treat accidents and medical emergencies, bringing the emergency department to the scene and providing life saving expertise before they even reach the hospital. We then fly the patient to the hospital best equipped to deal with their needs, giving them the best possible chance of survival.





ONE YEAR OF GIVING BLOOD

2016 saw us reach an important milestone. It marked one year of our team carrying blood on board the helicopter and Critical Care Cars. One year of our crew being able to carry out pre-hospital blood transfusions, which can often be the difference between a severely injured or ill patient living or dying.

The ability to give pre-hospital blood transfusions is a vital step forward, and we are proud to be able to provide this service. Our Critical Care Team also provide senior governance and leadership advice for Wiltshire Air Ambulance who also carry blood products.

Covering a wide area, which includes major motorways and rural areas, the Critical Care Team see trauma cases on a regular basis. From road traffic collisions, to horse riding incidents, these patients are severely injured, and have lost a lot of blood. Waiting until they arrive at hospital for a blood transfusion could be too late, and in a situation where every minute counts giving blood at the scene can be crucial to their survival.

During the first year 62 pre-hospital blood transfusions were carried out. Of these 84% were trauma cases, 13% medical and 3% a mixture of both. In total over 80 transfusions have taken place since the project went live.

Before we started carrying blood we estimated that it would benefit two – four patients a month. However in the first year, pre-hospital blood transfusions were given to on average five patients a month, surpassing expectations.

Dr Harvey Pynn said: “Reviewing the cases for those patients who have received a pre-hospital blood transfusion in this area, I have no doubt in my mind that lives have been saved as a result of this intervention. We will endeavour to prove this statistically in time and will develop our practices to optimise the use of this precious life saving asset.”

Giving blood transfusions outside of the hospital is ground breaking, and has helped us to bring the emergency department to the patient. Using this advanced intervention at the scene means that the patient receives blood straight away, instead of having to wait until they reach hospital. We know that early intervention is the difference between life and death, and at a time when every minute counts it is crucial.

The next stage is to start carrying plasma, which helps the blood to clot. Blood is made up of several components. We carry red blood cells, which is one part. The other two parts are plasma and platelets. By carrying plasma it will aid the resuscitation by improving the patient's ability to clot.

A NEW HOME FOR GWAAC

Great Western Air Ambulance Charity will be moving to a new home, after planning permission for the site was granted in 2016.

The decision marks the end of four years of work, in which hundreds of sites were surveyed. The Almondsbury site was the only viable option, as it has good links for not only the helicopter, but also the two Critical Care Cars.

Chief Executive John Christensen said: “It is fantastic news for the charity. Finding a new base has been a long journey for us, and I am glad that it is now finally over, and we can begin work.”

“The Almondsbury site is perfect, as it is central to our area and population. The site is also easily accessible both by helicopter and car. I am pleased that we will have a modern base that will ensure that we can continue to provide this life-saving service.”

A new modern hangar will be built, which will house the GWAAC helicopter alongside the police helicopter.

This hangar will be a significant upgrade on the current hangar, which was built during the First World War and is one of the oldest surviving hangars in the UK. It will finally allow the charity to operate out of a building that is fit for purpose, and give the crew the working facilities that they deserve.”

GWAAC has been based on Filton airfield since its first flight in 2008. However the airfield is being extensively re-developed, which meant that the charity needed a new home from which to operate.





AN HOUR TO SAVE YOUR LIFE

The crew onboard HM65 are extremely busy, attending on average four jobs a day and saving hundreds of lives. People across the region have been very generous, fundraising to keep this vital life-line going, but they don't often get the chance to see where their money goes.

August gave people a unique opportunity to see the work that the crew do out in the field, as they appeared in two episodes of BBC Two's 'An Hour To Save Your Life'. The programme was the result of two months of filming, where a camera crew spent time with our Critical Care Doctors and Critical Care Paramedics. It showed them responding to incidents in both the helicopter and Critical Care Cars. Filming also took place in hospital, giving viewers behind the scene insights into the handover between our crew and the hospital medical team, as well as the ongoing care and surgery each patient received.

An Hour To Save Your Life looks at innovations in emergency medicine and the improvements in patient outcomes as a result of pre-hospital care and fast-tracking cardiac arrest, medical and trauma patients to specialist centres.

The team were shown responding to three incidents, treating patients Christy, Peter and George. The crew all wore GoPro cameras strapped to their chests, which along with shots from the cameraperson, gave people the chance to see and hear what goes on at the scene of a serious incident.

Our team jumped in the Critical Care Car, and rushed to Christy's aid when she was hit by a car in Bristol. Critical Care Paramedics Vicki Brown and Neil Hooper, and Critical Care Doctor Greg Cranston were seen giving her an emergency roadside anaesthetic as they feared she may have bruising to the front and back of her brain. The episode followed her journey through Southmead Hospital, and then a specialist brain rehabilitation unit. Christy was determined to overcome her serious injury and it was hoped that she would return home soon.

During the same episode viewers were also able to see Critical Care Paramedic Pete Sadler and Critical Care Doctor James Tooley as they treated Peter, who had been run over by a forklift truck in Gloucestershire. Peter was lucky, his injuries were painful, but not life-changing, and he was soon back on his feet again.

Horse rider George needed our help when he suffered a riding accident in Gloucestershire. Viewers watched as Critical Care Paramedic John Wood and Critical Care Doctor Greg Cranston rushed to the scene. On arrival there were worries that he had damaged his spinal cord and that his breathing may deteriorate. After doctors at Southmead assessed him it was discovered that he had lost the use of his legs, and it was unlikely that he would walk again. George's inspiring attitude and the way he accepted what had happened touched many viewers.

We were overwhelmed by the response to these shows, and are so thankful to the people who support us, and ensure that we can continue to be there for people like Christy, Peter and George. We also want to thank the patients and crew who gave us a behind the scenes look at what goes on.





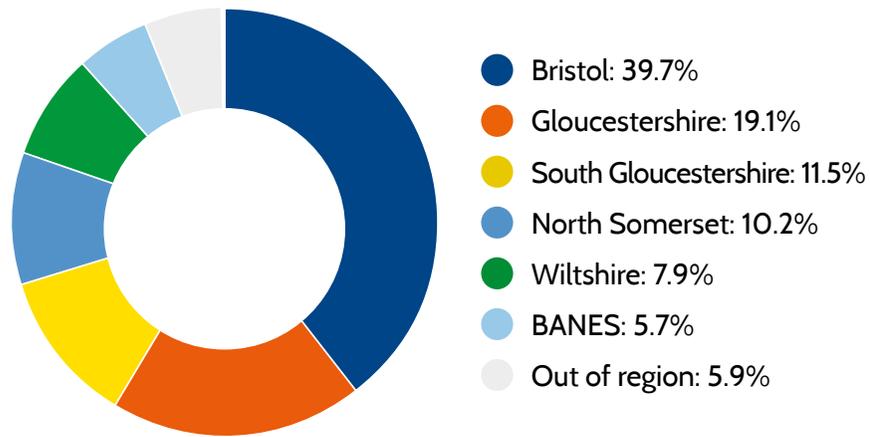
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 Great Western
Air Ambulance Charity

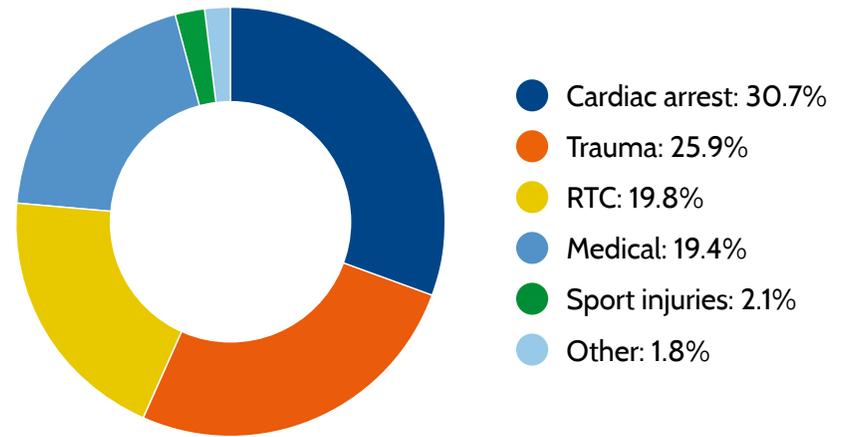
MISSIONS IN 2016

TOTAL: 1,735 JOBS BY HELICOPTER AND CRITICAL CARE CAR

REGIONS:



TYPE OF JOB:



COSTS

£2.6m

THE TOTAL REVENUE WE NEED TO STAY OPERATIONAL EACH YEAR

£50

COST TO LIFT THE HELICOPTER OFF THE GROUND

£2,000

THE AVERAGE COST OF EACH LIFESAVING MISSION

£15

FOR EVERY MINUTE THE ROTOR BLADES TURN



OUR MISSION AND VALUES

Our mission is the the relief of sickness and injury for the benefit of the public by assisting in the provision of emergency medical services and equipment, in particular the provision of an air ambulance service or other emergency transportation, primarily in the area served by the former Great Western Ambulance Service NHS Trust namely Bristol, Bath and North East Somerset, Gloucestershire, North Somerset, South Gloucestershire and parts of Wiltshire.

Our Values:

Patient First

We are proud of the excellent pre-hospital emergency care we offer to our patients.

Ethical

We pride ourselves on being respected and ethical

fundraisers.

Working Together

We work together for the people in our area.

Thank You

We recognise the importance of saying thank you.

Our Vision:

Our vision is that people in our area receive the best pre-hospital emergency care.

OUR PATIENTS

The seven people featured here lead very different lives. Some are children who attend school and love playing imaginary games, while others are parents, or grandparents and go to work to earn a living. One is a keen golfer, another loves playing football with his grandson, while one has just started university studying fashion design.

Despite all these differences, they have one thing in common: without GWAAC they would not be alive today. We treat people of all ages, and from all different walks of life, giving them the best possible chance of survival. Quite simply, we keep families together. But we can only do that with your support.

BILL'S STORY

“I WAS SO LUCKY IN EVERY POSSIBLE WAY THAT DAY. THANK YOU.”



Bill enjoys his job at Chippenham Golf Club, but didn't expect to be fighting for his life during his shift. 30 minutes after starting work, he had a cardiac arrest and collapsed.

Staff from the club resuscitated him, and when we arrived we stabilised him. Bill was flown to the BRI, and has since made a full recovery.

IAN'S STORY

“I AM STILL HERE THANKS TO GWAAC. THEY SAVED MY LIFE.”



Ian was visiting family when he suffered a cardiac arrest and stopped breathing. Our team carry specialised equipment that is not found on a normal ambulance. This includes a LUCAS machine, which they used on Ian to standardise heart compressions. They managed to restart his heart, and escorted him to the BRI by road ambulance. Ian has since made a full recovery.

AMELIA'S STORY

“BECAUSE OF GWAAC WE STILL HAVE OUR PRECIOUS AMELIA.”



Two year old Amelia suffered a serious head injury, and was on the way to hospital in a land ambulance when her condition worsened.

Our crew met the ambulance on route, and after assessing her condition sedated her, before airlifting her to the Bristol Children's Hospital. She was given the all clear and has no lasting problems.

BECKY'S STORY

“THERE ARE NOT ENOUGH THANK YOU'S IN THE WORLD.”

Becky was involved in a horrific crash. She suffered serious injuries including a traumatic brain injury and many broken bones, and was not expected to survive. We treated her at the scene before taking her to hospital, where she spent two weeks before being moved to a brain rehabilitation unit for six months. Becky learnt to walk and talk again, and has just started University.



JOHN'S STORY

“WE ARE SO GRATEFUL FOR THE HELP YOU GAVE.”

John was at his local leisure centre playing football with his grandson, when he suffered a cardiac arrest and collapsed on the pitch. Luckily the manager of the leisure centre was trained in CPR, and kept John alive until our team attended. They treated him at the scene, and transferred him to the BRI, where he spent three weeks recovering.



DAVID'S STORY

“I OWE YOU EVERYTHING AND CAN'T THANK YOU ENOUGH.”

While out for a walk David suffered a cardiac arrest and collapsed. He was found by two people walking by, and we were quickly on the scene. David was resuscitated by the ambulance crew before we got there, and we then treated him at the scene, before taking him to the BRI. He was discharged 15 days later.



HARRY'S STORY

“YOU ARE ABSOLUTE SUPERHEROES TO US. THANK YOU SO MUCH.”

When one year old Harry received a significant head injury his life was left hanging in the balance. We rushed to his side and found him in a critical condition and struggling to breathe. Harry was sedated at the scene to protect his brain, and was taken to Bristol Children's Hospital. He is recovering well, and has been allowed home.



EDUCATION

We are proud to work to the Gold Standard Critical Care Model, which means rushing a highly trained Critical Care Paramedic and Critical Care Doctor to the scene of an incident. Our team have undertaken intensive training to be able to deliver advanced care to those who need it the most. Delays in critical interventions before arrival at hospital will worsen outcomes. We believe that patients deserve the care of a world class medical team immediately after injury.

Our team are passionate about the care they deliver. They are keen to share their skills and experiences with others, so that more people benefit, as well as improving the work they do.

Great Western Heart Starters

During 2016 we were proud to launch our new education programme Great Western Heart Starters, which sees our medics, other clinicians and healthcare students from the University of Bristol and the University of the West of England teach CPR and basic life support skills in secondary schools.

Our crew know the importance of early intervention, and take the skills of the hospital to the scene of an incident. However the moments before they arrive on scene are crucial.

Every year in the UK there are 60,000 incidents of Out of Hospital Cardiac Arrest (OHCA) and over half of them are witnessed by a bystander. People are often too afraid to intervene, instead just waiting until the ambulance arrives. But by that time it could be too late. Having the confidence and ability to start CPR could be the difference between someone living or dying.

With this in mind we launched Great Western Heart Starters, a campaign to teach CPR and basic life support skills to Secondary School children. Our mission is simple: we want to create a new generation of life-savers. We want to give children the skills and confidence to help if they witness someone having a cardiac arrest – whether it be a family member at home, or a member of the public in the street.

Heart Starters chair Dr Johannes Von Vopelius Feldt said: “Teaching CPR to children through Great Western Heartstarters will improve





survival after cardiac arrest, but also provides a connection between the charity, emergency services and the community. The children get to learn a life-saving skill and interact directly with paramedics, nurses and doctors. “

“Seeing the enthusiasm with which the children learn and practise CPR is highly rewarding for myself and our volunteers. We hope that the children take this enthusiasm to their homes and families, teaching them the basics of how to save a life.”

Instructors will teach other basic life support skills, as well as demonstrate how to use an automated external defibrillator (AED). Our vision is that no child in our region will leave school without the ability or confidence to deliver bystander CPR.

Clinical Governance Days

Each month we hold a day-long event dedicated to improving clinical performance through rigorous case reviews, presentations from experts, and reviews of current published research. The term ‘clinical governance’ refers to the way in which healthcare organisations safeguard the care given to their patients. We ensure that the advanced clinical care we offer is continuously monitored, enhanced and developed so that patients receive the very best emergency and life-saving treatment.

Our Clinical Governance days are open to all interested clinicians, and the audience is usually made up of local doctors and paramedics, as well as members from the Hazardous Area Response Team (HART). We see the day as a chance to share ideas and thoughts, as well as educating the Critical Care Team of the future.

Throughout 2016 the team have reviewed complex cases, including traumatic amputations, drownings, and cases involving children, and discussed procedures such as blood transfusions and using our ultra sound machines.

Exams and training

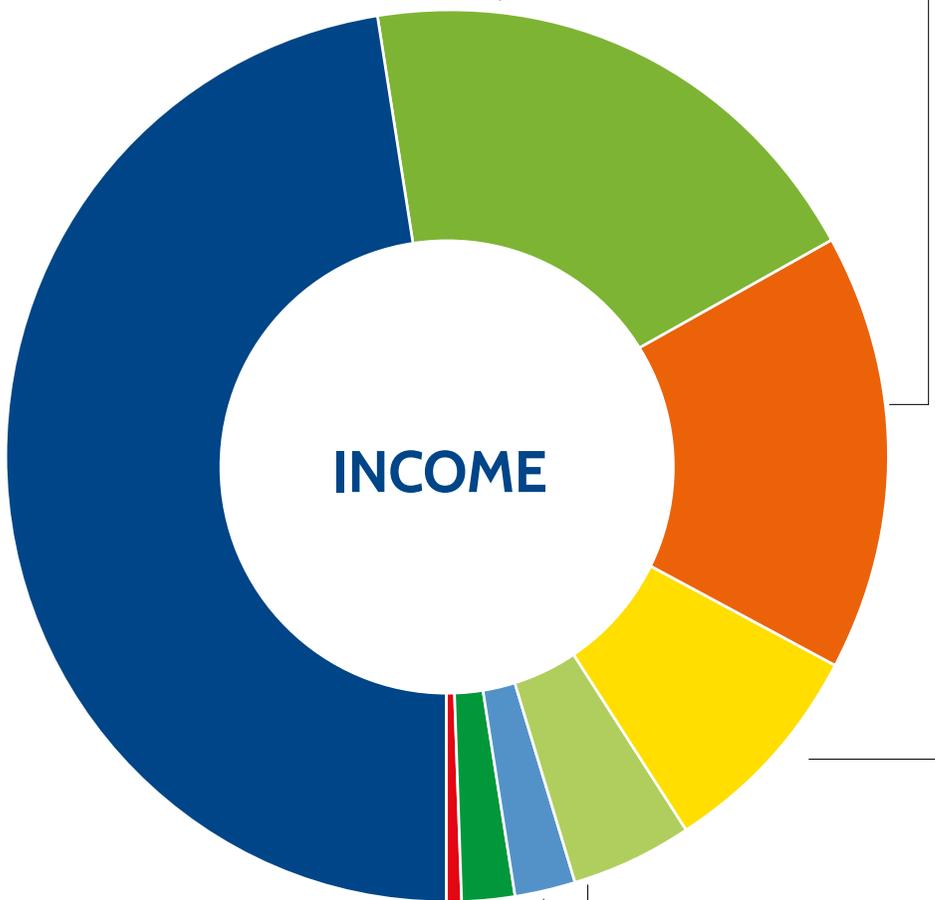
Some of our crew took their Diploma in Immediate Medical Care at the Royal College of Surgeons in Edinburgh. The examination is designed to test the knowledge, skills and behaviours of pre-hospital emergency care practitioners. It takes place over two days and includes a written paper and practical scenarios. For this exam our Lead Doctor Matt Thomas and Critical Care Paramedic Vicki Brown were examiners. Vicki is the only female paramedic examiner in the country.

We also had two doctors take the Fellowship in Immediate Medical Care, which is the highest level of formal qualification available for pre-hospital practitioners. It consists of a written paper, and then practical scenarios in the pre-hospital environment.

Our new crew spent a week at a PHEM training course in Moreton in Marsh, where they took part in scenarios including entrapment and rescue, delivering pre-hospital care in challenging environments, and dealing with a major incident.

OUR FINANCES

TOTAL
£3,733,910



INCOME

Libor grant: **£728,495**

Donations: **£589,660**

CAAT grant: **£300,000**

Legacies: **£170,100**

Trusts: **£83,442**

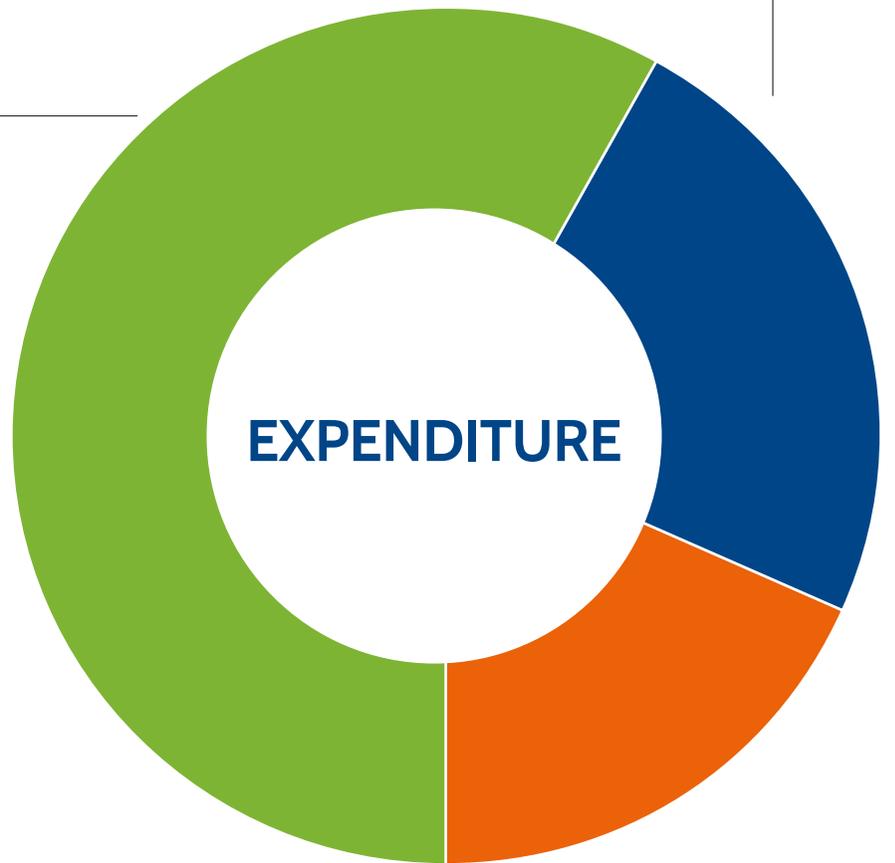
Collection Boxes: **£75,648**

Lottery: **£1,773,677**

Other: **£12,888**

Helicopter running costs - **£1,612,213**

Lottery (prize fund and agents costs) - **£659,628**



EXPENDITURE

TOTAL
£2,778,727

Support costs allocated to activities - **£506,886**

OUR SUPPORTERS

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

Our corporate supporters

We are passionate about creating partnerships with corporates and ensuring that working with us is a rewarding and exciting experience. By becoming a corporate partner your staff will have the chance to fundraise for a local charity, and will benefit from the guidance and support of our fundraising coordinators.

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 2016 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 all 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 this year. Our work simply wouldn't be possible without you.

The Albert Hunt Trust

Allianz

The Avon and Somerset Police
Community Trust

Bristol Balloon Fiesta

Bristol Marriott Hotel City Centre

Cirencester Golf Club

Clevedon Golf Club

Coleford Town Council

The David Thomas Charitable Trust

Dot Zinc Limited

The Dulverton Trust

Fairford Steam Rally

The GC Gibson Charitable Trust

Gloucestershire Hauliers

The Grace Trust

Grosnevor Consultancy

Hapenny Press

The Hospital Saturday Fund

Irwin Mitchell

The John James Bristol Foundation

The Langdale Trust

Lloyds TSB

Longdole Polo Club

Mercedes-Benz of Bristol

Nationwide Building Society

North Gloucestershire Football
Association

Provincial Grand Lodge of Bristol

Rotary Club of Bathavon

Rotary Club of Cotswold Tindal

Rotary Club of Dursley

Rotary Club of Gloucester Severn

The Sobell Foundation

The Summerfield Charitable Trust

Tewkesbury Borough Council

Tockington Manor School

Typecraft

The Zurich Community Trust



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

 0303 4444 999

 GREAT WESTERN AIR AMBULANCE CHARITY

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