

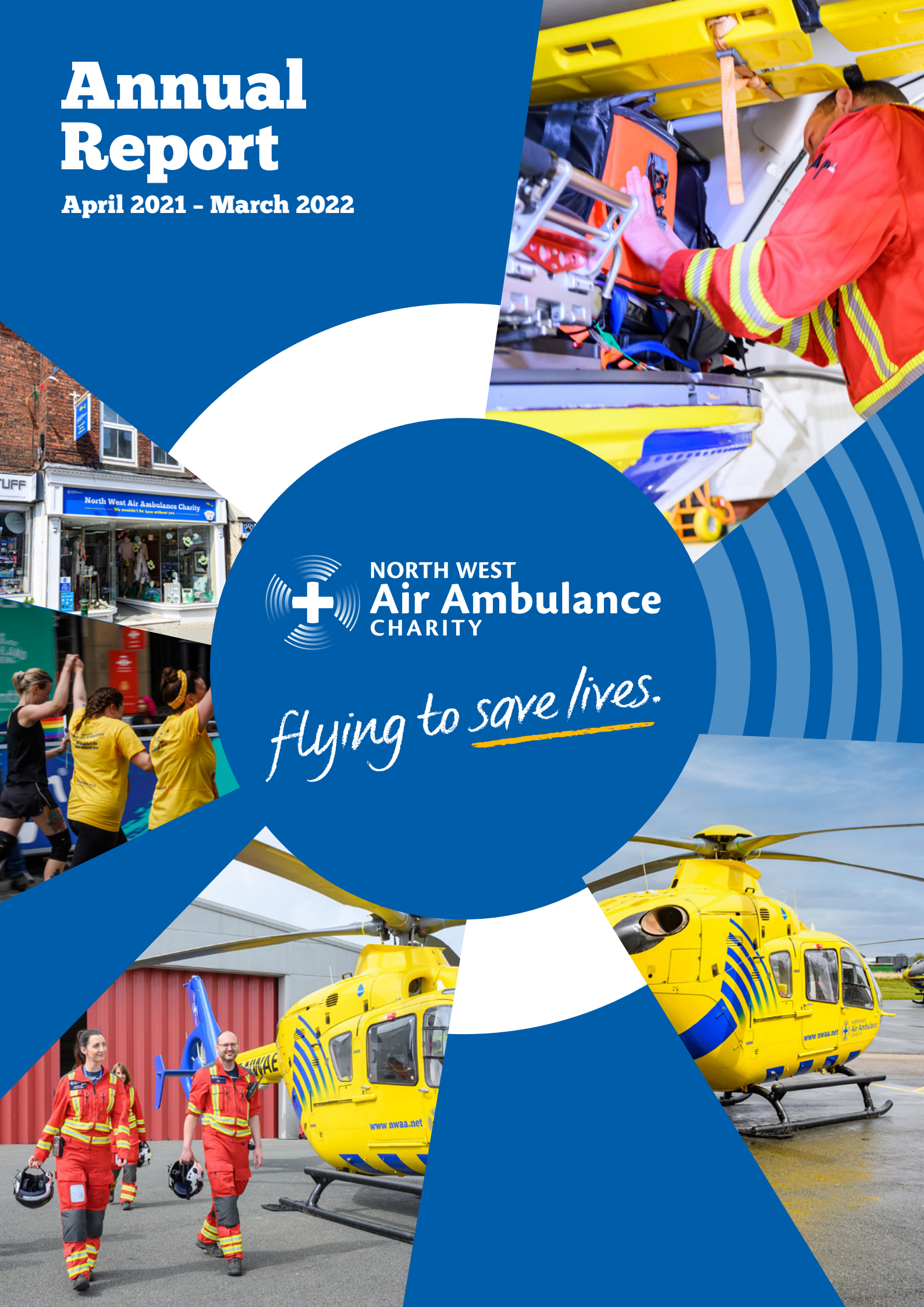
Annual Report

April 2021 - March 2022



NORTH WEST
Air Ambulance
CHARITY

flying to save lives.





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Chairman's welcome

A warm welcome to our annual review

Firstly, on behalf of all our patients and their families, may I say thank you to all our wonderful supporters for their ongoing commitment to ensuring our Charity can continue 'flying to save lives', and guaranteeing we are able to 'bring the hospital' to the most critically ill and injured patients, across the whole of the North West, 365 days a year.

Patients are at the heart of everything we do, and ultimately at the heart of every decision we make. They are 'Our Why' we exist, but it's because of our wonderful people that we are able to make the lifesaving difference we do.

I want to take this opportunity to thank every member of staff, crew, and volunteer for being #NWAAmazing. Whether it's on the front line carrying out lifesaving medical interventions, or behind the scenes, everyone is part of the same crew, 'One Crew', together saving lives.

As we emerge from the Pandemic, it is imperative we remain fit for purpose and fit for the future, ensuring we have the right level of funds and our income is sustainable, so we can deliver our clinical ambitions with confidence.

This year:

- We agreed an ambitious five-year income and engagement strategy to ensure financial resilience and significantly grow and diversify our income streams.
- We agreed an upfront investment in new talent, enabling the early recruitment of 13 new roles ahead of the next financial year as part of delivering this strategy.
- We made the commitment to invest in our first ever multimedia brand awareness campaign, including radio, billboards, and social ads across the North West.
- We undertook a robust competitive tendering process for renewal of our helicopter fleet. The contract was awarded to Babcock securing another 7 years of future proofed service delivery.

Engaging with our staff and volunteers and ensuring everyone has a voice is essential to making sure we have the right culture where everyone feels valued, part of a team and has the opportunity for personal growth.

This year:

- We have facilitated hybrid working.
- We held our first ever annual staff conference and values awards.
- We conducted our first external staff engagement survey.
- We reinvigorated our Employee and Volunteer Forums.



Clinically our service continues to go from strength to strength. All our Paramedics have been upskilled to Critical Care Paramedics (CCPs) and now have the capability to administer specialist drugs such as ketamine as well as carry out surgical interventions, such as sedation and thoracotomies, interventions which previously have only been carried out by our consultant level doctors.

This year:

- We continued to equip our crew with the most advanced medical equipment, one example of this is the ultrasound scanner; a pocket-sized portable, hand-held, full body scanner, which connects to a smartphone.
- We developed our Patient Aftercare service in both Aintree and Preston Hospitals, to provide support and clinical advice to NWAA patients and families, and to provide us with essential valuable patient data. This service will be fully established across all Major Trauma Centres during 2023.
- We trialled and introduced an evening car response service between October 2021 - March 2022, between 1800-0200 each Friday and Saturday.

We continue to take a 'digital first' approach to all that we do with the utmost consideration to digital security and data governance compliance.

This year:

- We have improved our range of digital payment options, keeping on point with the growing use of contactless payments, and simplified the payment process, making it seamless across all platforms.
- We developed our clinical HEMSbase system so our hospital partnerships can record patient outcomes. This is a first for us and is vital for making evidence-based decisions to assess and evolve the care we provide.

In shaping the future of our Charity, our aspiration is to lead the way in bringing the hospital to the patient and to this end we have big, brave, and bold aspirations over the coming years.

This annual report will inform you further of the achievements, challenges, and performance of our Charity over the last 12 months, in line with our 2018- 2023 strategy, all of which have been made possible thanks to the dedication and commitment of all our supporters, staff, crew and volunteers.

Together we continue to make a lifesaving difference!

Mr A G Jude

Chair, on behalf of the Board of Trustees

Our year by the numbers

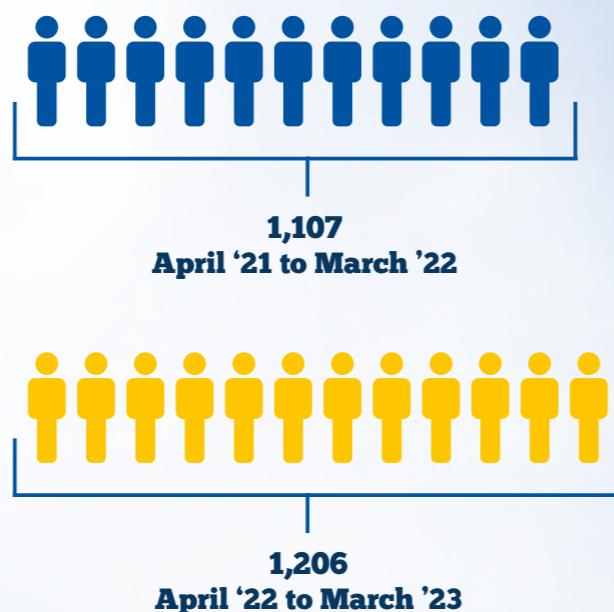
Statistics taken from period 4/2021 to 3/2022 unless otherwise specified.



Number of jobs



Number of patients



Sport/leisure

95

Road traffic collision

753

Transfer



Assault

282

Exposure

11

Accidental injury

660

Intentional self harm

177

Other transfer



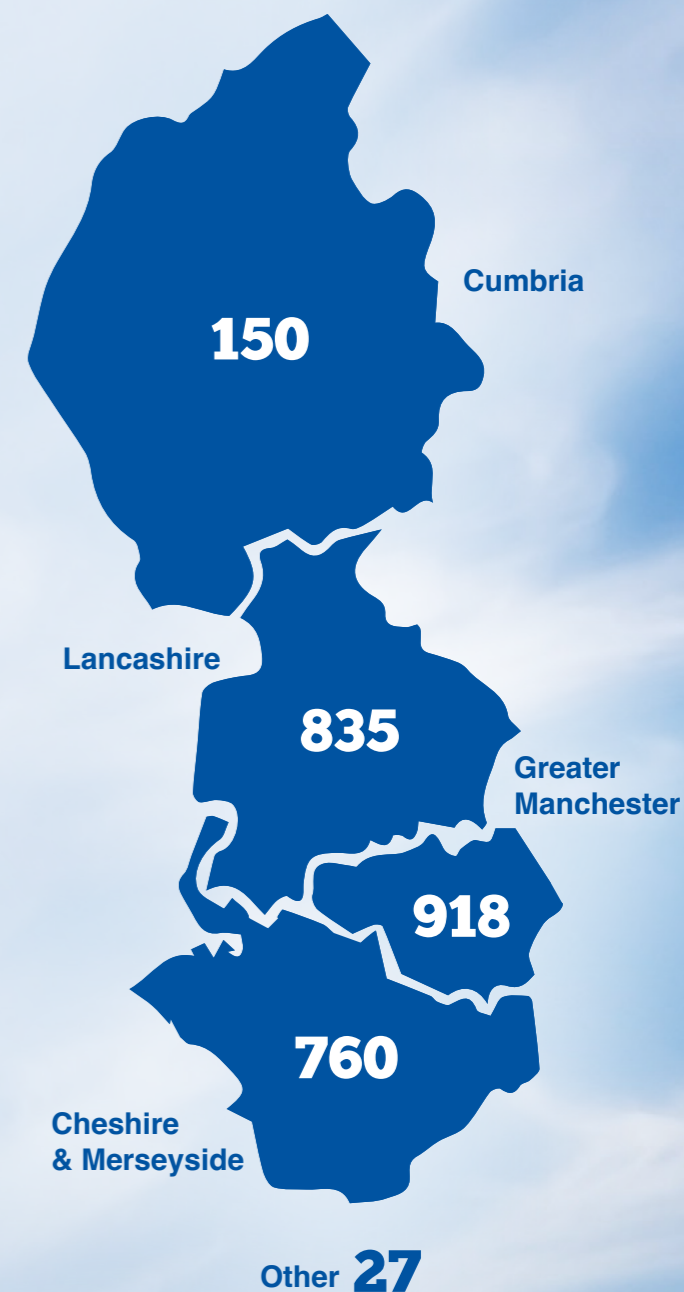
Medical

609

Other

67

Number of missions by county



Number of blood plasma patients



Number of RSIs

136

Number of major haemorrhages

72

Number of intubations without drugs

97

The Trustees, who are also Directors of the Charity for the purposes of the Companies Act, submit their annual report and audited financial statements for the year ended March 31, 2022.

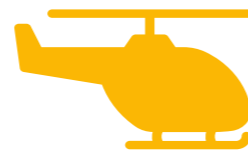
The Trustees have adopted the provisions of the Statement of Recommended Practice 2019 (SORP) Accounting and Reporting for Charities second edition, October 2019, in preparing the annual report and financial statements of the Charity.

The North West Air Ambulance Charity (NWAA) was set up as a company limited by guarantee in 1999. It is governed by a Memorandum and Articles of Association, which were amended in 2017 to update the appointment and tenure of Trustees, objectives, and inclusion of training as a future area where the Charity could be involved. Further changes covering election terms and voting processes were made in 2019.

The objectives for which the Charity is established are:

- The relief of sickness and injury and the protection of human life by the provision or support of an air ambulance service in Lancashire, Cumbria, Greater Manchester, Merseyside, Cheshire, and such other areas as the Trustees may in their absolute discretion determine from time to time
- The provision of training and education in matters relating to the relief of sickness and injury and the protection of human life

The Charity is supported by North West Air Ambulance Promotions Limited, a trading company (primarily shops) and the Friends of the NW Air Ambulance Lottery CIC (Community Interest Company) which runs the Charity's Lottery. Both companies were set up and have the objective of raising funds and/or generating awareness of the Charity and are subsidiaries of the Charity.





Performance summary

Financial performance

The Charity group had a consolidated deficit for the year of £349,630 (2020/21 £1,994,506) but with increased income and costs and a decreased gain on investments.

Summary Financials	1/4/21 to 31/3/22 £k	1/4/20 to 31/3/21 £k
Donations and Legacies	4,062	4,451
Other trading activities	7,174	5,964
Investments	3	9
Total income	11,239	10,425
Commercial trading operations	2,763	1,926
Other fundraising costs	1,968	1,293
Charitable activities	6,876	6,202
Total expenditure	11,606	9,421
Net income	(367)	1,003
Gains/(losses) on investments	18	991
Net movement in funds	(350)	1,995

Total income increased from £10,424,700 to £11,239,148, driven by the increase in retail sales, as shops were able to open fully from April 12th, 2022, following closures due to Covid restrictions. Fundraising activity increased as the year went on, with Events finally taking place as restrictions lifted.

Shops opening meant only a small amount of grant funding was received, compared with last year, and furlough funding ceased once staff returned to work. Commercial trading costs returned to normal levels, with all shops opened and full activity taking place. Unfortunately, three shops had to close during the year, incurring additional dilapidation costs as per the lease agreements.

Fundraising activity slowly returned, with events costs increasing slightly in comparison to last year. Canvassing activity was allowed to start again, with elevated levels of recruitment for Lottery plays during the year. Efforts were made to increase regular giving, with a second approach if supporters didn't initially want to play the Lottery. This was canvassed separately later in the year.

With Covid restrictions ceasing, mission numbers increased as did normal day to day activity. Additional operational costs were incurred as evening car trials carrying doctors and paramedics took place during weekends. Its success has led to it being rolled out further during 22/23.

Staffing levels returned to normal, with significant recruitment taking place to bring fundraising teams back to full capacity to meet the expected increase in demand for events and renewed support.

There was a small gain in investment values in contrast to the notable increase in the previous year. However, the valuation dipped significantly in Q4 as global economic events caused increased volatility in the markets. Further fluctuations in investment values are expected for the remainder of the 22/23 Fiscal Year (FY).

As planned, another response vehicle was purchased to replace an older vehicle, with other capital expenditure focusing on medical equipment replacement. Some equipment for community use was scarce and could not be purchased during the year.

Retail development

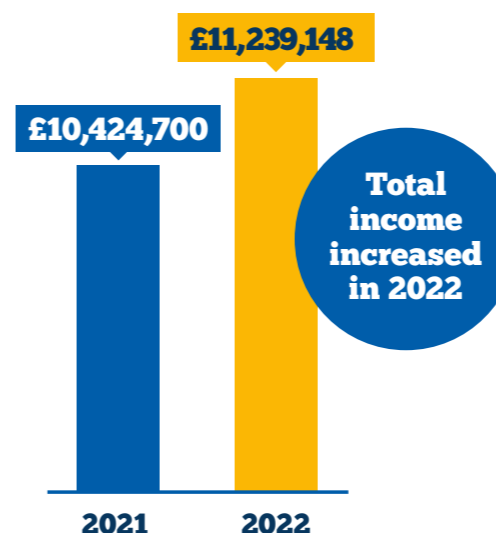
The promotions business returned with a successful year compared with the difficulties experienced during the Covid pandemic restrictions. All shops were opened from April 12, 2021, with good sales levels across most shops.

Two shops were marked for closure during the year as the leases were due for renewal and they were deemed to be uneconomical to remain open. A third shop closed due to forced action by the landlord. Despite the loss of these three stores, the surplus for the year far exceeded pre-Covid returns. Retail was also restructured during the FY21/22 seeing several changes made to capitalise on synergies and improvements to streamline the Retail operation. These being:

- To restructure the senior management of the Retail operation, merging it with that of Facilities Management. To capitalise on the synergies between these two functions.
- To create a second Regional Manager South role to provide all shops with closer, more effective line management.
- To create an On-Line Manager Role to bring together the Donated Stock and On-line functions to ensure a smooth and integrated operation.

Results of subsidiary companies and group

The results of the Charity Group are summarised in the Statement of Financial Activities, and those of the subsidiary companies in the notes to the Financial Statements.





Charitable operations

Clinic impact - Critical Care Paramedics, Helicopter, Evening Car, Expansion of service

What we've done

Extended our Service Level Agreement (SLA) with North West Ambulance Service (NWAS)

Building on a strong relationship and strategic partnership with NWAS, in December 2021 we extended our Service Level Agreement (SLA) for another five years. NWAS provides Critical Care Paramedics (CCPs), Doctors, Medical Director and Consultant Paramedic, Care Quality Commission registration and all aspects of clinical governance for NWAA. It also provides clinical strategy and supports NWAA's clinical aspirations, such as service delivery expansion, clinical team skills, and development pathways.

Introduced Critical Care Paramedics (CCPs) into the team

To enhance and further develop the clinical capabilities of the NWAA crews, investment was made into upskilling existing Paramedics to become CCPs, with NWAS and a partnership with Bangor University providing the academic structure. All NWAA Paramedics now work operationally as CCPs, with the majority still undergoing academic study/sign off. This brings huge patient benefits with CCPs offering additional surgical skills including airway management but, crucially, being able to administer additional specialist drugs such as ketamine.

The CCPs pathway for NWAA Paramedics has also enabled us to amend the terms and conditions of employment meaning all CCPs are now on a permanent secondment with NWAA, instead of having to reapply every two years to remain in post.

Renewed our aviation contract to future-proof the service

Our strategic partnership with existing aviation services provider Babcock Aviation Limited, continues after a brand new contract was agreed, following a robust market test and procurement process, with support from an external aviation expert, which resulted in five bidders and more than 10 potential options being explored. This will provide a future-proofed turn-key aviation service, until at least 2029.

Babcock, who have partnered with NWAA for more than 20 years, proved to be the most appropriate solution, matching the current and potential future needs of NWAA, while enabling service delivery of the clinical strategy. The contract will see two of the existing helicopters upgraded and another replaced with a newer Night Vision Imaging Systems (NVIS) capable aircraft, which would enable us to respond via aircraft at night.

Introduced new and innovative equipment such as...

Schiller Monitor: Having previously used the Lifepak15 monitor which was heavy, cumbersome, and technologically limited, we conducted clinical trials on three alternatives. The Schiller Monitor was chosen for its advanced technology, its ability to communicate with other pieces of clinical equipment - and potentially hospitals - with patient information, and because it weighs less than half of the Lifepak15. We've bought seven monitors, one for each aircraft and vehicle.

Arterial Lines: These were introduced alongside the Schiller Monitor to help measure vital signs/levels more accurately. We bought additional training equipment, and training was conducted in-house by NWAA highly skilled Consultant Level Doctors.

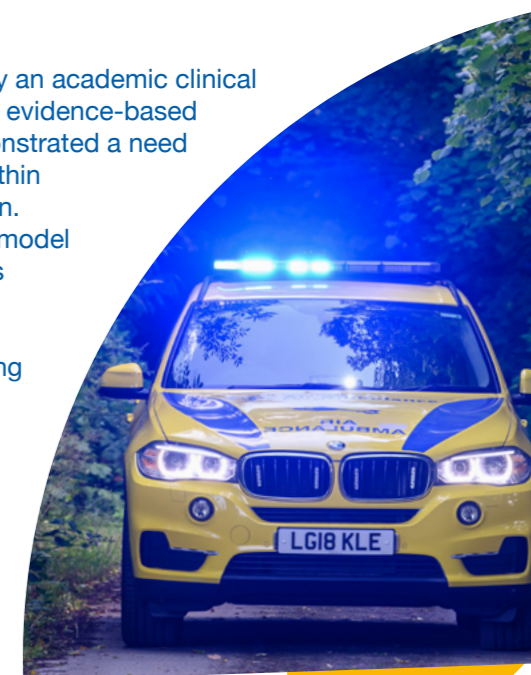
Butterfly ultrasound equipment: Used by the Doctors, with training ongoing to potentially enable use by CCPs, Butterfly iQ+ (Butterfly Network Inc.) is a pocket-sized portable external ultrasound scanner. It's a handheld, single-probe, whole-body ultrasound system, powered by a single silicon chip which connects to a smartphone.

Trialled and introduced an evening car service

An evening car response service was trialled by NWAA for six months between October 2021-March 2022, using an evidence-based approach, and supported by work previously commissioned with Lancaster University.

Based at Barton, it delivered Enhanced Pre-Hospital Care (EPHC) by either Doctor and CCP, or two CCPs, between 1800-0200 each Friday and Saturday.

The trial, validated by an academic clinical study, supported the evidence-based approach, and demonstrated a need for such a service within the North West region. The service delivery model has been adopted as a permanent feature with plans to expand capacity in the coming year, supported by additional clinical recruitment.



Our crew

Within the last four years the number of NWAA Clinical staff has more than doubled, and within the last 12 months there's been an increase of four CCPs and another four Consultant Level Doctors.

Current Clinical Staffing	1/4/21 to 31/3/22	1/4/20 to 31/3/21
Doctor	22	18
CCP	18 moving to 20 in Dec 2022	16
Pilot	7	6
Engineer	3	3
Bank Paramedic	7	5

All clinical staff are provided via an SLA with NWAS. Doctors typically work two days per month with NWAA, with CCPs on full-time, permanent secondment to NWAA. Bank Paramedics are used to cover ad-hoc sickness, and Pilots and Engineers are provided via Babcock.



The difference we made to our patients

The tables below show the activity levels for the last two years.

Number of incidents, patients and treatments

Number of jobs	1/4/21 to 31/3/22	1/4/20 to 31/3/21
Total number of jobs	2,690	2,524
Number of patients	1,206	1,107
Number of RSIs (Rapid Sequence Intubation)	136	125
Number of intubations without drugs	97	79
Major haemorrhages	72	50
Blood plasma patients	72	52

Number of incidents by region

Number of jobs – by type	1/4/21 to 31/3/22	1/4/20 to 31/3/21
Accidental injury	660	713
Road traffic collision	753	656
Medical	609	447
Assault	282	300
Other	67	68
Intentional self-harm	177	211
Sport / Leisure	95	50
Transfer	16	42
Other transfer	20	17
Exposure	11	20
Total	2,690	2,524

Number of jobs by region

Number of missions – by county	1/4/21 to 31/3/22	1/4/20 to 31/3/21
Cumbria	150	111
Lancashire	835	716
Greater Manchester	918	1,000
Merseyside and Cheshire	760	669
Other	27	78
Total	2,690	2,574





Meet our patients

Rob's story

On 4 June 2022, Rob, a plumber from Farington Moss, Preston was working in his garden ahead of a family gathering. Cutting wood using a new chainsaw, the machinery bounced back off the wood hitting Rob in the chest, leaving him fighting for his life.

Rob said: *"I was preparing the garden as we were getting ready for a party. I was cutting up some logs that needed clearing and the chainsaw bounced back up. It hit me in the chest and I had to fight to get it off me."*

Caught in Rob's t-shirt, the chainsaw had caused significant damage. Rob called for help from his wife Karen.

Karen said: *"I was on the patio on the phone to my mum and I heard Rob shouting my name. He's always pottering around in the garden but this was a different shout to his usual."*

"He came from the side of the shed and walked around and I could see the chainsaw. He was trying to push it away from his body and then he just lay down on the floor. I hung up on my mum and ran down to him. I could see it was serious with the amount of blood."

Karen attempted to stop the bleeding using a dustsheet from the shed pressing onto Rob's wound while speaking to 999 call handlers.

Rob said: *"There was just blood, flowing out everywhere. I was quite conscious and calm – the adrenaline was kicking-in, but at the same time, we both knew it was serious. We told each other we loved each other."*

Paramedics arrived after 13 minutes and due to the severity of Rob's injuries, the air ambulance was requested immediately. A helicopter carrying a Consultant HEMS Doctor and HEMS Critical Care Paramedic arrived at scene to treat Rob.

The North West Air Ambulance Charity's enhanced pre-hospital care teams carry eight units of blood on board to every job. Eimhear Quinn and Adam Wager, Consultant HEMS Doctor and HEMS Critical Care Paramedic for the Charity, were the team on the helicopter that day.

The crew arrived and used blood products to maintain blood flow and pressure to his heart, allowing Rob to travel to hospital for immediate surgery. Without this, Rob would have died before arrival to hospital.

Eimhear said: *"We immediately started to transfuse Rob with our blood products as quickly as we could and we needed to move him towards an operating theatre as soon as possible."*

"Undoubtedly without the pre-hospital blood transfusions, Rob would have died on the way to hospital. The injuries he sustained included laceration of his subclavian artery and vein. These are large vessels inside the chest that originate very close to the heart and pump blood at high volume and pressure."

The seriousness of Rob's condition meant Dr Eimhear and paramedic Adam prepared Rob in case he suffered a traumatic cardiac arrest on his way to hospital, caused by ongoing catastrophic blood loss. Treating this would have required the team to stop the ambulance and perform a resuscitative thoracotomy – a form of emergency surgery that provides access to the chest for a better view of Rob's major organs.

Rob was transferred via land ambulance to Blackpool Victoria Hospital, where the regional cardiothoracic surgeons are based. After arriving in the Emergency Department, he received a further three units – bringing the total units of blood received by Rob during the early stages of treatment to eleven.

Eimhear said: *"I estimate Rob lost three plus litres of blood. An adult male has about five litres of blood, so Rob had lost approximately 60% of his circulating volume before we arrived. Without blood transfusion he wouldn't have survived the ambulance journey."*

After six days in Blackpool's Intensive Care Unit, Rob moved to Wythenshawe Hospital for surgery to treat injuries to his arm, which risked being amputated. On Thursday 30 June, Rob was discharged from hospital and returned home. The following day, Rob and Karen celebrated their 16th wedding anniversary.

Rob said: *"We watched TV and just sat together as a family. It was a bit emotional coming home. We were all back together again and it was just nice to spend time with my family."*

Karen said: *"Our daughter's 17th birthday party was coming up as well. All she kept saying when we asked what she wanted was 'I just want my dad home', and he's here now."*

Since returning home, Rob and his family have paid tribute to the North West Air Ambulance Charity crew for the care he received and to the charity for carrying blood on board their vehicles. The family wrote an emotional letter to Eimhear, Adam, and the whole charity to express their gratitude.



**Rob needed
11
units of blood**

Rob said: *"I think doctors give you time...they've given me time. Time to watch my kids grow up, time to be with my wife. They're giving me time to grow a bit older and appreciate life a little bit more, and enjoy it."*

"The intervention and treatment from the North West Air Ambulance Charity was the pinnacle point for me. They gave me the time to get to the hospital. I've been very lucky - I feel like a very lucky man."

Meet our patients

Dylan's story

In October 2021, Dylan Fryers from Warrington, left his home to buy some sweets with his brother Ethan, and on the way was involved in a hit-and-run.

Dylan's mum Sam was sitting at home when Ethan came running back into the house.

Sam said: *"I could barely understand him. Then I heard 'Dylan has been hit by a car'. I ran out as fast as I could."*

"Dylan was just lying in the middle of the road. It was like watching Casualty without a pause button."

Dylan had major swelling of the brain and had suffered multiple skull fractures. He also had broken ribs, a collapsed lung and bruising all over his body.

Paramedics arrived, and due to the serious nature of Dylan's injuries, the North West Air Ambulance Charity was rushed to the scene. As it was after the time helicopters are sent to incidents, the crew was dispatched by road using one of the charity's Critical Care Vehicles.

Critical Care Vehicles contain the same equipment as a helicopter would and allow us to deliver enhanced pre-hospital care to the patient through our HEMS Doctors and Paramedics.

Sam said: *"I realised just how serious it was when the doctor arrived. He came over to me and explained they were bringing the hospital to the roadside."*

"Then they explained they were going to intubate him because he was very agitated and they didn't know what damage was done at that point."

"It was better to put him in a coma to let his body calm down. That's what they did at the roadside."

"Bringing the hospital to the roadside saved that travel time, they just crack on and they explained it fully to me."

Dylan was intubated, or RSI'd by the doctor. He was then transported by land ambulance to Aintree University Hospital. He remained in a coma for 11 days. Now after months of rehabilitation, Dylan is slowly returning to normal life.

Sam is forever grateful to the North West Air Ambulance Team for saving Dylan. When Dylan had recovered enough, the family dropped cakes off to the crew, and hundreds of other healthcare staff who treated him for their care to say thank you. Sam said:

"The Air Ambulance is the reason why Dylan is alive now. One hundred million per cent. That is why Dylan is still with us now and not in a worse state than he could have been in."



Our plans for the future - What is next

Introducing blood on board to all our aircraft and response car teams

The capability to deliver blood, via the EPHC model, was introduced into NWAA in January 2019. Since then, more than 200 transfusions have been given, making a significant impact to the chances of survival for patients across the region. The current operating model is provided by the Doctor-led team, either via aircraft or critical care vehicle, and supported by a strategic partnership with Greater Manchester Blood Bikes (a charitable organisation) and Salford Hospital Blood Service. Blood products are provided by Salford Hospital via a Service Level Agreement (SLA) and delivered daily and on request to Barton Airbase by Greater Manchester Blood Bikes volunteers.

We plan to expand the current capacity to deliver blood by the Doctor-led aircraft, by increasing its use to enable both Doctor and CCP led aircraft and response vehicles. This is a challenging and ambitious goal, supported by NWAS whose clinical governance and procedures underpin all essential ethical and governance requirements, blood is planned to be available on all platforms by Q1 of 2023. This will ensure an equitable blood transfusion service.



Increasing our service delivery by providing 12-hour cover on each aircraft daily

From October 2022, all aircraft will operate for a period of 12 hours each, something previously only provided via the Doctor-led aircraft.

The Doctor-led aircraft will continue to work from 08:00-20:00, 365 days a year. Previously, helicopter provision, staggered seasonally across the day to provide maximum flying potential, covered 10 hours on each of the two CCP-led aircraft. The increase allows for a more robust staffing model and better work-life balance for crews and raises coverage of enhanced pre-hospital care by a total of four hours per day.



From October 2022, all aircraft will operate for a period of 12 hours each



Bringing online upgraded helicopters

As previously outlined, the helicopter contract with Babcock has been renewed and the scope of the contract changed significantly to enable delivery of the NWAA clinical strategy. The upgraded and replacement helicopters will be introduced in a phased approach, between April-November 2023.

The new contract will see increased performance for two of the existing aircraft, giving a payload increase of 115kg which can be used to carry additional fuel, equipment, medical trainees/observers, and potentially a parent and child at an incident.

All aircraft will benefit from brand-new medical-fit interiors, including:

- The latest ergonomically beneficial stretchers, to aid both crew-loading procedures and patient treatment/comfort
- Improved seating and lighting
- Additional storage solutions

Although not possible with the three existing airframes, the replacement aircraft will have the ability to operate at night, should an evidence-based study (timeframe to be confirmed) suggest this as a future option.

To support operational resilience, the new contract includes a dedicated, NWAA-branded, back-up aircraft to provide cover during planned maintenance or ad-hoc prolonged downtime. The current service delivery standards for aircraft and pilot availability sit at more than 98%. Another added benefit of the new contract is the provision of a dedicated seventh regional pilot to support the existing team of six, along with the pool of available touring pilots provided by Babcock.

Finally, with a digital-first based approach, all three helicopters will have the ability to operate as a data flight cell, meaning patient data can be transmitted while in the air, representing a huge step forward in the aligned use of digital-based solutions and improvements to existing working practices.



Digital

Moved to software-based rostering

A bespoke software solution has replaced and upgraded the complex and previously demanding manual task of creating a robust roster, saving time and resources. The much-welcomed digital step forward offers further options and shift scenarios and has been used to provide accurate workforce planning needs in terms of CCP headcount.

The system, which was used to define the crew working patterns and is available for at least the next two years, was made possible by a supporter donation which helped with both the purchase and ongoing contract for a total of three years.

Expanded the use of our Asset Management system “Asset Panda” to include stores and drugs

NWAA uses a cloud-based asset management system which has been gradually introduced over the last two years to control the difficult and often time-consuming task of clinical consumables and drug stock management. The equipment is currently used successfully to manage all clinical equipment/ daily checklists, and will be broadened to cover IT, Retail, and Health and Safety, within the next 12 months.



Working towards paperless patient records (EPRF)

An initiative to go paperless for patient records is a key objective because it will save crew time on re-typing the same information and enable a more seamless and secure transfer of patient sensitive data. We are working in partnership with NWAS on a trial to integrate our patient reporting system (HEMSBASE) with NWAS’s direct access system, so receiving hospitals can be provided with secure, timely and relevant information electronically.

Purchasing Schiller Monitors that can talk to other pieces of kit

NWAA will provide crews with the most advanced and innovative medical equipment available. Any decisions to purchase clinical equipment are based on how much it will affect patient outcome, so any opportunity to work digitally and, more effectively is also factored in. As outlined in the ‘upgraded helicopter’ section, by using a digital approach the more technologically advanced equipment will be able to transmit data to a receiving hospital while still in the air, saving time and providing the hospital with a much-needed heads-up. Even marginal gains like these will improve patient outcomes.



Patient aftercare

How does it work?

A consideration in our approach, is to enable an integrated and joined up way of working with our receiving hospitals, focusing on the six Major Trauma Centres (MTCs) across our region.

A Patient Aftercare service has been established in both Aintree and Preston Hospitals, the two busiest in terms of receiving NWAA patients are in the process of rolling this service out across all regional MTCs and will have this fully established during 2023.

The aftercare service provides the following:

1. Immediate clinical feedback to our crews, via hospital based Major Trauma Practitioners (MTP), funded by NWAA, and acting on behalf of NWAA
2. Support and Clinical advice to NWAA patients, families and loved ones
3. Essential valuable patient data via Trauma, Audit and Research Network (TARN) submissions, this data is essential to evidence and support via research, the real difference NWAA makes to its patients

Next steps

- Fully establish and embed at each location
- Introduce a manager role to oversee
- Begin use of TARN data via research team





Fundraising

The Trustees of the North West Air Ambulance Charity are committed to a responsible approach to fundraising, treating donors and fundraisers respectfully and fairly, so they feel valued and free to donate if, when and how they wish to.

We adhere to the Fundraising Regulator Code of Practice in all fundraising activity. The Charity is supported by North West Air Ambulance Promotions Limited, a trading company (primarily shops), and the Friends of the NW Air Ambulance Lottery CIC, which runs the Charity's lottery, its largest income stream. The Charity is registered with the Fundraising Regulator and complies with its Code of Fundraising Practice. The North West Air Ambulance Charity relies entirely on donations to fund our work. Without the public's generosity, taking part in our weekly lottery or becoming regular donors, we would not be able to provide our lifesaving service.

We value their support, so we work very closely with carefully chosen fundraising agencies to make sure anyone who is fundraising on our behalf represents our organisation and our work to the highest standards.

We are open about how we raise our funds, and we pro-actively engage with the Fundraising Regulator so that any concerns can be highlighted and addressed as a priority.

Our fundraising follows the Code of Fundraising Practice, and we provide training and inductions for new employees as well as implementing compliance policies to reduce the risk of any breaches of fundraising guidelines.

Throughout the year we have adopted an innovative approach to fundraising, which you can see detailed in this report. We have also looked at diversifying our ways of generating income, to ensure sustainable funds for the future.

Overall, income from Charitable fundraising finished slightly below the target of £1.83m, at £1.78m, just £43k behind. Initially it seemed supporters were not quite ready to attend events, but regular giving increased rapidly during the year as Direct Debit sign-ups proved very successful.



The North West Air Ambulance Charity relies entirely on generosity of the public to fund our work, we receive NO government or NHS funding



Community and events

Community:

Community support plays a vital role in our operation, so we are keen to actively strengthen existing connections and create new ones. In 2021/22 we recruited a new team of Regional Fundraisers and a Fundraising Assistant to support fundraising activity in communities across the North West, raising the Charity's profile and awareness of the work we do.

In order to maximise funds raised through static collection tins, we introduced a new policy which maps out their locations and helps us develop new improved ways of collecting donations. We are focusing especially on contactless technologies making it easier for people to give, as day-to-day transactions become increasingly cashless. We are also investing in opportunities to extend our supporter base and attracting a younger demographic, including working more with schools and colleges.

What's next:

Our Community Team will continue to establish relationships with schools and will launch a new Schools Fundraising Presentation and Lesson Pack to attract more support from the education sector. We will also be holding our first crew Q&A sessions at colleges and universities so we can engage directly with students to increase understanding of our work and our Charity status.

Having a presence at high profile events across the North West such as the region's 10k race calendar and other mass participation events, will help us to connect and steward existing and new potential supporters, and raise awareness about our Charity, so we plan to continue to expand our events portfolio in this way.

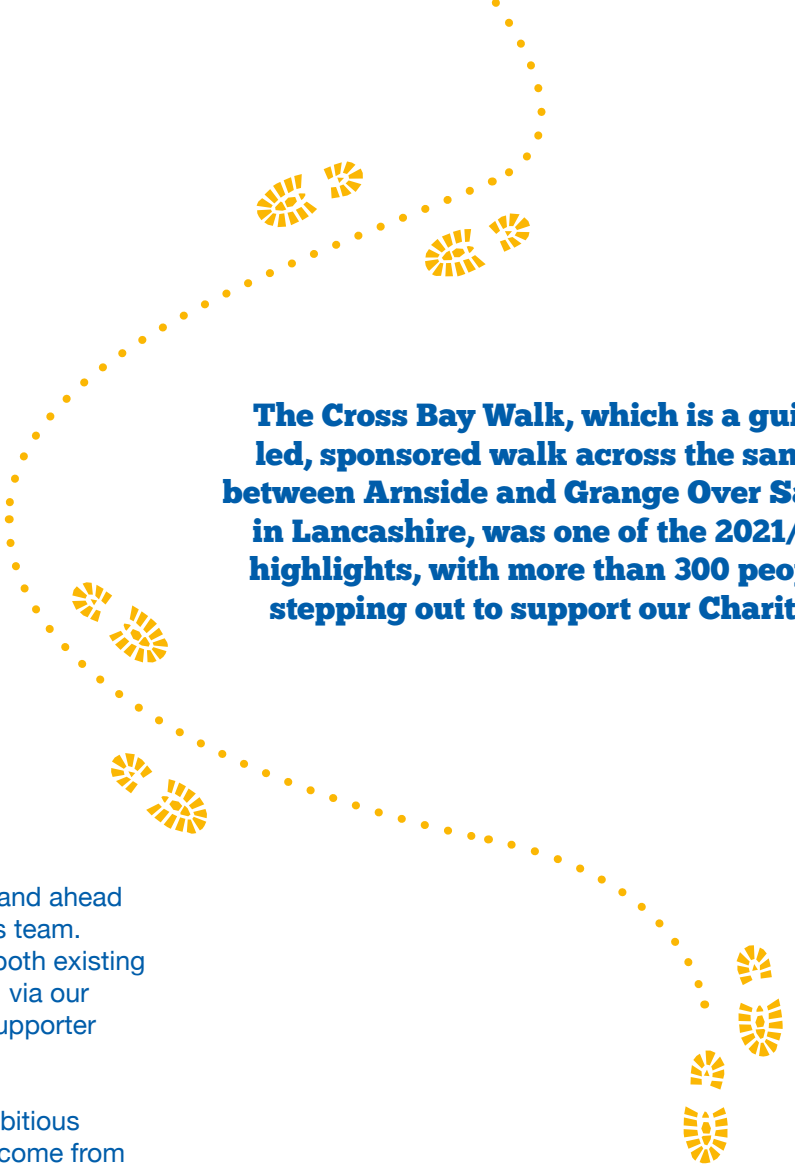
We intend to implement an In Memoriam marketing strategy and stewardship programme. This new initiative will see us build relationships with bereaved family and friends of patients treated by our Charity, and those who simply want to support us as a Charity following the loss of a loved one. We will do this by working with funeral directors and crematoria, and by making the best use of digital marketing platforms such as MuchLoved which specialises in stewarding In Memoriam fundraising communications. In parallel with our new website, we launched our MuchLoved site where supporters can create tribute pages in memory of a loved one.

Social media and new technology are playing an ever-present and increased part in everyone's lives, so we are embracing the introduction of digital solutions and innovations to create new opportunities for people to support us and to steward our fundraisers – that includes launching the Charity's first Facebook Challenge engaging and recruiting new audiences with a call to action to walk 310,000 steps in March. Investment in new contactless payment devices as an alternative to collection tins/buckets will also help us use the latest technology to give our supporters the best quality experience.

We plan to increase the Charity's presence in new online spaces such as online fundraising platform Enthuse, which will allow more seamless journeys for event participants, from the point of registration to creation of fundraising pages and automated, behaviour-driven stewardship journeys and incorporate digital elements into our Christmas 2022 campaign including virtual Christmas cards.



The Charity continues to look at new and innovative ways to fundraise



The Cross Bay Walk, which is a guided, sponsored walk across the sands between Arnside and Grange Over Sands in Lancashire, was one of the 2021/22 highlights, with more than 300 people stepping out to support our Charity.

Events:

A Calendar of Events for the current year and ahead will be created by a new dedicated Events team. Our events will be designed to appeal to both existing and new audiences, and will be promoted via our website, social channels, retail, and our supporter and volunteer networks.

We will embark on our first year of our ambitious five-year strategy to increase our gross income from Community and Events activity by 302% from £600k in the current year to £2.4m by 2026/27.

What's next:

The Events team will expand, and our events portfolio will be further developed and will deliver a diverse calendar in line with the five-year strategy, including developing bespoke events – digital and physical, with the objective of achieving our ambitious income targets, but also to attract a new younger demographic of fundraisers, an audience which offers new opportunity for the Charity as identified by a brand audit which was conducted earlier in the year.



High value giving

Major gifts:

Major Gifts is a relatively new pipeline for 21/22 with a few existing major donors to the charity giving above £5k. The five-year strategy enables investment in this area mainly in terms of recruitment. 2021/22 saw the Charity introduce a new Ambassador Programme which will introduce the Charity to new audiences which have the propensity to make a high value contribution to the Charity.

What's next:

The aim is to expand the Ambassador Programme from five to ten. Develop a schedule of Major Donor events to increase income and awareness and increase the prospect pipeline of Major Donors and continue to deliver a strong stewardship plan for all Major Donors. All activity will support the growth of our five-year strategy, as we look to recruit a Major Gifts Fundraiser and Stewardship Co-ordinator in 22/23. This additional resource will support the growth of Major Gifts income through research, donor mapping and the delivery of the highest standard of stewardship which will result in increased donor loyalty.

Trust and Foundations:

In 21/22, in line with the five-year strategy, the Charity moved away from a part-time, external consultant-led approach to Trust and Foundations fundraising. The intention was to realise the identified potential for this income stream. The Charity successfully recruited an in-house full-time experienced Trusts and Foundations Fundraiser which has resulted in the Charity submitting larger, unrestricted grant opportunities both regionally and nationally and increase applications.



What's next:

With experienced resource in-house in place the ambition is to build strong long-term relationships with grant giving Trusts and Trustees which will result in an increase in multi-year pledges and provide excellent stewardship by encouraging base visits and impact reports.

Corporate:

After a challenging couple of years for business, re-engagement with our corporate supporters was a focus for 2021/22. A key focus was to work closely with the Operations Team to develop a detailed project list which would enable the Corporate Team to approach companies across the region with potential sponsorship opportunities which are in line with the Corporate Social Responsibility policy and their level of giving. The team also supported other areas of the Charity with companies being approached for Gifts-in-Kind which resulted in product being donated to our shops.

What's next:

In 22/23 we plan to develop the project list further, and focus on securing long term partnerships, sponsorships, and Charity of the Year Partnerships with leading corporate organisations across the region. The intention is to recruit an experienced Corporate Fundraising Manager to lead the team to deliver its ambitious income growth over the next five years.

Individual giving

In 2021/22, the charity introduced a new direct debit facility to enable supporters to make regular donations via their bank accounts. We have seen strong growth in this area, with further initiatives planned for next year to help the charity acquire and retain supporters.

Like all not-for-profit organisations, the Covid-19 pandemic had a significant impact on the charity's fundraising capabilities. A cross departmental working group was created to introduce an appeal which would be both online and offline. The campaign proved very successful, exceeding its income target by 300%.

We also tested some cold acquisition campaigns which performed admirably, generating income and new names which the charity can market to in future.

A new online donation page was created with support from an external agency. The platform has enabled the charity to provide its supporters with a variety of ways to donate which includes Debit/Credit Card/PayPal/Google and Apple Pay. We can also develop campaign specific donation pages with ease. The previous page only offered PayPal as a solution.

What's next:

It's important that we understand how and why people give to our Charity so we can best attract and retain their support.

We plan to use several initiatives to give us this insight including developing a forecasting model for regular giving recruitment and retention, and comparing an appeal made within Skylines against one made in a standalone mailing.

Developing a four-way cold mailing test will allow us to explore the cost effectiveness of non-face-to-face options. We will also develop a supporter journey retention programme specifically for anyone in their first year of regular giving.

We will explore opportunities to convert active cash donors and lapsed lottery givers to regular monthly giving and develop a new creative agency relationship.



Beaverbrooks Charitable Trust Trustees with Charity CEO Heather Arrowsmith

Ambassador Allan Price with Charity CEO Heather Arrowsmith

Our aim is to be the preferred Charity to support for businesses and staff across the region

Supporter engagement

The Supporter Engagement team is often the first point of contact in the Charity for supporters, potential donors, and members of the public.

The team is responsible for managing a variety of people, engaging with supporters by phone, email and in writing about a wide range of enquiries, ensuring these are managed in accordance with our customer service standards.

Throughout 2021/22, the Supporter Engagement team received regular training on the licensing conditions and codes of practice (regulated by the Gambling Commission) and regularly conducted audits of all internal processes and procedures to ensure it continues to successfully deliver an efficient and first-class supporter experience for the Charity.

What's next:

In 2022/23, we will be reviewing potential contact centre solutions to help us better manage calls, emails, live chat, and Social Media interactions through one platform.

There will be a continuation of the existing training programme, with additional activities undertaken in relation to streamlining internal processes.

The Supporter Engagement team will also lead on a project to procure a new CRM - one which will target and build relationships with new and existing supporters, view our audience holistically, track and improve marketing performance and integrate with our fundraising platforms.

Legacy

Our involvement in the National Free Wills Network and Freewills.co.uk, which give supporters the opportunity to write their will for free, allows us to start the legacy giving conversation and introduce it as a way to support us.

These dedicated weeks, promoted in October 2021 and March 2022, received a positive response, encouraging supporters to move from considering making a pledge in their will into taking action.

In November 2021, we introduced a legacy event at Brockholes Nature Reserve in Lancashire which was attended by 131 guests, generating six legacy enquiries and one-off donations totalling £6.8k.

What's next:

We intend to recruit a dedicated Legacy Marketing Officer, and a Legacy Administration Officer to the Charity. To maximise the opportunity for income within the Legacy income stream. The new team will collaborate with teams across the Charity to build an internal culture of legacies and make sure legacy conversations are introduced to supporters at the appropriate stage of their journey with the Charity.

In 2022/23, we will see more Legacy Marketing Events take place at our air base in Barton the focus will be to show our supporters the impact a legacy makes to the work we do.

We plan to develop campaigns through our shops, online, by post and email, to raise awareness and encourage supporters to make a pledge in their will.





Lottery

The lottery company is licensed by the Gambling Commission.

The lottery company recruits players primarily door-to-door and in privately owned venues. It provides extensive training to its representatives on areas of social responsibility, including dealing with vulnerable people, and all canvassers are registered with Dementia Friends. The Charity ensures high standards of ethical behaviour from external representatives at all times, with regular reports and details of each canvasser's training and meetings taking place to review concerns and discuss performance, as well as updates on our charitable activities. In addition, NWAA runs inductions for canvassers on their role as Charity Ambassadors, and this includes strict protocols which mean they cannot enter people's homes or approach sheltered accommodation. Canvassers are instructed to walk away from anyone who does not engage or shows any sign of vulnerability. NWAA also has its own Social Responsibility in Gambling policy.

The CIC has a remote lottery license. This enabled some growth and acquisition of the lottery during the year through alternative routes to market such as telemarketing campaigns, social media, and the website. We have introduced welcome calls, where new players are thanked for their support and asked about their experience with the canvasser to ensure they were happy to sign up.

It is recognised that with the enhanced license comes further regulatory responsibility and therefore we have developed a wide-ranging lottery assurance plan, including the requirement for a further audit of processes, responsibilities, and procedures by a third party to ensure our processes and plans are robust. We have also strengthened our staffing resource in this area.

Key objectives

Our aim is to make our weekly lottery as appealing as possible, by improving the player experience, increasing winnings, and engaging regularly, so players keep playing. Online marketing and positive exposure will also help us to expand the age demographic of weekly lottery players.

While focusing on increasing the number of players, we are of course committed to ensure we continue to deliver the highest level of compliance in line with the Gambling Commission's regulations which was confirmed by an external lottery audit in January 2022.



Weekly lottery

In 2021/22, we increased capacity within our lottery team by appointing a new Lottery Promotions Officer to manage acquisition and retention campaigns, also support with compliance aspects of our lotteries. We introduced Lift Off Lotto welcome calls three months after sign-up - feedback has been excellent from recipients so far and we hope this will help stem attrition rates.

Further initiatives have been undertaken to help retain and reactivate players, these include emails sent at six months and twelve months since lottery player sign-up. We have successfully updated and distributed new canvasser packs to provide our professional fundraising agency with more relevant information to better sell the lottery to new players.

What's next:

As part of our continuous efforts to improve the experience of our lottery players in 2022/23 the Charity plans to appoint a highly reputable External Lottery Manager (ELM) to look after its weekly lottery operation. The ELM will deliver services including weekly lottery draws, customer service, support for players, distribution of winners' cheques, and communications in line with our lottery player supporter journey.

We also intend to launch a new Lift Off Lotto webpage through the appointment of a design agency. Players will be able to sign up to our Lift Off Lotto and choose to round up their play with an additional donation which we can claim Gift Aid against.

A Direct Response Television (DRTV) campaign will use digital channels to promote our Lift Off Lotto. We plan to appoint a creative media company to introduce video advertisements for platforms such as YouTube, encouraging people to play through our new microsite.

We will create a telemarketing campaign to encourage lapsed players to re-join the Lift Off Lotto, utilising the new ELM to support the delivery of a robust supporter journey. We will continue to look for ways to increase our Lottery offer, undertaken horizon scanning and through conversations with potential partners who can offer a new gaming product which the charity can add to its portfolio.

Seasonal raffle

Income from our Season Raffle remained positive throughout 2021/22 - a redesign of the existing collateral was completed to entice more supporters to participate. Draw tickets continued to be sent alongside the charity's newsletter, Skylines.

We conducted data analysis and insight on players to help us shape activity for 2022/23. Furthermore, we also spoke with various other charities to understand their approaches to further develop the product and maximise income.

What's next:

In 2022/23, we will be creating a profile of responders from previous stand-alone raffle campaigns to help us build a stronger picture of the best cold audiences to target on future campaigns.

Our Seasonal Raffle has had a revamp so now it has become a twice-yearly mailing which is separate from the Skyline newsletter, meaning our raffles can be sent to a cold audience.

Seasonal raffle tickets will also be available to purchase online from our website for the first time.

Marketing, communications and PR

2021/22 saw the launch of the Charity's new website in August 2021. This was a major project for the Charity and involved all teams across the Charity. The new site has allowed us to engage with our supporters more effectively and will future-proof the Charity as new digital innovations evolve.

We recognise we need to make it as easy as possible for people to learn about and support what we do and the impact we have. During 2021/22 our objective has been to invest in digital marketing and develop a one-click approach to everything. This will continue throughout the next five years.

Our supporter e-newsletter, launched in 2021-22, and now has a reach of 29,000. 2021/22 also saw PR moving in house to support the growing team to share fundraising stories, as well as patient stories which highlight the incredible real-life outcomes of what we do.

Bringing PR in-house has meant that we have been able to improve how we monitor the Charity's media coverage and use a database of contacts to make sure our stories are circulated to the most relevant journalists regionally and nationally.

A brand audit was carried out to understand the level of awareness about our Charity across the region and showed that, although people knew of us, they often did not realise we were a Charity that receives no government funding or that we are not part of the NHS. In response to this, Q3 and Q4 campaigns featured creatives to communicate the key message "we receive no government funding" across various channels.

Hashtags featured in the creatives - #NWAAstonishing, #NWAAmazing and #NWAAwesome - proved particularly popular and #NWAAmazing continues to be a great asset to social copy, outside of the quarterly campaigns.

The audit results also highlighted opportunities to increase support, so going forward the focus will be on digital development, testing and trialling new and emerging digital concepts to expand our reach and supporter base significantly.

What's next:

2022/23 will see a continued focus on digital marketing. An audit of our current digital and online marketing and channels will take place, and the results of the audit will inform a development plan which will be delivered over the next five years. A new Digital Marketing Manager will be recruited to drive our digital first strategy raising our profile and expanding our audience to include a younger demographic across the region.

#NWAAstonishing
#NWAAmazing
#NWAAwesome

Volunteer engagement

As part of a developing programme of volunteer reward and recognition, NWAA celebrated individual length of service milestones across all volunteer roles, awarding certificates to volunteers for one, two, five, 10, 15, and 20 years' service and, for the majority, giving a face-to-face thank you.

The 2022 volunteer survey shows that NWAA volunteers are now more diverse, with 7% of those who responded coming from a non-white background compared to 0% in 2020. Volunteers say they're positive about their volunteer experience with us and continue to rate NWAA volunteering opportunities above 9/10.

Improved volunteer KPIs mean NWAA's community and retail volunteer base should grow so we're able to operate effectively and efficiently, not only maximising income for the Charity, but also offering a positive and engaging experience for volunteers and supporters.

Volunteer numbers dropped as less volunteers were required during Covid, but after recruitment during quarter four, volunteer numbers increased to 374. 125 of these were within fundraising and 249 volunteering in retail.

What's next:

We are committed to equipping our volunteers with easy and accessible ways to learn the skills they need to succeed and stay safe while they're volunteering with us. Updated online volunteer training will be introduced in 2022/23 and we will also explore specialist training for volunteers so that we can support personal development and meet specific needs in our retail operations.

Our first NWAA Volunteer Awards will also launch, giving volunteers the opportunity to receive formal recognition for their efforts. Staff and volunteers will have the chance to nominate anyone who they feel has shown outstanding commitment, dedication, and been an exceptional representative of our Charity.

New volunteer roles will be introduced with a focus on community engagement and research in our fundraising team.

NWAA is working towards achieving Investing in Volunteers status, completing an audit, and collaborating with volunteers and staff across the Charity to improve our volunteer programme.



Retail

The Promotions business was able to achieve 50 weeks of sales after the final Covid lockdown, so recovery was ahead of expectations, delivering strong end of year results.

Three shops were closed within the year, two of them due to commercial decisions and one where the landlord required us to return the premises.

Staffing brought its challenges because of recruitment issues and Covid-19 sickness levels.

For most of the year, the Promotions business was brought into the Operations Directorate and there was a further Retail management change at the end of the year to create a more robust management structure.



Complaints and compliments

Our complaints policy is available via our website, email, and via post. In 2021-22, seven complaints were received, of which four related to our fundraising. We take complaints very seriously – they provide the Charity with an opportunity to gain experience and take the appropriate action to minimise the risk of a recurrence. We also publish an internal complaints and compliments report which is shared with our Directors. By recording compliments and comments received from the public we can share the information with relevant staff, which supports our continual improvement of our supporter journey.

All our direct marketing communications contain clear instructions of how a supporter can easily opt out of receiving any further communication if they wish to. We are signed up to the Fundraising Preference Service to enable people to let us know that they do not wish to receive fundraising communications from us, and we received two requests from this service last year.



Governance

Organisation structure

The Charity and its Promotions and Lottery subsidiaries are governed by the Trustees who are also Directors of the companies. The Trustees hold Board Meetings four times a year and, where necessary, hold occasional meetings and communications via tele and video conferences between official board meetings.

Trustee governance

Trustees appointed by the Charity are unpaid. They are appointed for a period of up to three years, and at the end of that three-year term, they may be re-appointed. Trustees are selected for their abilities to make an effective contribution to the Charity, and key attributes and experience include:

- Business management
- Marketing
- Fiscal management
- Governance and Legal
- Medical/clinical experience
- Charity management

The Board of Trustees is chosen to reflect the diverse range of skills needed. The Charity undertook a review of the composition of the Board, considering the skills and experience mix required and those already in place, to ensure a good cross-section of skills and that the Board is not over dependent on individual Trustees in most areas. It can, therefore, expect a proficient level of resilience and challenge.

The Board recognises that, on occasion, this may require specialist input and assurance. It has, for example, ensured that it has external aviation support during the procurement of its helicopter provision; and it sought specialist support to review the challenges faced by the retail business during the pandemic.



The appraisal and self-assessment of Trustees has been put in place, which has fed into improving training and development for Trustees. Trustees are accountable for the operation of the Charity and its subsidiary companies; decisions regarding key risk, strategy, annual budget agreement and major purchases are reserved for the Board.

The overall Accountability Framework for the organisation, showing the Board and Sub Committee composition and their Terms of Reference, is agreed annually by the Board.

Governance review

In 2021, Crowe undertook a review of NWAA's compliance and governance framework. The review was recommended by the Trustees in response to the updated 2020 Charity Code of Governance. The code of governance is not a legal or regulatory requirement but represents good practice.

NWAA was assessed against key areas including purpose, leadership, integrity, decision making, risk control, board effectiveness, EDI, openness, and accountability.

The report concluded that NWAA showed considerable evidence of compliance with the code in line with recognised good practice. Recommendations were raised for considerations by the Board about the organisation's development and enhancement, and these will be considered to future-proof governance arrangements.



Leadership team (LT)

The running of the Charity and subsidiaries led by the Chief Executive is undertaken by the Leadership Team following delegated powers of authority. The Leadership Team is made up of:

- Chief Executive Officer
- Medical Director
- Director of Income and Engagement
- Director of Operations
- Director of Finance and Resources

The Medical Director is provided by North West Ambulance Service NHS Trust, a key strategic partner, as part of a service level agreement arrangement. The role is essential to manage and be held accountable for the clinical governance of the Charity. The position strengthens the revisions to the SLA and provides assurance to the Trustees that the Charity is operating in a compliant clinical manner and, accordingly, in their approach to risk.

Legal

Company Secretarial and Governance advice is provided by Brabners LLP.

Associations

The Charity is a member of Air Ambulances UK. The Association was established as a membership body for those organisations which form the air ambulance services in the UK, and extensive use is being made of the contacts with forums available for all AA CEOs, Finance Directors, Operations Directors, and Human Resources Managers.



Board sub-committees

Finance Sub-Committee (FSC)

A Finance Sub-Committee, comprising two Trustees and members of the Leadership Team, meets quarterly to consider financial matters, risk management, investment management and information technology, and reports to the Board of Trustees accordingly.

From February 2022 the FSC receives monthly management accounts prior to distribution to the Board.

As the Charity continued to trade out of Covid, the Trustees of this committee and agreed other attendees met more frequently to monitor the potential fiscal impact on the Charity. As a result of careful financial stewardship, the Charity continues to carry reserves in excess of the current reserves policy.

During the year, the FSC recommended changes to the scheme of delegations for NWAA.

Governance Sub-Committee (GSC)

The Governance Sub-Committee continues to review all aspects of governance. It comprises two Trustees and members of the Senior Management Team, who meet quarterly.

Key matters taken to the sub-committee during the year are noted below.

The Compliance Framework Document (CFD) is a key NWAA governance tool. This is the internal framework which was created based on the Association of Air Ambulances (AAA) framework for a High Performing Air Ambulance Service 2013 and continually developed by NWAA. The CFD is updated and evidenced against the appropriate standards noting completed items. Further improvement is anticipated during 2022.

During the year Crowe's compliance team was asked to review the CFD.

The outcomes of the May '22 CFD review were to include more up-to-date guidance on areas of compliance most relevant to NWAA, to review risk appetite, and to improve the CFD by cross-referencing. The report provided substantial assurance with recommendations including that a Trustee be appointed to lead on Safeguarding.

In June '21 the GSC reviewed the Statutory Health and Safety requirements to ensure compliance with the Operations Director having embedded H&S throughout the organisation and discussed the procurement process around the provision of the new aviation contract where NWAA appointed a subject matter expert to ensure a robust tender process.

Clinical Governance Assurance was discussed in Dec '21 and the Trustees were assured that robust compliance was in place. The provision of Clinical service delivery, and associated governance at NWAA, is achieved via a strategic partnership and Service Level Agreement (SLA) with North West Ambulance Service (NWAS). This relationship and agreement serve to mitigate the risk to NWAA by legally contracting the service to the relevant subject matter experts.

In Dec '21 the GSC noted that the Charity had revised the highest compliance level with the Gambling Code of Practice. Given the positive audit the committee agreed to the recommendation to move from bi-annual to annual audits.

The Charity has embedded a robust programme with several Audits as standard working practice across the organisation.

Clinical Governance Sub-Committee (CGSC)

As per the Service Level Agreement (SLA) and to demonstrate compliance within the accountability framework, the North West Ambulance Service (NWAS) provides clinical governance and CQC registration for North West Air Ambulance Charity (NWAA); the purpose of the NWAA Clinical Governance Sub-Committee (CGSC) is to monitor and provide assurance regarding clinical governance provided by NWAS and to report to the Board of Trustees on all clinical and quality aspects of service delivery.

Supporting information for the CGSC is achieved via Clinical Governance review meetings, held monthly, and chaired by a member of the Clinical SMT. This forum allows for case review, professional discussion, and creates a positive learning environment. In addition, all clinicians, led by Clinical SMT, have been appointed a defined audit area to review and will support the methodology of and enable 'deep dive' key topic audit review.

Operations Sub-Committee (OSC)

This committee scrutinises and reviews systems in place to ensure, monitor and improve the quality of operational service provided to support and facilitate clinical service delivery and the wider Charity. The active reporting of health and safety requirements will also move to be overseen here, along with oversight and guidance in relation to the above-mentioned helicopter contract review and renewal.

During the year, the committee discussed the following key matters noted below:

Additional fit-out costs relating to the Babcock additional items beyond the initial scope of the upgrade. The committee asked for a risk analysis for the Helicopter Terrain Avoidance System (HTAWS). This is designed to provide an additional safety measure for pilots by virtue of an audible warning when an aircraft exceeds defined safety parameters (vertical and horizontal planes).

Annual Healthy and Safety report including managing risk and carrying out risk assessments in the retail shops.

NWAA and Babcock's development of a Crisis Communications Plan and collaboration regarding the robust plan being in place.



Staffing and resources

NWAA culture and values

The first NWAA annual staff conference was held in Q3, bringing almost all employees across the Charity together for a value added, memorable and enjoyable day. It was a major achievement in engaging and motivating our employees and a very welcome face-to-face experience following the prolonged Covid lockdowns.

We were also delighted to roll out our core NWAA Employee Values to everyone for the first time. With the support of our Value Champions, and following a nomination process, the presentation of the first Values Awards to employees took place at the staff conference. Our values:

- We are passionate about saving lives
- We take ownership
- We never stand still
- We are one crew

The feedback from staff regarding the conference and the Value Awards was overwhelmingly positive and that will now give us a template for the future.

Employee engagement survey

The first Employee Engagement Survey took place in Q2 using the selected Best Companies 'b-Heard' survey to help us measure, recognise and improve levels of workplace engagement and give us a clear understanding of what we are doing well and what we might be able to do to be better.



The outcome of the survey identified the actions needed to make NWAA an even better place to work. Responding to the feedback provided by our employees, an inclusive approach was taken to develop an action plan incorporating feedback from staff.

Training and development

Our e-training portal, which is predominantly for mandatory trainings, was upgraded to enable tracking of staff learnings. We were able to continue with essential training where it was necessary in a Covid safe manner from Q3 onwards.

First Aid training as an essential requirement was face-to-face and socially distanced, the IOSH Managing Safely course was conducted virtually with 100% success rate.

Staffing and resources

Charity and Promotions took advantage of the Government's furlough scheme to help manage the impact of the restrictions on the Charity's financial position.

The Board of Trustees approved an Income and Engagement strategy which included 13 new roles to grow our income over a five-year period.

As expected, the staff attrition rates increased in 2021-22. This followed a successful restructure of our Income and Engagement and Retail management teams in this period and was also in keeping with the general trend and impact of the pandemic of staff movement experienced across the UK.



Staff attrition in 2020/21 in comparison to previous years:

	Retail	Charity	Total
2019-20	21.5%	28%	24.4%
2020-21	8.1%	9.5%	8.8%
2021-22	31%	41%	36%

The (sick) absence levels across the whole organisation remain low and below the national average.

IT and data governance



We have made a significant investment to IT over the last few years and the benefits are evident - our IT infrastructure is secure, resilient, and high performing. We are now in a period where we can continually evaluate and audit to improve and enhance our systems, and to ensure we follow security best practices.

NWAA continues to adopt a digital first approach to everything we do across the Charity, progressing our digital journey, making improvements to the website to simplify digital payments and provide a wider range of digital payment options. The recent launch of social media campaigns is using digital platforms to help us reach a wider target audience. We take a digital first approach across all our digital platforms to ensure we maximise effectiveness in growing our income streams.

The threat of cyber-attacks is ever-present and as a Charity we continue to always remain vigilant, appreciating our first line of defence is our people, which is why staff and Trustees receive regular briefings on potential threats, how to prevent, identify and report them.

We have implemented industry regarded security solutions to integrate with our email system and pro-actively detect and alert to potential threats. With increasing and more sophisticated threats we have focused on cyber security training through regular awareness bulletins and simulated exercises.

Our data protection steering group meets regularly to support the Charity in data protection matters, and our data protection consultancy partner has made recommendations to improve our data protection framework and compliance with the UK GDPR.

Success in achieving the Cyber Essentials Plus certification reassures us we are taking the right actions to protect our Charity in the areas of IT security and data governance.

Public benefit statement

The Trustees confirm that they have due regard to the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit and that the Charity meets the requirements in the advancement of its objectives.

The Charity exists to provide free of charge emergency enhanced pre-hospital care services to the people of the North West of England. Three helicopters are crewed by highly skilled Consultant Level Doctors and Critical Care Paramedics providing cover typically during daylight hours, supported by four Critical Care vehicles, one of which operates on two evenings per week from 18:00-02:00. This care service is to be expanded during 2023 with the aim of covering four and then seven nights per week.

In 2017 we introduced Consultant Level Doctors to operate from one helicopter. This provides enhanced medical care services, having the capacity to save lives through advanced medical interventions at the scene of an accident or incident. In addition, in January 2019 the provision of blood on board was introduced and during 2021, the Paramedic workforce was upskilled to deliver advanced clinical interventions including advanced airway management and administration of pain management drugs.



Financial investments

Trustees completed their review of the investment policy under the guidance of professional independent financial advisors and implemented it during 2016/2017.

The Charity relies entirely on donations from the public for its activities, with investment assets held as reserves. The investment objective is to generate a return in excess of inflation, as inflation is a key risk to long-term objectives. The Charity is aiming to achieve and maintain a real portfolio value of circa £10m over the medium to long term. The portfolio aims to preserve capital value as much as possible while seeking to achieve our investment objective and maintaining the liquidity necessary to support operational requirements.

The target and actual investment allocations as of March 31, 2022, were as follows:

Asset Class	Fund	Strategic Allocation	31 March 2022
Diversified Growth Fund	Black Rock Dynamic Diversified Growth Fund	25%	28.5%
Diversified Growth Fund	Ninety-One Diversified Growth Fund	25%	24.9%
Cash	ABRDN Sterling Liquidity Fund	50%	46.6%
Total		100%	

The Trustees engage ISIO as investment advisors (ISIO were formed out of the sale of KPMG's Pensions Advisory business) with the performance of the funds kept under review by ISIO and reviewed twice a year by the Board of Trustees.

NWAA does not have specific Investment Policy regarding ESG, however ISIO conducted a review in November and the Board were presented with a report. This report was designed to provide the trustees with a better understanding of ESG factor exposures in the Charities Investments. ISIO provide information on both negative and positive aspects of ESG and assessed the overall exposure to these factors.



The Charity has robust reserves and investments to meet future obligations

The total return to March 31, 2022, can be broken down between mandates as follows:

Relative Returns	BlackRock DDG Fund	ABRDN Sterling Liquidity Fund	Ninety-One DGF (formerly Investec)	Total
12-month net return	9.2%	0.0%	11%	5.3%
12-month net objective (target)	3.1%	-0.1%	7.1%	1.5%
Net objective description (target)	3m LIBOR + 3%	7-day LIBOR	CPI + 3.25%	

During the year, the growth funds outperformed their objectives as growth markets recovered from the Covid-driven market sell-offs experienced in early 2020.

Asset values in growth mandates were supported by fiscal and monetary measures introduced to combat the impact of lockdowns. The total return is estimated at 5.3% compared with the investment manager's objective returns of 1.5%.

In the last few months of 21/22 and in early 22/23, the Investment Valuation has decreased due to global economic events and inflationary pressures.

Risk

NWAA has a corporate 'strategic' risk strategy based on a "5x5" risk assessment methodology.

The Board is accountable for risk and reviews key and high-level risks on a regular basis, with NWAA leadership Team (LT) managing a strategic risk register with a clear outline of the risk assessment process systematically followed. This considers the unmitigated risk, the levels of existing controls and assurance and, therefore, the current risk, and finally action plans to mitigate risk further where required. The Board is made aware of the highest-rated risks and the plans to reduce their current levels and what residual risks will remain if actions remain open. A RAG (Red, Amber, Green) system is reported at the quarterly Board meetings. The Finance Sub Committee provides the oversight to the process and ensures progress, accountability, and consistency are maintained. Each committee will review and challenge the risk assessments for its own area, as necessary.

Each of the Leadership Team directors has identified risks that are reviewed each month and specific notes and comments made for FSC and Board awareness and horizon scanning.

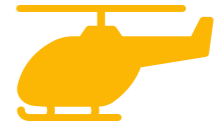
Throughout the year, Sub-Committees are also invited to undertake 'deep dives' on risks identified at their quarterly meetings to gain a greater understanding of the assessment of, and assurance around, the risks identified.

During the fiscal year, Covid has remained a key focus, together with monitoring of necessary staff recruitment and mitigation of risks for the key income areas for the Charity. As we go into the new fiscal year, the current top three strategic risks identified are the impact of economic uncertainty due to inflationary pressures, sustainability of the retail operating model and monitoring of lottery income. The committee has also been made aware of the robust NWAA approach to counter cyber attacks.

The Board notes the action plans put in place to mitigate known risks, although it is recognised that this will not all be within the control of the Charity.



Reserves policy



Funds as per the balance sheet

The total reserves/funds for the group at the end of 2021/22 is £17,678,260 (2020/21: £18,027,890). Of this the restricted funds for nominated specific use totals £83,231 (2020/21: £170,709) which are analysed in more detail in the notes to the accounts leaving unrestricted funds of £17,595,028 (2020/21 £17,857,181).

Unrestricted designated funds are based upon the need to earmark funds to meet two years' annual lease commitments (for property and helicopters) as described in the notes to the accounts, which gives a value of £6,589,550 (2020/21 £4,559,067). This leaves a value of £11,005,478 (2020/21 £13,298,114) of unrestricted general funds.

A further allowance must be made to discount for tangible functional fixed assets, to reflect the fact that these funds cannot be freely spent. This reduction of £552,115 (2020/21 £542,459) then leaves a free reserves balance of £10,453,363 (2020/21 £12,755,655).

Review of available reserves

The Charity's policy is to hold two years of operational expenditure as reserves to ensure continued financial security and to provide for contingencies. The reserves considered are those that are unrestricted funds, less the tangible assets.

The total annual operational expenditure for 2021/22 was £6,605,805 (2020/21 £6,163,206) which was mostly from unrestricted funds. This comprises the direct costs of the operations (lease costs, fuel, clinical staffing, training) plus a proportion of indirect costs (such as staffing, depreciation and governance costs) as detailed in the notes to the accounts.

To assess the reserves policy position at the end of the year it will be necessary to compare the total funds above and planned operational spend for the next two years. It will be also necessary to consider any forecast change in reserves.

The funds available under the reserves policy as of March 31, 2022, are therefore £17,042,913 (being unrestricted funds less the tangible assets). This is in excess (by c £3.8m) of two years of the 2021/22 total unrestricted operational expenditure at current levels. Therefore, Trustees should consider if it remains within its reserves policy when considering contracts costs going forward.

Trustees are committed to continuing evidence-led operational and clinical development and, therefore, expenditure will increase further over future years. Given this forward-looking context, the reserves of £17,042,913 are in line with holding two years of operational funds and, therefore, the organisation is operating within its reserves policy.

Over the next couple of years reserves will be put under pressure by capital expenditure plans, the new helicopter contract, and an increase in indirect operational spend. Once the new Helicopter contract commences, the annual direct operational spend alone will be in excess of £7m. Whilst the reserves are currently in excess of the two years of operational spend, these plans will reduce this surplus. As a consequence, the trustees will ensure the policy is kept under review.

Going concern

In the light of the financial outlook outlined in the previous pages, the Directors have considered the financial forecasts for the CIC (Lottery) and are confident that it remains a going concern, and for the accounts to be prepared on this basis.

Similarly, the financial forecasts for the Charity, with the potential to use reserves in the medium term if required, enable the Trustees to remain confident that it has the means to remain a going concern and to adapt as necessary to changes required.

Last year the Trustees had to monitor the ability of retail to continue as a going concern. The results from this year have shown a return to a healthy surplus, without the need to continue the use of our CBILS facility from The Co-operative Bank.

On this basis, the Directors have considered the forecasts for the retail business and consider the business to be a going concern.



Statement of trustees' responsibility

The Trustees (who are also Directors of North West Air Ambulance Charity for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Annual Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice (United Kingdom Accounting Standards).

Company law requires the Trustees to prepare financial statements for each fiscal year. Under company law, the Trustees must not approve the financial statements unless they are satisfied that they give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and the group, and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the charitable group for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the Trustees are required to:

- Select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently
- Observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP
- Make judgments and estimates that are reasonable and prudent
- State whether applicable UK accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements
- Prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charitable company will continue in business

The Trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the charitable company's transactions, disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable company, and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006 and the provisions of the Charity's constitution. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the Charity and the group and, hence, for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Insofar as the Trustees are aware, there is no relevant audit information (as defined by section 418 of the Companies Act 2006) of which the Charity's auditor is unaware, and the Trustees have each taken all steps that they ought to have taken to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the auditor is aware of that information.



Forward look for the charity



The Charity has made considerable progress in 2021/21 and with robust reserves in place NWAA is in a positive position to progress in the next fiscal year and beyond.

- The Board and Leadership Team will be working on the 2023 Operational five-year strategy in 2022/23. The overall strategic aim, to maximise patient impact, remains at the core of the strategy
- The operational plan is focused around improving patient impact and ensuring operational excellence. We are planning to offer a night-time car service and provide blood on all platforms, subject to trials
- The Board committed to new helicopter leases and to fly more hours in 2022/23 with increased Doctor and CCP resource
- The reserves policy has given the Charity the reliance to be able to continue meeting its charitable objectives and service provision, even within times of great uncertainty
- The Charity will consider the headroom capacity to use its reserves, through its investments where appropriate, subject to financial forecasts and risk management
- The Charity will look to diversify fundraising to reduce reliance on Lottery and Legacy and to enhance the profitability and sustainability of the retail business

The recruitment of additional heads into the Income and Engagement teams will drive fundraising growth over the five-year period as per the strategy agreed by the Board in 2021/22.

- NWAA will develop and implement a more digital and innovative approach to fundraising, which will enable the Charity to engage with a more diverse demographic of supporter. A new Charity CRM implementation is planned for the near term
- Our values, staff support, training, and development, will be at the forefront of everything we do
- Our risk management practices will be continually reviewed as does our approach to have policies in action with continual improvement across NWAA



Plans for future period and long-term objectives

Plans for future period

The report gives a detailed outline of the objectives for the immediate future which are:

- To evidence and maximise patient impact
- To drive improvements in clinical capability and capacity
- The re-generation of diverse income streams and development of the longer-term strategy
- To embed culture and values to establish a great place to work and volunteer
- To create an environment to encourage innovative healthcare and a digital first approach
- Raising the profile of NWAA as a Charity

Long-term objectives

The key aspects of our strategy are:

Impact

To deliver specialist and enhanced medical care to the critically ill and injured, and transport patients to the most appropriate place to achieve the best outcomes for them.

Forward thinking

To actively encourage innovation and embrace technology to enhance our ability to provide innovative healthcare.

Collaborative

To continue to collaborate with our partner organisations to provide the best possible outcomes for all.

Transparent

To adhere to robust governance structures and ensure transparency and compliance.

Our people

To create an environment where staff and volunteers will flourish.

Sustainable

To ensure financial stability and responsible income generation.

Profile

To continue to raise awareness with the public and all other stakeholders across the North West.

Auditors

Crowe UK LLP has indicated its willingness to be reappointed as statutory auditors. This report has been prepared in accordance with the special provisions of Part 15 of the Companies Act relating to small companies.

Approved by the Board of Trustees on:
21st December 2022

and signed on its behalf by:



Mr A G Jude
Chair



Mrs K J Spencer
Trustee



How to support us

There are many ways in which people can support our lifesaving Charity by giving money, time or talent.

Making a donation

To make a donation please visit <https://donate.nwairambulance.org.uk> or call our team on 0800 587 4570.

Fundraising

Our lifesaving service is there for the whole of the North West Community, each year thousands of people run, swim, walk and do amazing things to raise money for our Charity. We have a dedicated team to support people who want to make a difference and support our charity by taking part in a fundraising event or holding an event themselves.

To learn more please contact fundraising@nwairambulance.org.uk

Play our lottery

Playing in our Lift Off Lotto is a fun way to support our charity. Our weekly lottery is a vital source of income, and it funds around half of all of our missions. Tickets are only £1 and players have the chance of winning up to £1,000 every week, plus a huge £10,000 in our quarterly superdraws.

To learn more, or to enter into our lottery or raffles, visit www.nwairambulance.org.uk/play-our-lottery

A big thank you.

The Charity would like to thank everyone who has supported us in the past year. You really have made a lifesaving difference to the people of the North West.



flying to save lives.

Scan the
QR code to
donate today



NORTH WEST
Air Ambulance
CHARITY

Registered Charity no: 1075641

