



Annual Report

April 2022 - March 2023





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Chairman's Introduction and Review of Activities



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 to 'fly 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.

As a lifesaving charity, 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 ambition.

This year:

- We continued to work towards the targets set in the 2018 – 2023 strategy, with significant progress in all areas.
- We signed the contract for an upgraded helicopter fleet.
- We appointed an external lottery management partner to run the Lottery, which provides funding for the Charity to operate.
- We continued to adopt a 'digital first' approach with the digital transformation of systems and processes, with the utmost consideration given to digital security and data governance compliance.

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

This year:

- We revisited our Employee Value Proposition (EVP) to ensure that we remain competitive and attract the best talent.
- We have reviewed and continue to see the benefits of being able to offer hybrid working where appropriate.
- We held our second #OneCrew annual staff conference and values awards.
- We conducted our annual staff engagement survey to ensure that everyone has a voice, feels heard and is valued.

This year:

- We commenced the implementation of the new supporter engagement system to support our five-year strategy and grow all income streams. The system will improve the supporter journey process and connect existing systems to centralise all data and reporting.
- We made improvements to core business services in IT, Finance, People and Culture and Project Management including the implementation of a number of systems to work smarter and continually improve efficiency.
- We further developed the Charity's cyber security and data protection training for Trustees, staff and volunteers.

Clinically our service continues to go from strength to strength. All our Paramedics have been up-skilled 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 thoracostomies, interventions which previously have only been carried out by our Consultant-level Doctors.

This year:

- We initiated the role of Patient Aftercare Coordinator via strategic partnerships with hospital trusts to provide support and clinical advice to North West Air Ambulance Charity patients and families and to provide us with essential valuable patient data. This service will be fully established across all major trauma centres during 2023/24.
- We agreed to continue with the night car service, which was successfully trialled. This service operates on Friday and Saturday evenings between 6pm until 2am and is expected to become a seven days a week service during 2023/24.
- We agreed to implement blood on board all platforms, which will go live in 2023/24.

In shaping the future of our Charity, our aim 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, whether it is on the front line carrying out lifesaving medical interventions, or behind the scenes. Everyone is part of the same crew:

#OneCrew.

Together, we continue to save lives!

Mr A G Jude
Chair, on behalf of the board of Trustees

Legal and Administrative Details

North West Air Ambulance (“the Charity”) is a registered company and is registered with the Charity Commission. The Charity was incorporated on 12 April 1999.

Charity registration number: **1075641**
Company registration number: **03752544**
Chair of the Trustees: **Allan Jude**

Bankers:

The Co-Operative Bank plc
1 Balloon Street
Manchester
M60 4EP

Barclays Bank plc
48b & 50 Lord Street
Liverpool
L2 1TD

Registered Auditors:

Crowe U.K. LLP
The Lexicon
Mount Street
Manchester
M2 5NT

Registered and Principal Office:

Stanley House
North Mersey Business Centre
Woodward Road
Knowsley
Merseyside
L33 7UY

Key management personnel:

Ms Heather Arrowsmith
Chief Executive Officer

Mr David Briggs
Director of Operations

Mrs Sarah Naismith
Director of Income and Engagement

Mr Roger Brown
Director of Finance and Resources
resigned April 2023

Mr Tony Rowan
Director of Finance and Resources
(appointed June 2023)

Trustees:

Mr A G Jude (Chair)
Mrs K J Spencer
Mr S E Meehan
Mrs D J Smith
Dr R C Hall (resigned 7 July 2021)
Mr D R Head
Dr S J Mercer (appointed 6 October 2021)

Investment Advisors:

Isio Manchester
3 Hardman Square,
Manchester,
M3 3EB



Trustees' Report

The Trustees, who are also directors of the Charity for the purposes of the Companies Act, submit the annual report and audited financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2023. The Trustees have adopted the provisions of the Statement of Recommended Practice 2019 Accounting and Reporting for Charities second edition, October 2019, in preparing the annual report and financial statements of the Charity.

North West Air Ambulance Charity was established 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 North West Air Ambulance Lottery Community Interest Company (CIC) which runs the Charity's lottery. Both companies are subsidiaries of the Charity. They were established to raise funds and/or generate awareness of the Charity.

Performance Summary

Financial Performance

The Charity Group had a consolidated surplus for the year of £1,420,851 (2021/22, £(349,630)) with significant increases of income and costs. The following table summarises the financial results.

 Donations and legacies £6,170,000 1/4/2021 to 31/3/2022 £4,062,000	 Other trading activities £7,983,000 1/4/2021 to 31/3/2022 £7,174,000
 Investments £93,000 1/4/2021 to 31/3/2022 £3,000	 Total Income £14,246,000 1/4/2021 to 31/3/2022 £11,239,000
 Commercial trading operations £2,854,000 1/4/2021 to 31/3/2022 £2,763,000	 Other fundraising costs £2,136,000 1/4/2021 to 31/3/2022 £1,968,000
 Charitable activities £7,735,000 1/4/2021 to 31/3/2022 £6,876,000	 Total expenditure £12,725,000 1/4/2021 to 31/3/2022 £11,606,000
 Net income £1,522,000 1/4/2021 to 31/3/2022 £(367,000)	 Gains/(losses) on investments £(101,000) 1/4/2021 to 31/3/2022 £18,000
 Net movement in funds £1,421,000 1/4/2021 to 31/3/2022 £(350,000)	

Total income increased from £11,239,148 to £14,246,459, driven by strong retail sales, a large increase in legacy income and healthy fundraising activity, continuing the bounce back from the restricted activity of previous years.

Despite the closure of three shops in the previous financial year, retail income increased, achieving shop sales of over £2 million, with an initial £227,000 and a further £22,000 received from a business interruption insurance claim related to the pandemic shop closures.

Fundraising activity increased further during the year with a full programme of community events taking place for the first time since the pandemic. Regular giving continued to increase, achieving over £50,000 in income per month by March 2023.

Mission numbers increased again, as activity returned to normal, and all helicopters operated for 12 hours. Additional operational costs were incurred as the evening car trial continued each weekend. This will be rolled out seven days a week during 2023/24.

Staffing levels were maintained in the year, with a cost-of-living payment made to all staff in October 2022.

The Charity's investments in diversified growth funds continued to fluctuate during the year as global market conditions remained volatile and ended the year with an overall reduction in value. The liquidity fund is now far eclipsing pre-pandemic levels, with monthly returns reaching over £17,000 by March 2023.

An additional critical care car was purchased, with further investment in new and advanced medical equipment.

Supplier and manufacturer delays means the new and modified helicopters, originally due to start arriving in August 2023, are due to arrive at the end of January 2024.

Retail Development

The promotions business continues to show significant improvement, benefitting from the restructure of stewardship at the start of the 2022/23 financial year. This was bolstered by the addition of a Regional Manager for the south of the area. Strong sales were supported by a good return on Gift Aid claims.

Investment in improvements have demonstrated a positive impact, these being:

- Additional staff to increase the staffing model to enable increased workflow and sales.
- Improvements to the staff benefits package to bring in line with the wider charity.
- Property improvements including a new shop fit-out, improved electrical installations and LED lighting replacing standard lighting in most shops.
- Two new fully liveried delivery/collection vehicles.

An added contribution to income came from business continuity insurance for forced closures during the pandemic.

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.

Clinical Impact

Introduced and embedded Critical Care Paramedics into the team

To enhance and further develop the clinical capabilities of the North West Air Ambulance Charity crews, investment was made into up-skilling existing Paramedics to become Critical Care Paramedics, with North West Ambulance Service and a partnership with Bangor University, providing the academic structure.

All the Charity’s Paramedics work operationally as Critical Care Paramedics with the majority also have been signed off academically. This brings huge patient benefits as they can now offer additional surgical skills including airway management, and crucially, can administer additional specialist drugs such as ketamine.

Introduced new and innovative equipment

Schiller Monitor: Having previously used the Lifepak15 monitor which was heavy, cumbersome and technologically limited, trials were conducted to assess 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.

Seven monitors were purchased, one for each aircraft and vehicle. These are now in daily operation with all crews. Since the introduction, North West Ambulance Service, the Charity’s strategic partner, has also commissioned Schiller to provide its entire service with defibrillators/monitors, demonstrating the Charity leads the way.

Arterial Lines: These were introduced alongside the Schiller Monitor to help measure vital signs/levels more accurately. Additional training equipment was purchased, and training was conducted in-house by the Charity’s highly skilled, Consultant-level Doctors.

Butterfly Ultrasound Equipment: Used by the Consultant-level Doctors, with ongoing training to potentially enable use by Critical Care Paramedics, 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 the Charity for six months between October 2021 and March 2022. This used an evidence-based approach and was supported by work previously commissioned with Lancaster University. Based at Barton Airbase, it delivered enhanced pre-hospital care by either a Consultant-level Doctor and a Critical Care Paramedic, or two Critical Care Paramedics, between 6pm and 2am 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 was adopted as a permanent feature from April 2023 with plans to expand capacity in the next financial year, supported by additional clinical recruitment. The aspiration is to move to seven nights per week by March 2024.



Clinical Crew

During the last four years, the number of clinical staff within the Charity has more than doubled. Within the last 12 months, there has been an increase of two Critical Care Paramedics, with further recruitment during the next financial year for the night car expansion.

Current Clinical Staffing	1/4/22 to 31/3/23	1/4/21 to 31/3/22
Consultant-level Doctor	22	22
Critical Care Paramedic	20 moving to 25 during financial year	18 moving to 20 in Dec 2022
Pilot	7	7
Engineer	3	3
Bank Paramedic	7	7

All clinical staff and governance are provided via a service level agreement with North West Ambulance Service. A Medical Director and Consultant Paramedic oversee all clinical matters and North West Air Ambulance Charity is now fully embedded into the North West Ambulance Service clinical directorate.

Consultant-level Doctors typically work two days per month with North West Air Ambulance Charity, with Critical Care Paramedics on full-time, permanent secondment to the Charity. Bank Paramedics are used to cover ad-hoc sickness and Pilots, Engineers and air operators’ certificates are provided via Babcock.



Patient Impact

Nicola's Story

Nicola, 38, had been visiting the local Christmas lights switch-on with her family. As she was putting her daughter, Emily, into her car seat, Nicola collapsed. She was unresponsive and had stopped breathing.

What was a Christmas tradition for their family had become a nightmare. Nicola's husband, Ben, began performing CPR. Within minutes, members of the public offered their help. When the paramedics arrived, they gave shocks via a defibrillator to try and restart her heart.

Critical Care Paramedics Mikey and Lee from the North West Air Ambulance Charity saw the call come in for a 38-year-old female in cardiac arrest. They mobilised immediately in the critical care vehicle and within 20 minutes they'd arrived at the scene.

Nicola was still unresponsive when the crew arrived, and both Mikey and Lee worked hard to try and restart her heart.

They administered a further shock as Nicola had an extremely rare heart rhythm. Her heart briefly started, and then a second cardiac arrest followed. She required a further shock, and after a brief round of CPR, her heart started beating again.

The Charity's critical care paramedics were then able to give Nicola drugs to sedate her and protect her brain function as they accompanied her in the ambulance to hospital. Without their lifesaving intervention, Nicola wouldn't have survived.

During her stay in hospital, Nicola was fitted with an implantable cardioverter defibrillator (ICD), and she was able to make it home for Christmas with her family.

One year on, and Nicola has fully recovered. She is saying thank you to the North West-based charity that saved her life by launching their Christmas Campaign, 'Message in a Bauble'.



If it weren't for Mikey and Lee, there's a very high possibility that I wouldn't be here now...

Nicola and her family recently visited Mikey and Lee at the Charity's air base to thank the team for saving her life.

She said: "There never seem to be enough words or the right words to thank Mikey and Lee; they are heroes to us, and I'm sure to countless other families. We couldn't believe it when we found out you were a charity-run organisation.

"If it weren't for Mikey and Lee, there's a very high possibility that I wouldn't be here now, I wouldn't be able to watch Emily grow up, and she wouldn't have a mummy."

Ben, Nicola's husband, said: "When Mikey and Lee arrived at the scene, although it was obvious how critical the situation was, I had a feeling of reassurance from them that was a relief from the absolute panic I was feeling. Because of them, Nicola is still here with me and Emily."

The 'Message in a Bauble' campaign will give everyone across the North West a chance to say thank you and pass on festive messages to the crew members, who will be working as usual over the Christmas period.

Critical Care Paramedic Lee said: "When leaving the hospital at the time of the incident, we both said how much of an excellent Christmas present it would make for them to be together as a family and Nicola fully recovered."

Critical Care Paramedic Mikey said: "I think both of us wanted to see Nicola home safe, I remember talking about the impact; her young daughter still has a mum, and her husband still has a wife. Meeting the family was great; I don't think I will ever be able to express how either of us felt seeing them all together laughing and joking."



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

Table 1 – Number of incidents, patients and treatments		
Number of jobs	1/4/22 to 31/3/23	1/4/21 to 31/3/22
Total number of jobs	2,884	2,690
Number of patients	1,383	1,206
Number of Rapid Sequence Intubation (RSIs)	137	136
Number of intubations without drugs	142	97
Major haemorrhages	46	72
Blood plasma patients	65	72

Table 2 – Number of incidents by job type		
Number of jobs by type	1/4/22 to 31/3/23	1/4/21 to 31/3/22
Accidental injury	683	660
Road traffic collision	770	753
Medical	772	609
Assault	248	282
Other	64	67
Intentional self-harm	186	177
Sport / Leisure	77	95
Transfer	26	16
Other transfer	28	20
Exposure	30	11
Total	2,884	2,690

Table 3 – Number of jobs by region		
Number of missions by county	1/4/22 to 31/3/23	1/4/21 to 31/3/22
Cumbria	156	150
Lancashire	808	835
Greater Manchester	1,055	918
Merseyside & Cheshire	819	760
Other	46	27
Total	2,884	2,690

What’s Next:

Introducing blood on board to all aircraft and critical care vehicle teams.

The capability to deliver blood, via the enhanced pre-hospital care team was introduced by the Charity in January 2019. Since then, more than 230 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 Consultant-led Doctor team, either via aircraft or critical care vehicles. This is 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. The products are delivered daily and on request to Barton Airbase by volunteers.

Increased capacity to deliver blood is planned to expand beyond the current Consultant-led approach to the Critical Care Paramedic-led aircraft and critical care vehicles.

North West Ambulance Service supports this challenging and ambitious goal. The North West Ambulance Service's clinical governance and procedures underpin all the Charity's essential ethical and governance requirements. Blood is planned to be available on all platforms by quarter three of 2023. This will help to ensure an equitable blood transfusion service. The Charity is participating in a national research trial called 'Swift' along with another nine air ambulances. This is to ascertain if whole blood makes a difference when administered at the roadside. Currently, the Charity provides packed red blood cells and plasma.

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

From October 2022, all aircraft commenced operating for a 12-hour period, something previously only provided via the Consultant-led Doctor aircraft.

The Consultant-led Doctor aircraft will continue to work from 8am to 8pm, 365 days a year. Previously, helicopter provision was staggered seasonally across the day to provide maximum flying potential, covering nine and a half hours on each of the two Critical Care Paramedic-led aircraft. This increase allows for a more robust staffing model, better work-life balance for crews and raises coverage of enhanced pre-hospital care by a total of five hours per day, 365 days a year.

Upgrading helicopters

The helicopter contract with Babcock was renewed last year, following a robust tendering process. The scope of the contract changed significantly to enable delivery of the Charity’s clinical strategy. The upgraded and replacement helicopters will be introduced in a phased approach during December 2023 and January 2024.

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 North West Air Ambulance Charity 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.



Working towards paperless patient records (ePR)

An initiative to go paperless for patient records is a key objective because it will save crew time as they will not need to re-type the same information, enabling a more seamless and secure transfer of patient sensitive data. In partnership with North West Ambulance Service, the Charity is trialling integrating HEMSbase, its patient reporting system, with North West Ambulance Service’s direct access system, so receiving hospitals can be provided with secure, timely and relevant information electronically.

North West Air Ambulance Charity Patient Aftercare

The Charity’s approach is to enable an integrated and joined up way of working with receiving hospitals, focusing on the six major trauma centres across the region.

A patient aftercare service has been established in Aintree and Preston Hospitals (the two

busiest in terms of receiving North West Air Ambulance Charity patients), along with Salford Royal Hospital and Alder Hey Children’s Hospital. There are advanced discussions with Manchester Children’s Hospital and Manchester Royal Hospital, who are all aiming to be online by quarter four of 2023.

The aftercare service provides the following:

- Immediate clinical feedback to our crews, via hospital-based, major trauma practitioners, funded by and acting on behalf of North West Air Ambulance Charity.
- Support and clinical advice to North West Air Ambulance Charity patients, families and loved ones.
- Essential valuable patient data via Trauma, Audit and Research Network (TARN) submissions. This data is essential to evidence and support via research, showing the real difference North West Air Ambulance Charity makes to its patients.



What’s Next:

- Fully establish and embed at each location.
- Introduce managerial role to oversee.
- Begin use of Trauma, Audit and Research Network data via research team.

Fundraising Performance

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.

The Charity is registered with the Fundraising Regulator and complies with its Code of Fundraising 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 North West Air Ambulance Lottery Community Interest Company (CIC), which runs the Charity's lottery, its largest income stream.

The North West Air Ambulance Charity relies entirely on donations to fund its work. Without the public's generosity, taking part in its weekly lottery or becoming regular donors, the lifesaving service the Charity provides would not continue.

The Charity works very closely with carefully chosen fundraising agencies to make sure anyone who is fundraising on

its behalf, represents the organisation and works to the highest standards.

The Charity is transparent about how its funds are raised, proactively engaging with the Fundraising Regulator, so that any concerns can be highlighted and addressed as a priority.

New employees receive a Code of Fundraising Practice briefing in their induction. The Charity provides employee training and has an implementation plan for compliance policies to reduce the risk of any breaches of fundraising guidelines.

Throughout the year an innovative approach to fundraising has been adopted. To ensure sustainable funds for the future, the Charity has also explored ways of diversifying income generation.

Overall, income from charitable fundraising finished slightly below the target of £1.83 million, at £1.78 million, just £43,000 behind. Initially, supporters seemed reluctant to attend events, but regular giving rapidly increased during the year through the growth in successful direct debit sign-ups.

Community and Events

The Community and Events team have completed the first year of a five-year strategy to increase income by 302%. The income target of £890,000 was exceeded and by year end, over £1 million income had been achieved by the team.

During this year, the new schools' presentation and lesson pack was launched, enabling engagement with new audiences including around 40 schools across the North West. The team also increased engagement with colleges and universities through an online question and answer session with the Charity's clinical crew, which aimed to enhance understanding of the Charity's work and charitable status.

The Charity had physical presence at key public events, including the Royal Cheshire and Lancashire Shows, Blackpool Air Show, Kendal

Calling Festival and the Great Manchester Run, where the Charity's key messages were shared with the public. The annual Cross Bay Walk took place in July with 400 participants supporting the Charity and the team were finally able to stage large-scale public collections again for the first time since the pandemic.

The Charity launched a successful Christmas campaign across all channels, offering supporters to send a 'message in a bauble' to the clinical crew. This was promoted through Skylines, magazine, which achieved over 800 responses, with baubles being displayed at both Barton and Blackpool airbases. An online message in a bauble option was launched, to extend the campaign's reach.

The Charity's first Facebook challenge took place in March, engaging and recruiting new audiences and re-engaging with former patients who signed up to take part.

What's Next:

The Charity continues to take a digital-first approach to community and events fundraising, looking at new and innovative ways to fundraise including developments in contactless technologies, new online platforms and social media fundraising options, embracing the introduction of digital solutions and innovations to create new opportunities for people to support us.

The team will be focusing on increasing diversity in the supporter base by implementing activities that target under-represented communities in the North West.

A dedicated Events team is now in place and will be increasing the number

of North West Air Ambulance Charity bespoke events on offer to the public and making maximum use of new branded event kit to further promote the Charity. They will be developing new supporter experience programmes for participants in running and challenge events and further strengthening relationships with key event organisers in the region, with the aim of creating a pipeline of 'charity of the year' status at large events.

The team will be actively contributing to the development of the Charity's 25th anniversary plans for 2024, utilising the increased public awareness to reach new audiences.



High Value Giving

Major Gifts:

The Charity’s first in-person, high-value event was held at a prestigious venue in Manchester City Centre in 2022/23. The evening was a great success, providing greater insight into the current prospect pipeline and their warmth to the Charity.

The enrolment of a new Major Gifts’ Fundraiser has been a crucial step in the development of the major gifts programme. This has supported the expansion of reach and the steady increase of the Charity’s major gift income.

Trust and Foundations:

There has been a noticeable growth in the Charity’s trust and foundations income since recruiting an in-house Trust and Foundations Fundraiser. Building strong long-term relationships with the grant-giving trusts and Trustees has enabled larger donations to be secured and enhanced relationships, resulting in some cases, multi-year pledges. There has also been an uplift in Trustees attending airbase visits to witness first-hand the crew’s vital work. The impact of all this work has resulted in an increase of income to this particular income stream.

Corporate:

The key focus of the corporate team during 2022/23 has been to increase the Charity’s reach to businesses in the North West: identifying new corporates who have a charitable arm within their organisation and making initial enquiries to receive their support.

There have been numerous successes in securing ‘charity of the year’ partnerships and sponsorship during 2022/23 and a substantial increase in the number of approaches being made. The team have built relationships with businesses across an array of industries whilst raising awareness of the Charity.

What’s Next:

In 2023/24, a corporate club is being developed, enabling small and medium sized businesses to be part of a corporate networking group whilst supporting the Charity with charity donation. The roll out is planned in quarter two.

Individual Giving

The Charity’s regular giving supporter base steadily increased over the year, with face-to-face acquisition going well with an external partner.

The development of a regular giving supporter journey has begun. This aims to increase the retention of regular giving supporters. The Charity is working with a creative agency to develop a full supporter welcome pack and a games area on our website for supporters’ families to explore.

A successful Christmas campaign took place through Skylines, raising over £48,000.

What’s Next:

An individual giving campaign across all channels, to inform supporters of our uplift in operational costs will be launched. This aims to re-engage with donors. Over the coming year the use of additional digital channels will be explored with the aim of attracting and engaging with a younger demographic.

The Charity’s enhanced supporter journey will be implemented, and retention rates will

be monitored. Further development of the supporter journey is planned.

We are looking at introducing a ‘keep the change’ initiative on our lottery which would enable our supporters to ‘round up’ their lottery donation. This would mean we are able to claim Gift Aid on those donations and will result in extra income for the Charity.

Lottery

At the beginning of the year, a company was appointed to host both lottery and raffle sign-up pages through the Charity’s website, the first time that the raffle has been available to purchase online. The raffle moved from being sent along with Skylines and was advertised as a stand-alone product. As a result, the raffle was marketed to a cold audience for the first time. An external lottery partner has been appointed to run weekly lottery draws on the Charity’s behalf, freeing up North West Air Ambulance Charity staff to spend more time on other products and ensuring capacity to meet five-year strategy objectives.

This year saw two successful in-house raffles both achieving over-target income.

A media agency was appointed to manage a digital marketing campaign for Lift Off Lotto and film adverts with previous winners. The campaign performed very strongly and finished in June 2023.

What’s Next:

A new digital initiative will be introduced this year. This is an app-based football bingo game which will be in place from May 2023 onwards.

Lottery winner video ads have been filmed and will be promoted in 2023/24.

The weekly lottery supporter journey will continue to be improved. Winners’ questionnaires will be included along with cheques in the new year.

An external supplier will take over the operations of the Charity’s raffle and lottery and their webpages in 2023/24.



Legacy

The Charity has invested in the Legacy team to maximise the opportunity to increase income from legacies. Involvement with the National Free Wills Network has been maintained. While new relationships with Make a Will Online and local solicitors have been built to encourage supporters to move from considering a gift in their will to taking action.

There were three supporter events: two at Barton Airbase in Manchester and one in Kendal. They gave the opportunity to show supporters the impact that gifts in wills make. These were successful in generating new pledgers and enquirers as well as building relationships with supporters.

In March, there was a coordinated burst of legacy promotion including features across social media, inclusion in Skylines and the e-newsletter. This generated 25 legacy enquirers who will be stewarded in future.

What's Next:

The programme of supporter events will continue, with events in Liverpool and Cheshire in 2023/24 to show supporters the impact a legacy makes to the Charity's work.

A dedicated 'gifts in wills' mailing will be trialled, asking supporters to consider leaving a gift in their will. To introduce legacy messaging to a wider audience, a social campaign will be tested. The legacy focus month will be repeated, and legacies will be integrated into other communications to ensure gifts in wills messaging is seen by current supporters.

In 2023/24, there will be a focus on legacy pledgers and enquirers' supporter journey, including introducing a welcome gift, offering more opportunities to visit the airbase and regular updates.

The internal culture of legacies will continue with dedicated training, working closely with Retail and other teams to make sure legacy conversations are introduced to supporters at the appropriate stage of their journey with the Charity.

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 the Charity's customer service standards.

In 2022/23, the team received regular training on complaints handling, the Codes of Fundraising Practice and the Licence Conditions and Codes of Practice, which set out the requirements all

licensees must meet in order to hold a Gambling Commission licence.

The Charity's Customer Relationship Management team also resides within this area. They are responsible for the management of the Charity's database which is used to maintain supporter relationships.

In 2022/23, the team conducted a procurement process to acquire a new Customer Relationship Management system to integrate with digital fundraising platforms, better manage interactions with its supporters and streamline processes to support the delivery of the five-year strategy. Following the selection of a system supplier the development of the implementation plan has begun.

What's Next:

In 2023/24, potential contact centre solutions will be reviewed to enable better management of calls, emails, live chat and social media interactions through one platform. The team will also support the planned activities for the Charity's 25th anniversary.

The Customer Relationship Management team will be responsible for completing the database migration which will include the embedding of new workflow management solutions throughout the Charity to increase efficiency and ultimately improve the supporter experience.

Marketing, Communications and Public Relations

A summer media campaign ran from the beginning of June 2022 until the start of August 2022, consisting of radio, outdoor and social media advertising. During the period of the campaign, the North West Air Ambulance Charity's website had 8,423 visitors. Facebook advertising in June and July reached 216,000

people in the Manchester and Merseyside areas. The adverts were clicked through 2,247 times. Between April 2022 and March 2023, North West Air Ambulance Charity's social media posts reached 2.3 million users, with 2,000 posts published across the platforms. People interacted 33,000 times on Facebook, the highest engagement rate of those platforms at 27%.

With 185 volunteers supporting the Community Fundraising team, the Charity had 505 committed volunteers at the end of the year. Volunteer growth at North West Air Ambulance Charity has bucked the trend of volunteer growth nationally, which is in decline. New volunteer roles, enhanced training for volunteers and improved communication through newsletters, forums and focus groups, has enabled volunteers to feel closer to the Charity. Strategic partnerships leading to regular volunteer placements have also opened the door to new volunteers.

The 2023 survey showed a further increase in volunteers from diverse backgrounds. In 2020, 100% of volunteers who chose to complete the survey were from white backgrounds; in 2023, volunteers from black, Asian or mixed/multiple ethnic groups make up 10% of the volunteer workforce. The investing in volunteers audit demonstrated areas of volunteering best practice and directed strategic changes to improve the volunteer programme.

What's Next:

While building and sustaining brand awareness of the Charity across all channels will continue, advancing its digital presence will be a focus for the Marketing team. The team will continue to enhance the Charity's positive reputation and support through proactive press engagement. A programme of research will inform key marketing opportunities, strategy and the subsequent tactics deployed. Previous research identified a marketing opportunity to attract a younger demographic. A marketing campaign is in development for delivery in July and

August 2023, targeting those in the 18 to 34 age range. Further market research will support the campaign delivery and ensure it resonates with its intended audience. This research will also ensure that the channels utilised will be the most effective to reach the younger demographic. During the planned brand audit, the campaign's effectiveness will be assessed through awareness levels once the campaign is completed. The team will be instrumental in the implementation of the marketing activity celebrating the Charity's 25th anniversary.

What's Next:

The implementation of new supporting documents to process and induct volunteers, will ensure all volunteers are given consistent key messaging and a positive introduction to the Charity. Volunteer co-ordinators will offer further in-person support as standard during the volunteer training and induction process, to ensure a consistent volunteer experience and to help volunteer managers in up-skilling and supporting volunteers at the start of their role. New flexible volunteer roles and leadership

roles will be launched, to allow volunteer managers more scope to expand the work they do, particularly in Community and Events. The achievement of investing in volunteers will be a cause for celebration as the Charity continues to show its commitment to a quality volunteer experience. The implementation of the new Customer Relationship team platform and volunteer management software will be revolutionary in how the Charity engages with volunteers.

Volunteer Engagement

As the North West Air Ambulance Charity volunteer programme continued to grow, 2022 saw the introduction of volunteer awards. Over 100 nominations were received to recognise the impact of exceptional volunteers. 12 volunteers, nominated by staff and peers, were invited to the Barton Airbase for a celebration, led by the Charity's Chief Executive Officer. All nominated volunteers received certificates of appreciation, ten volunteers received

special recognition videos from the crew while the winners received awards and a tour of the airbase with the Charity's Leading Paramedic for emergency helicopter and vehicle services. There has been a significant increase in volunteer support in Retail Operations. 2021/22 ended with 249 volunteers supporting retail operations across the 11 stores, e-commerce, and warehouse. The year 2022/2023 saw 320 volunteers averaging over 1,000 hours of support each week which was the biggest single year increase of volunteers the Charity has seen.





Retail

The Promotions business was able to achieve 50 weeks of sales after the final pandemic 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 pandemic 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

The complaints policy is available via the Charity's website, email and post. In 2022/23, seven complaints were received, of which four related to fundraising. Complaints are taken very seriously – they provide the Charity with an opportunity to gain feedback and take the appropriate action to minimise the risk of a recurrence.

An internal complaints and compliments report is compiled which is shared with Directors. By recording compliments and comments received from the public, we can share the information with relevant staff and strategic partners, which supports the continual improvement of our supporter journey.

All the Charity's direct marketing communications contain clear instructions of how a supporter can easily opt out of receiving any further communication, if they wish to. The Charity is signed up to the Fundraising Preference Service to enable people to inform the Charity if they do not wish to receive fundraising communications. Two requests were received from this service last year.

Staffing and Resources

People and Culture

The outdated term 'HR' has been replaced with the new term, 'People and Culture', to reflect a progressive, people-centred approach with a keen focus on best-in-class culture. Culture being increasingly important for an organisation to be valued as an 'employer of choice' for both job seekers and employee retention.

North West Air Ambulance Charity Culture and Values

Following on from the success of its first staff conference, the Charity's second annual staff conference and values awards took place in November 2022 with the focus on 'Our why'.

The day captured the purpose, essence and spirit of what and why the Charity does, with touching in-person, patient stories as well as lifesaving skills sessions delivered by the clinical crew.

The day also included the presentation of values awards to employees who best demonstrated the Charity's values:

- We are passionate about saving lives.
- We take ownership.
- We never stand still.
- We are #OneCrew.

The conference brought the majority of employees across the Charity together including staff, crew and Trustees, who all enjoyed a memorable day full of direct engagement and integration. Feedback from the day regarding both the conference and the value awards was overwhelmingly positive.

Employee Value Proposition

An appealing employee value proposition is being developed to reflect the value North West Air Ambulance Charity offers to employees in return for the value they bring to the organisation, with improvements to sick pay, pension contributions and annual leave.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

As part of promoting equality, diversity and inclusion, mandatory training is being rolled out across the Charity, focusing on promoting an inclusive and compassionate culture where diversity can thrive.

The candidate selection and interview process has been reviewed with the aim to tailor the current process to be more 'neurodiversity smart' and a new hire onboarding experience has been introduced. A blended learning approach is being worked on to promote personal growth opportunities and embed a strong learning and development opportunity culture.



Employee Engagement Survey

Following on from the first employee engagement survey last year, a second survey took place in quarter two. The previous survey results in June 2021, scored the Charity in the ‘one to watch’ category, meaning the organisation had demonstrated good levels of workplace engagement.

In the second survey, the score increased further into this category with a 36-point improvement. This was based on a larger number of participants who responded this year compared to last year.

An action plan from the staff survey results, is in place and being worked through. Other staff engagement initiatives remain in place such as an employee forum and monthly update calls, amongst others.

Staff turnover rates decreased in 2022-23. This followed an increase in new roles in Income and Engagement 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 turnover in 2022/23 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%
2022-23	23%	19%	25.8%



Engaging with staff and ensuring everyone has a voice is essential to making sure the Charity has the right culture where everyone feels valued, part of a team and has the opportunity for personal growth. Having an active and representative employee forum, conducting annual staff engagement surveys, and holding conferences, are all examples of important elements in achieving this.

Hybrid working has become the norm and where appropriate, has been facilitated throughout the year. This has also enabled the Charity to increase our headcount in a way that would otherwise be impossible with the existing workspace.

There has been a greater focus on learning and development opportunities, too. For example, mental health first aid training has recently been rolled out and first aid training will be scheduled this year.

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

IT and Data Governance

The Charity has continued to maintain a robust data governance framework, which is supported by its internal data protection steering group. The annual data governance audit showed us to be compliant with the UK GDPR and positively assessed the way personal data is handled within the organisation.

As the value of digital information grows, cyber security is of high importance and a priority for the Charity. The type of risks posed include theft of sensitive and personal data, theft or damage to data, threat of hacking for criminal or fraud purposes and potential disruption to infrastructure such as charity IT systems and the Charity’s public facing website.

To mitigate these threats, protective measures have been enhanced by ensuring multi-factor authentication and strong passwords are enforced to all accounts that access the Charity’s systems. Cyber security and data protection training has been refreshed for all staff and delivered through the new training platform.

We look forward to the implementation of our new supporter engagement system to support our five-year strategy and grow all income streams. The new system is key to maximising our supporters’ journey, integrating existing services and raising our social media presence.

Core business services have improved in IT, Finance, People and Culture and Project Management.

Solutions have been implemented that make day-to-day tasks easier, collaborative and more accessible across devices. These improvements are made with careful consideration to digital security and compliance with data governance.

The renewal of cyber essentials plus certification reconfirms and provides assurance that the Charity follows industry standard good practice across the organisation and the addition of cyber insurance cover this year provides peace of mind that if the worst happened, the support is in place to recover and continue business operations.

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 response vehicles, one of which operates on two evenings per week from 6pm until 2am. This care service is to be expanded during 2023/24 with the aim of covering four and then seven nights per week.



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 £10 million 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 31 March 2023, were as follows:

Asset Class	Fund	Strategic Allocation	31 March 2023
Diversified Growth Fund	Black Rock Dynamic Diversified Growth Fund	25%	26.5%
Diversified Growth Fund	Ninety-One Diversified Growth Fund	25%	23.4%
Cash	ABRDN Sterling Liquidity Fund	50%	50.1%
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.



The total return to 31 March 2023, 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	-2.8%	2.3%	-0.9%	0.1%
12-month net objective (target)	5.6%	2.3%	13.3%	5.9%
Net objective description (target)	Sonia + 3%	Sonia	CPI + 3.25%	

Developed equity markets have delivered strong returns over the last six months despite recent volatility surrounding the banking sector, following the collapse of Silicon Valley Bank (SVB). Investors concluded the systemic risk was minimal and as a result the financial sector recovered in March to finish on a quarter high. The total return is estimated at 0.1% compared with the investment manager’s objective returns target of 5.9%.

In the first few months of the year, the valuation of Black Rock and Ninety-One dropped dramatically, similar in nature to those prior to the pandemic. They recovered in the last few months of the year, but not enough to prevent an overall loss in value of the two funds.

The Charity is aiming to achieve and maintain a real portfolio value of £10 million.





Risk

North West Air Ambulance Charity has a corporate ‘strategic’ risk strategy. During the year, the risk register was migrated to a cloud-based platform which adds clarity and functionality to ensure a clearer risk management process.

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 red, amber, green (RAG) system is reported at the quarterly board meetings.

The finance sub-committee provides oversight of 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 the Financial Services Commission 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, the pandemic 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:

- 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 North West Air Ambulance Charity’s approach to GDPR compliance and 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 2022/23 is £19,099,111 (2021/22: £17,678,260). Of this, the restricted funds for nominated specific use totals £16,754 (2021/22: £83,231) which are analysed in more detail in the notes to the accounts leaving unrestricted funds of £19,082,357 (2021/22 £17,595,028).

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 £7,877,235 (2021/22 £6,589,550). This leaves a value of £11,205,121 (2021/22 £11,005,478) 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 £507,087 (2021/22 £552,115) then leaves a free reserves balance of £10,698,034 (2021/22 £10,453,363).

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 2022/23 was £7,560,639 (2021/22 £6,605,805) 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 31 March 2023, are therefore £18,575,270 (being unrestricted funds less the tangible assets). This is in excess (by circa £3.45 million) of two years of the 2022/23 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 evidenced operational and clinical development and, therefore, expenditure will increase further over future years.

Given this forward-looking context, the reserves of £18,575,270 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 £8 million. 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 light of the financial outlook outlined above, 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.

The results for promotions from this year have shown another healthy surplus, again 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.

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 undertakes an annual 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 sought specialist

support to review the challenges faced by the retail business during the pandemic.

The appraisal and self-assessment of Trustees is in place and has fed into improving training and development for Trustees. Trustees are ultimately accountable for the operation of the Charity and its subsidiary companies. Decisions regarding key risks, 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, the appointed auditors undertook a review of North West Air Ambulance Charity's compliance and governance framework in order to further improve governance procedures. 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.

The Charity was assessed against key areas including purpose, leadership, integrity, decision making, risk control, board effectiveness, equality, diversity and inclusion, openness and accountability.

The report concluded that North West Air Ambulance Charity showed considerable evidence of compliance with the Code in line with recognised good practice. Recommendations were raised for consideration by the board about the organisation's development and enhancement, and these will be considered to future-proof governance arrangements.



Leadership Team

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 consists of:

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

The remuneration packages of the Leadership team (excluding the Medical Director) are benchmarked against those of similar organisations and are reviewed annually by the Trustees.

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 service level agreement and provides assurance to the Trustees that the Charity is operating in a compliant clinical manner and, accordingly, in their approach to risk.

The interim Director of Finance and Resources completed their contract in April 2023, with a permanent replacement in post during June 2023.

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 Air Ambulance Chief Executive Officers, 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.

As a result of careful financial stewardship, the Charity continues to carry reserves in excess of the current reserves policy.

During the year, the Financial Services Commission recommended changes to the scheme of delegations for North West Air Ambulance Charity.

Governance Sub-Committee (GSC)

The governance sub-committee continues to review all aspects of governance. It comprises two Trustees and members of the Leadership team and meets quarterly.

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

The compliance framework document is a key North West Air Ambulance Charity governance tool. This is the internal framework which was created based on the Association of Air Ambulances’ framework for a high performing air ambulance service in 2013 and continually developed by North West Air Ambulance Charity. The compliance framework document is updated and evidenced against the appropriate standards noting completed items.

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

Clinical Governance Sub-Committee (CGSC)

As per the service level agreement and to demonstrate compliance within the accountability framework, the North West Ambulance Service provides clinical

governance and Care Quality Commission (CQC) registration for North West Air Ambulance Charity.

The purpose of the Charity’s clinical governance sub-committee is to monitor and provide assurance regarding clinical governance provided by North West Ambulance Service and to report to the board of Trustees on all clinical and quality aspects of service delivery.

Supporting information for the clinical governance sub-committee is achieved via clinical governance review meetings, held monthly and chaired by a member of the Clinical Senior Management Team. This forum allows for case review, professional discussion and creates a positive learning environment. In addition, all clinicians, led by the Clinical Senior Management Team, 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 is 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:

- Annual health and safety report including managing risk and carrying out risk assessments in the retail shops.
- North West Air Ambulance Charity and Babcock’s development of a crisis communications plan and collaboration regarding the robust plan being in place.

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 Charity's statements of recommended practice.
- Make judgements 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.

During the last year, Simon Mercer joined us as an interim Trustee whilst Rachel Hall took a sabbatical. Simon has since been appointed as a permanent Trustee of the Charity, Director of the promotions company and Director of the lottery company.



Forward Look for the Charity

North West Air Ambulance Charity continues to achieve its objectives and targets and with robust reserves in place, the Charity is in a positive position to progress in the next financial year and beyond.

- Work will commence on the new strategy, which will continue in the same strategic direction. The patient will remain at the heart of everything the Charity does, but with leveraged ambition from the board to 'lead the way' in bringing the hospital to the patient.
- The Charity will ensure it is in a position to attract and retain the best talent and continue with its #OneCrew ethos, ensuring everyone irrespective of their role, feels they belong and are part of #OneCrew, together making a lifesaving difference.
- The reserves policy gives the ability for the Charity to meet its charitable objectives and service provision, even within times of great uncertainty.
- Having strong financial planning and robust finances will ensure that the Charity can develop its big, brave and bold ambitions unimpeded.
- The operational plan is focused around improving patient impact and ensuring operational excellence.
- Following a successful trial, the night car service will be rolled out to a seven days per week service in 2023/24.

- Blood on board all platforms will be provided from 2023/24 onwards.
- The patient aftercare programme will continue with patient aftercare coordinators in place in all the major trauma centres in the region during 2023/24.
- The new, upgraded helicopter fleet will arrive in 2023/24, with a commitment to fly more hours in 2023/24 with increased Consultant-led Doctor and Critical Care Paramedic resources.
- 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 ensure the sustainability of its fundraised income and to diversify fundraising to reduce reliance on lottery and legacy and to enhance the profitability and sustainability of the retail business.
- North West Air Ambulance Charity will trail blaze digital and innovative approaches to fundraising, which will enable the Charity to engage with a more diverse demographic of supporter. The new Charity supporter engagement system is expected to 'go-live' in 2023/24.
- The Charity's risk management practices will be continually reviewed and developed.



Plans for the Future Period and Long-Term Objectives:

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 regeneration of diverse income streams and development of the longer-term income growth strategy.
- To make North West Air Ambulance Charity an even better place to work and volunteer and as a leader in its field.
- To create an environment to encourage innovative healthcare and a digital first approach.
- Raising the profile of North West Air Ambulance Charity as a Charity and a leader in delivering specialist and enhanced medical care to the critically ill and injured.

The key aspects of our strategy for longer term objectives are:

- **Impact:** To save lives.
- **Forward thinking:** To actively encourage innovation and embrace emerging technology to enhance our ability to provide innovative pre-hospital healthcare.
- **Collaborative:** To continue to collaborate with our strategic 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 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 of the lifesaving difference it makes and that it is completely self-funded.

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 on 4th October by the Board of Trustees 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 our Donate page at 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 £1 and players have the chance of winning up to £1,000 every week, plus a huge £10,000 in our quarterly super draws. To learn more, or to enter into our lottery or raffles, visit nwairambulance.org.uk/play-our-lottery.

Legacy Support

Legacy gifts provide the Charity with a valuable income that can allow us to plan for the future and benefit as many patients as possible. Gifts left to our Charity in a will help us to fund vital service to make a difference to the people of the North West.

As a Charity, our patients are at the heart of everything we do. We are dedicated to bringing the hospital to the patient by delivering enhanced pre-hospital care and gifts in wills allow us to continue to do this for everyone in the North West.

In the 2022/23, financial year we received £3,437,765 in legacy gifts.

Gift Aid

If you are a UK taxpayer and make a simple declaration, for every £1 donated the Charity receives 25p of Gift Aid. In 2022/23 we were able to claim £194,829 in Gift Aid.

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.





nwairambulance.org.uk

Registered Charity no: 1075641

