

Your Local Air Ambulance NEWSLETTER

ISSUE 4

# SKY'S THE LIMIT

## FLYING FORWARD!

Take a closer look at the incredible work of Your Local Air Ambulance. Inside we're celebrating excellence, sharing Megan's story, unveiling exciting updates on our brand and more!



your local  
air ambulance  
Derbyshire · Leicestershire · Rutland  
Warwickshire · Northamptonshire

# WELCOME

Hello, and thank you for reading our latest update! In 2024, we faced significant challenges due to the economic climate and cost-of-living crisis. However, we are committed to operating efficiently and providing urgent lifesaving care. Thanks to your support, we continue to achieve our operational goals!



We're excited to announce an upcoming brand update that reflects the hard work of our team across the five counties in England. This is a fantastic opportunity to enhance our mission of delivering lifesaving care in your local area (pg. 4).

We also have much to celebrate—our Melton Mowbray store was named the UK's Favourite Charity Shop 2024! I had the pleasure of accepting the award alongside Simon Mitchell, Area Manager, and Mark Rawlins, Director of Trading. A heartfelt thank you to our amazing volunteers and local supporters (pg. 7)!

Our doctors, paramedics, and pilots were shortlisted for several awards, and we are incredibly grateful for their dedication to saving lives (pg. 5). Camilla Raca, our Communications Manager, is featured in our Staff Spotlight for sharing inspiring patient stories (pg. 10), while Jess Storr highlights the importance of donations from local clothing banks in her report from our Reuse warehouse (pg. 13).

I absolutely love a Spring clear-out and now is a perfect time for you to donate your unwanted clothes and bric-a-brac!

I'm always inspired by the dedication of our community team and the fabulous volunteers who fundraise for us. One of our team members even participated in a Strictly Come Dancing event where I was lucky enough to be a judge too (pg. 14)!

Finally, thank you for your unwavering support as we navigate changes at your local air ambulance. Together, we are giving local people the best chance of survival and recovery from trauma.

Thank you for supporting The Air Ambulance Service. I hope you enjoy this newsletter.

*Peta*

Peta Wilkinson  
CEO, Your Local Air Ambulance

## OUR VALUES



CREATIVITY



COMPASSION



COURAGE

## MISSION STATS 2024

Reaching a medical emergency in rapid time can be the difference between life and death. That's where Your Local Air Ambulance comes in.

**£2,300**  
Average Mission Cost

**3,468**  
Total Missions



**653**  
Hours Flown



£



**809**  
Road Traffic  
Collision Missions



**57,112**  
Critical Care  
Car Miles



**16**  
Counties Attended

\*These figures reflect our missions  
from 1 Jan 2024 - 30 Nov 2024

# A BRAND-NEW CHAPTER FOR US

Starting in February 2025, we're rolling out a brand-new look and feel. This isn't just about logos and colours. It's about evolving into a cohesive, powerful brand that clearly tells our story—across everything we do. The changes you'll see will help us stay relevant, and ensure our branding and messaging are more inspiring, accessible, and engaging for everyone.

## WHY ARE WE DOING THIS?

Right now, our branding lacks unity and can be confusing. Without a clear structure, we miss the chance to build stronger recognition and connection with you, our supporters. This strategic shift will unify our services under one umbrella while allowing our sub-brands (Your Local Air Ambulance and Children's Air Ambulance) to maintain their unique strengths. More importantly, it will help us stay relevant, inclusive, and connected with everyone we serve—so we can continue growing and saving more lives, thanks to you. This evolution is essential for staying in tune with your needs and ensuring we're there for everyone, no matter who they are.

## WHEN WILL IT HAPPEN?

You'll start to see changes from now, with updates gradually rolling out over the next 12-18 months. Communications, retail shops, and even our public image will evolve step by step. This is just the beginning—more updates are on the way!

## HOW ARE WE DOING THIS?

We've spent time listening to you. With over 1,500 voices from surveys, interviews, and focus groups, we've gathered feedback on what matters most and how we can improve. This is about you as much as it is about us. You've shared your thoughts on what's important to you, and we've used that insight to guide these changes. Our new look will reflect who we are: experts in our field, with hearts that care, and a commitment to inclusivity in everything we do.

We'll be sharing more soon, but for now, we're flying forward—together.

# TOGETHER WE SAVE MORE LIVES



# CELEBRATING EXCELLENCE



**Paul Mullins**  
Critical Care Practitioner  
of the Year



**Captain John McCallion**  
Pilot of the Year



**Dr. James Nayyar**  
Doctor of the Year



**Dr. Matthew Wyse**  
Lifetime Achievement Award

## AIR AMBULANCES UK AWARDS

Despite not taking home any awards, we couldn't be prouder of our incredible staff who were shortlisted for prestigious categories at the Air Ambulances UK Awards of Excellence. The nominations highlighted the exceptional dedication, skill, and innovation within our team, showcasing their vital contributions to pre-hospital care.



The nominations celebrated Paul Mullins for Critical Care Practitioner of the Year, recognising his clinical expertise, resilience, and role in driving technological advancements for patient care. Dr. James Nayyar, a finalist for Doctor of the Year, was acknowledged for his groundbreaking contributions to paediatric pre-hospital care and global trauma management. Captain John McCallion was honoured in the Pilot of the Year category for his outstanding airmanship and dedication to mentoring new paramedics. Finally, Dr. Matthew Wyse was shortlisted for the Lifetime Achievement Award, celebrating nearly two decades of visionary leadership and innovation within The Air Ambulance Service.

We extend heartfelt congratulations to all the winners, whose remarkable achievements reflect the high standards of the air ambulance community. Their work inspires us to continue striving for excellence in lifesaving care.

To our supporters, these nominations are a testament to the impact of your generosity, which empowers our team to provide exceptional care. Together, we celebrate the recognition of our nominees and the collective efforts that make a real difference. Here's to another year of innovation, dedication, and teamwork in service to our communities!



# THANK YOU

A heartfelt thank you to everyone who joined in the fun of our 2024 Christmas raffle! Thanks to your generosity, through donations and ticket sales, you helped us raise an incredible £137,266! Your amazing support makes our lifesaving missions possible, and we couldn't do it without you.

## EXCITING NEWS!

Our Spring Raffle is just around the corner! Keep an eye on our website for all the details. Who knows - you could be our next £5,000 jackpot winner! Visit us at: [airamb.co/TAASRaffle](http://airamb.co/TAASRaffle)

"WE FULLY SUPPORT THE CHARITY THROUGH DONATIONS & GIFT AID."  
- MRS SHUCKSMITH (£250 WINNER)

"I'M SO PLEASED, I'VE NEVER WON ANYTHING BEFORE AND I'M 90 YRS OLD." - MRS MARSDEN

"I'M DELIGHTED TO HAVE WON £100. THANK YOU VERY MUCH." - MRS M BEADLE



## THE HANGER TAKES THE CROWN!



THE UK'S FAVOURITE CHARITY SHOP

# WINNER



We're thrilled to share that our charity superstore, The Hanger in Melton Mowbray, was named The UK's Favourite Charity Shop at the Charity Retail Association's 25th Anniversary Charity Shop Awards late last year!

This prestigious award drew thousands of nominations from across the UK, and The Hanger stood out as the winner among 12 inspiring finalists. Presented by the Charity Retail Association, this honour celebrates excellence and innovation in charity retail. Robin Osterley, Chief Executive of the Charity Retail Association, said: "Congratulations to the team at The Air Ambulance Service. This award is a testament to the dedication of the shop's wonderful staff and volunteers, and shows how valued it is by their customers and the wider community."

Mark Rawlins, our Director of Trading also shared his excitement on the award: "This is a fantastic milestone for The Hanger. The team has worked tirelessly to create a space that reflects the values of our charity and provides an exceptional experience for all. To everyone who donates, shops, or volunteers with us - thank you for making a real difference to the lifesaving work we do."



We can't wait to welcome even more visitors to our award-winning store, where every purchase and donation directly supports our lifesaving missions. Stop by and see why we're the nation's favourite! You can find us at 56 Scalford Road, Melton Mowbray LE13 1JY.

# Megan's Story

## PATIENT STORY

**We never forget the incredible resilience of those we help, and Megan Reeves is a remarkable example. Her story is a powerful reminder of why our lifesaving service exists.**

One February morning, 24-year-old Megan, an experienced skydiver with over 300 jumps under her belt, was attempting her first wingsuit jump at Hinton Airfield near Brackley. Wingsuit flying is an exhilarating challenge that uses fabric between the arms and legs to increase lift. But during this jump, a rare sequence of malfunctions led to a terrifying accident.

“Everything that could go wrong did go wrong.” Megan recalls. Her parachute didn’t open correctly, leaving her spiralling downward at 60mph. Worse still, injuries caused by the failed deployment left her unable to properly operate her reserve chute. With immense effort, Megan managed to open it just 1,000 ft from the ground, but she landed at 50mph, sustaining severe injuries.

Airfield staff raised the alarm immediately, and within 21 minutes of their 999 call, our air ambulance crew were on the scene. Megan had suffered a shattered pelvis, fractures in her lower spine, broken ribs, and serious leg injuries. The severity of her condition required urgent specialist care. Our critical care crew quickly stabilised Megan. Concerned about internal bleeding, the team applied a pelvic binder to limit blood loss and administered medication for clotting and pain relief.



Wrapped in a blizzard blanket for warmth, she was carefully transferred onto a scoop stretcher and airlifted to University Hospital Coventry in just 13 minutes.

Megan spent weeks in hospital undergoing surgery to repair her injuries, followed by extensive physiotherapy and hydrotherapy to learn to walk again. Despite the challenges, her determination never wavered. Amazingly, just over a year after her accident, Megan completed a tandem skydive with a friend.

While she approaches her passion for skydiving more cautiously now, she continues to enjoy the sport that changed her life. “Skydiving is an extreme sport, but the safety measures make it low-risk.” Megan says. “I had a freak accident, but it hasn’t stopped me from doing what I love. I couldn’t be more thankful for the air ambulance. I truly believe I wouldn’t be alive today if it wasn’t for their speed and hard work.”

For us, stories like Megan’s underline the critical importance of having advanced medical care available at a moment’s notice. Our ability to respond rapidly and deliver lifesaving interventions is only possible thanks to the generosity of supporters like you. Megan’s story is one of courage, resilience, and gratitude. She inspires us every day and reminds us why our mission matters. Together, we can ensure that people like Megan receive the care they need when it matters most.

*Thank You*

## IN THE SPOTLIGHT

**Name:** Camilla Raca

**Job Title:** Communications Manager



### HOW LONG HAVE YOU WORKED FOR TAAS?

I have worked for The Air Ambulance Service for six and a half years.

### WHAT DOES A TYPICAL DAY LOOK LIKE FOR YOU?

My days are wonderfully varied and starts (and often ends) with coffee! I interview patients to share their inspiring stories, write press releases, and draft responses to public or media queries. I create impactful quotes, edit materials for clarity, liaise with journalists, and monitor news outlets. Developing PR campaigns to raise awareness of our lifesaving service is a key focus, as is supporting teams across TAAS with communications needs. Whether managing media relations, crafting content, or handling urgent comms, my role centres on showcasing the vital work of our service to as many people as possible.

### WHAT HAS BEEN YOUR HIGHLIGHT SO FAR?

It has to be telling the stories of our former patients. It's always such a privilege to share their journeys and highlight the lifesaving difference our service has made to them. Every story is so inspiring and being able to help amplify their voices is something I truly cherish.

### WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO SAY TO OUR SUPPORTERS?

A heartfelt thank you to all our amazing supporters! Your generosity, whether through fundraising, volunteering, donations, or events, makes our work possible. We're so grateful for everything you do to help us continue our vital service.

### HOW CAN PREVIOUS PATIENTS SHARE THEIR STORY WITH US?

If you're a former patient and feel ready to share your story, we'd love to hear from you. Simply visit our website; [airamb.co/yourstory](http://airamb.co/yourstory), complete the online form, and I will get in touch. Thank you!



# JOIN OUR LIFESAVING LOTTERY

Did you know that you can support and win with us by playing our weekly Lottery? Your £1 per week will help keep us flying, and you just might win the £1,000 jackpot. Everyone's a winner!



"I support The Air Ambulance Service because it's a good cause. Where would we be without such good causes. I never expected to win, it was more about giving to a charity." - Mr Watkins, Winner



SCAN TO FIND OUT MORE OR VISIT  
[airamb.co/LotteryWNDLR](http://airamb.co/LotteryWNDLR)

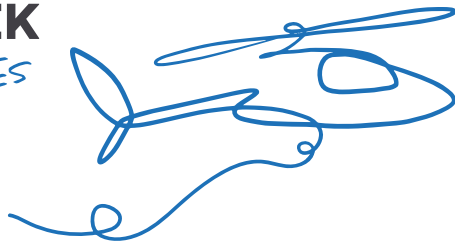


**GambleAware**  
Advice | Tools | Support

The Air Ambulance Service Lottery is promoted and operated by The Air Ambulance Service (TAAS). TAAS is licensed by the Gambling Commission, account number 41823, with responsible person Donna Young. The sole charitable beneficiary of this lottery is TAAS which will receive all of the proceeds after the deduction of the expenses of running the lottery, including the cost of the prizes. Players must be 18+ and be a resident of England, Scotland or Wales. Further terms and conditions can be found on the website above.

# GIFTS IN WILLS WEEK

YOUR SIGNATURE CAN SAVE LIVES



This year, Gifts in Wills Week is taking place from the **17th - 23rd March** and I wanted to take the time to introduce myself. I'm Lynda Copson and I am the Legacy Fundraising Executive at the charity. I am proud to say I have worked here for over two years. In that time, I have seen the huge impact that leaving a legacy can have on our Charity and this is why we have a special dedicated Gifts in Wills week emphasising the importance of these special gifts.

As a charity, we receive no Government funding, and we rely on the kind donations of our supporters. 1 in 7 of our missions are funded by Wills and we are very grateful for all the gifts that we receive. Any gift, however big or small, can make a real difference and support our lifesaving service. Gifts in Wills have a profound impact on our charity and these generous gifts go towards saving lives of those in their greatest hour of need.



Please call our team on **0300 3045 999** for more information or email us at **legacies@theairambulance.org.uk**

## HOW REGULAR GIVING SUPPORTS YOUR LOCAL AIR AMBULANCE

To maintain the bespoke aircraft, train new critical care paramedics and ensure the best emergency treatments are used, we need to be able to plan. Knowing that our supporters have committed to giving every month, even just £1, allows us to keep our service the best it can be to save lives.

For those who already give regularly... *THANK YOU SO MUCH!*

If you would like to become a regular supporter, or would just like to find out more, please scan the QR code with your smart phone camera or call our friendly supporter experience team on **0300 3047 697**.



# FROM CLOTHING BANKS TO LIFESAVING MISSIONS



**At our Daventry warehouse, our dedicated sorting team works tirelessly, unpacking bag after bag of incredible donations generously contributed through our network of clothing banks. Every item plays a part in supporting our lifesaving missions, and we're grateful for your ongoing support!**

We're delighted to introduce Jess Storr, our new Warehouse Stock Coordinator! Jess has been with The Air Ambulance Service for three years and is thrilled to step into this exciting role. She'll ensure all suitable donations are promptly sent to our shops, ready to find new homes.

"I'm thrilled to join the Reuse team and am absolutely blown away by the fantastic donations I've already come across in the clothing banks," Jess shares. "From everyday wear to occasion pieces and designer finds, these items are making a real difference in supporting our lifesaving missions!"

Each donation is carefully sorted into categories like ladies', men's and children's clothing. Tagged and bagged, they are sent to our high-street stores—and don't worry, our discount shops receive plenty of fashionable and quality items at budget-friendly prices too. Every item undergoes a thorough quality check to ensure its suitable to stay in the circular economy. With so many textiles ending up in landfills each year, donating to a clothing bank is a fantastic way to stay sustainable and support a good cause. Your donations help reduce waste and keep our helicopters flying!

**FIND YOUR NEAREST CLOTHING BANK**  
[airamb.co/ClothingBank](http://airamb.co/ClothingBank)



**THANK YOU!  
EVERY DONATION  
TRULY MAKES  
A DIFFERENCE!**

# STRICTLY NORTHAMPTON 2024



## A NIGHT OF SPARKLES AND DANCING!

On 16th November, Strictly Northampton 2024 (run by Step-by-Step Dance School) brought glitz, glamour, and incredible talent to the stage! Thirty-six contestants, each paired with professional dancers, dedicated eight weeks of training to perfect their performances of the Jive, Tango, Waltz, and Cha-Cha.

Karen Hughes, Community Fundraising Executive for Northamptonshire, shared her excitement: "It was such a fantastic experience! My husband Jim and I both took part, and we've kept dancing ever since. The event was not only memorable but also a huge success for our charity."

Together, the contestants have so far raised over £47,000 for The Air Ambulance Service - an incredible amount and testament to their hard work, dedication, and the generosity of our supporters. Thank you to everyone who contributed to making this event truly special!

## £80,000 Boost for The Air Ambulance Service!

Thanks to players of the People's Postcode Lottery, The Air Ambulance Service received an incredible £80,000 donation. This contribution is part of the £1 million prize awarded in Rugby, in September 2024. These funds will help support our lifesaving missions and ensure we can continue delivering critical care to those in need.

Please scan the QR code to hear from previous patient Guy Watt and Donna Young, our Head of Fundraising.



# FANTASTIC FUNDRAISERS



We extend a heartfelt thank you to all our fantastic fundraisers! Your time and effort are crucial to our mission... **THANK YOU!**





# YOUR SUPPORT MAKES IT POSSIBLE

**£2,300**

COULD FLY ONE COMPLETE MISSION FOR YOUR LOCAL AIR AMBULANCE.



PLEASE SCAN ME TO DONATE



OR DONATE ONLINE AT

[airamb.co/donate](http://airamb.co/donate)



COULD PAY FOR A BOX OF 50 MEDICAL GRADE STERILE GLOVES TO HELP PREVENT THE THREAT OF CROSS CONTAMINATION.

**£78**

COULD PAY FOR A BLIZZARD BLANKET TO WRAP AROUND PATIENTS TO PROVIDE WARMTH AND WEATHER PROTECTION

**£39**

COULD HELP PAY FOR AN IV KIT TO ALLOW PATIENTS TO RECEIVE VITAL MEDICATIONS THEY NEED ON SCENE, INCLUDING ANTIBIOTICS OR PAIN RELIEF.

**£15**

## FUNDRAISE YOUR WAY

Whether you're a seasoned fundraiser, planning your first event, or want to join us at one of our events to help raise awareness and vital funds for Your Local Air Ambulance, our team is here to help. For more information, please visit our website

[airamb.co/fundraise](http://airamb.co/fundraise), scan the QR code with your smart phone camera or call our friendly Supporter Experience Team on **0300 3045 999**.



STAY IN TOUCH



[www.theairambulance.org.uk](http://www.theairambulance.org.uk)

[theairambulance.org.uk/contact](http://theairambulance.org.uk/contact)

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0300 3045 999



your local  
air ambulance

Derbyshire - Leicestershire - Rutland  
Warwickshire - Northamptonshire



PART OF  
The Air Ambulance Service  
SAVING LIVES



Registered with  
FUNDRAISING  
REGULATOR

Part of The Air Ambulance Service.  
Registered Company No. 4845905.  
Registered Charity No. 1098874.

Donations gratefully received enable The Air Ambulance Service to meet the clinical needs of patients by covering the operational costs to ensure all our vital services are ready to respond.

This newsletter cost 10p to print.