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RIGG CONSTRUCTION

Main contractor for Wiltshire Air Ambulance's new airbase, opened in May 2018.



Wiltshire Air Ambulance
funded by you, flying for you

Wiltshire Air Ambulance is a registered charity and relies on donations to provide an essential Helicopter Emergency Medical Service (HEMS) for anyone who lives, works or travels in Wiltshire and surrounding counties. The service operates up to 19 hours a day, 365 days a year.

Wiltshire Air Ambulance's paramedics are trained in critical care skills which means they can carry out surgical procedures and give advanced drugs for sedation and pain relief to critically injured or ill patients.

Together with the specialist medical equipment – paid for by donations – on board the helicopter and rapid response vehicles, the critical care team is able to deliver gold standard medical care to patients.

Get in touch:

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registered charity number 1144097
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Wiltshire Air Ambulance Lift Off 2020

A fascinating history

Welcome to this edition of Lift Off – our special 30th birthday celebration souvenir issue in which we look back on three decades of saving lives in Wiltshire and meet some of the incredible people - paramedics, patients, volunteers (not to mention policemen) – who have all played such a vital part in keeping us airborne.

It is a fascinating history because unlike any other air ambulance in the UK, and possibly even the world, our Helicopter Emergency Medical Service was quite literally born out of necessity. A helicopter on hire to Wiltshire Police to provide aerial surveillance of the summer solstice celebrations at Stonehenge, passing over a road traffic accident at Beanacre, near Melksham, landed, took out a seat, loaded a stretcher and transported a critically injured person to hospital in five minutes.

At first we 'rented' a paramedic seat on the police helicopter so along with that came the challenge of raising a third of the costs of operating the aircraft and those funds only ever materialised because people from all over the county volunteered to help in that noble quest. Some have been with us for a long, long time, almost from the beginning, so I hope you are inspired as you read about this in the pages that follow.

Our 30th anniversary year though is not only about looking back and being thankful, it is also about looking forward and being hopeful.

Over the last 30 years the crews serving on Wiltshire Air Ambulance have saved a generation of people. The people saved have gone on to have children, welcomed siblings, cousins, nephews and nieces into the world or become grandparents.

With the help of our supporters we want to be here to save the next generation.

Indeed, we have high hopes that in 2020 we will break every record in our vital fundraising so that we can continue these lifesaving missions in our helicopter and rapid response cars at a time when our services seem to be required more frequently than ever.

Emblazoned across the helicopter are the words “funded by you, flying for you” and that sentiment is as true today as it was when the first ever air ambulance landed at Beanacre more than 30 years ago.

David Philpott
Chief Executive of Wiltshire Air Ambulance



The evolution of Wiltshire Air Ambulance

As Wiltshire Air Ambulance marks its 30th year of operation in 2020 we look at how it has developed. On these pages we look at how the service has evolved operationally.

Throughout its 30 years Wiltshire has been pioneering in the provision of an air ambulance service.

When Wiltshire Air Ambulance began it shared a helicopter with Wiltshire Police and this partnership lasted for 24 years. This was a unique arrangement in the UK as other air ambulances were stand-alone and used their own helicopters.

Why was Wiltshire different?

The idea for a joint emergency services helicopter originated when a temporary helicopter hired by Wiltshire Police to use for its summer solstice operation at Stonehenge was used to airlift a woman who was seriously injured in a road traffic collision on the A350 at Beanacre, near Melksham (pictured below).

The crew onboard the helicopter heard of the incident on their radios while they were flying and landed at the scene. They were told that it was unlikely that the woman would survive the journey to hospital by road so they decided to fly her.

The police observer's seat was removed to make way for her on a stretcher and a paramedic joined the crew. The flight to the Royal United Hospital, Bath, took five minutes and the woman survived.

This was in 1988 and the following year the police hired a helicopter for an extended period of three months and invited Wiltshire Ambulance Service to provide a paramedic to be part of the trial.



The 'go live' day - 15 March 1990

The helicopter responded to criminal activity while the medical incidents were mostly road traffic accidents.

The experiment was a success and senior officers at the police and ambulance services agreed that the citizens of Wiltshire would be best served by establishing a joint emergency services helicopter.

And on 15 March 1990 a full-time joint helicopter began operating, based at police headquarters in Devizes.

The crew comprised a pilot employed by Police Aviation Services (PAS), a police officer and a paramedic. The police officers and pilots were trained to assist the paramedics with their medical equipment and the paramedics were trained to assist with navigation, communications and videoing of police pursuits.

The first helicopter was a Bolkow 105 and this was in service for eight years.

The Bolkow was replaced in December 1998 by an MD 902 Explorer, a more advanced helicopter.

As well as being faster than the Bolkow, it had a greater endurance, 80% more cabin space and side loading for patients. It was also quieter and safer because it had no tail rotor (NOTAR).

Wiltshire's MD 902 was the first NOTAR twin-engined helicopter to enter service in the UK as a joint police and emergency medical service helicopter.



Emergency medical developments

Another notable first came in June 2001 when the hours of operation of the helicopter were extended from 10 to 19 hours a day due to the demand for medical emergencies – this resulted in Wiltshire Air Ambulance being the first air ambulance in the UK to fly at night.

In 2012 the development of pre-hospital emergency medicine nationally resulted in Wiltshire Air Ambulance's paramedics beginning training in critical care skills (pictured above).

This upskilling, together with the specialist medical equipment onboard (paid for by donations), changed the dynamic of the operation of the helicopter for medical incidents from 'swoop and scoop' (landing and airlifting patients to the nearest hospital) to effectively bringing a mobile emergency department to the scene of an incident, before transporting patients to the most appropriate hospital – often a regional trauma centre.

With the establishment of the National Police Air Service by the Government the joint helicopter partnership in Wiltshire came to an end in December 2014, but what followed was a new era for Wiltshire Air Ambulance.

A new era

The charity began operating as a stand-alone air ambulance on 9 January 2015 using a Bell 429 helicopter. The crew configuration was a pilot and two paramedics.



The MD 902 (left) and Bell 429 (right)

Wiltshire again made aviation history because it was the first time in the UK that a Bell 429 was used for Helicopter Emergency Medical Service (HEMS) work.

In comparison to the MD 902 the Bell 429 was faster, more powerful, with a bigger cabin and had the latest in-flight technology.

The helicopter and crew continued to be based at Wiltshire Police headquarters in Devizes renting the hangar until the charity's state-of-the-art airbase was built in Semington, near Melksham, in 2018.

The new airbase was a significant development as it brought together the operational team and charity staff under the same roof and on land owned by the charity for the first time.

In 2019 another important milestone occurred for Wiltshire Air Ambulance when it secured an Air Operator Certificate in its own right – the first to do so with a Bell 429 helicopter. This was following a thorough process involving the Civil Aviation Authority.

Message from our Patron



I am very proud to be Patron of the Wiltshire Air Ambulance Trust, which provides the county with a vital emergency service.

During my 10 year patronage, I have seen the charity go from strength to strength, from sharing a helicopter with Wiltshire Police to becoming a stand-alone air ambulance with its own helicopter.

I also had the privilege of officially opening the charity's airbase at Semington in 2018 where I met the aircrew, charity staff, former patients and supporters.

This year is another important milestone for the service as it celebrates 30 years of saving lives. Thanks to the dedication of the air crew, staff and supporters, the service gets better and better. Long may it continue!

How the charity developed

On these pages we look at how the charity running Wiltshire Air Ambulance developed from when the service shared a helicopter with Wiltshire Police to becoming a stand-alone air ambulance owning its helicopter and airbase.

A key supporter of Wiltshire Air Ambulance was the late Dr Richard (Dick) Riseley-Prichard (below, second from right, back row) who sadly passed away in 2017 at the age of 92. He played a pivotal role in establishing a charity to fundraise for it.



After retiring from the Royal Air Force in 1985 in the rank of Air Vice-Marshal Dr Riseley-Prichard, who lived in Allington in the Pewsey Vale, took a keen interest in the activities of the NHS in Wiltshire.

He became a member of Swindon Health Authority and subsequently a director and vice-chairman of Wiltshire Ambulance Service.

He was closely involved with Wiltshire Air Ambulance from its formation when it shared a helicopter with Wiltshire Police and he co-founded the Wiltshire Air Ambulance Appeal – the original charity set up to raise funds to pay to keep the air ambulance flying – in 1991.

The charity was run by Wiltshire Ambulance Service which provided office space for a couple of part-time staff and volunteers in Dorman House (on the same site as Chippenham Ambulance Station) in Malmesbury Road.

The police paid for two thirds of the running costs of the helicopter, which was based at the Air Support Unit (ASU) at police headquarters, Devizes, while the charity had to raise the remainder.

In 1995 the charity's contribution was £134,000 and the funds were raised through a variety of ways, including farmers' auctions, coffee mornings and large legacies.

Contrast this to the final year of the partnership with Wiltshire Police in 2014 when the charity's contribution was £700,000.

In 1998 – eight years after Wiltshire Air Ambulance began - Dot Whitehead (right) opened a charity shop in Westbury to raise funds for the charity (below). She supported Wiltshire Air Ambulance because it had airlifted a relative.



It was well received by locals and after just two years it expanded into the premises next door. In 2006 the shop volunteers received an award from The High Sheriff of Wiltshire for their "great and valuable services to the community."

The charity took over the running of the shop after Dot died in December 2012, aged 81. In 2018 the shop celebrated its 20th anniversary and during that time it generated over £1 million for the charity.

Aside from the shop, the charity grew slowly and other fundraising initiatives got underway including collection tins in pubs and shops, while volunteers went to community events with a branded gazebo (below) and sold merchandise.



Threat to the charity

In 2007 Wiltshire was in danger of losing its air ambulance because Great Western Ambulance Service (which had replaced Wiltshire Ambulance Service and was the sole trustee of the Wiltshire Air Ambulance Appeal) contemplated not renewing the contract with Wiltshire Police for the joint helicopter for a further five years.

But a successful campaign, organised by the Wiltshire Gazette & Herald newspaper and led by notable supporters, including Dr Riseley-Prichard and Richard Youens (now Wiltshire Air Ambulance's lifetime president), led to Wiltshire Air Ambulance being saved and the helicopter contract was renewed for five years.

The charity received the royal seal of approval when HRH The Duchess of Cornwall became its patron in 2009.

HRH had visited the Air Support Unit the previous year (pictured below) meeting crew members, charity staff, volunteers, supporters and former patients.



The Duchess's first duty as patron was to draw the first numbers for the charity's Lottery, which had been launched to help boost income.

The charity received another high profile boost when actor Sir David Jason, at the time patron of the Air Ambulances Association, visited to celebrate the 20th anniversary of Wiltshire Air Ambulance in 2010.



Sir David Jason with charity staff, volunteers and supporters to celebrate Wiltshire Air Ambulance's 20th birthday in 2010.

An independent charity is formed

Campaigners who were involved in the Gazette & Herald campaign to save Wiltshire Air Ambulance also lobbied Great Western Ambulance Service (GWAS) to relinquish control of the charity. The hard work paid off and a new charity, independent of GWAS, was formed in October 2011 called the Wiltshire Air Ambulance Charitable Trust (WAACT).

In April 2013 the trustees of WAACT honoured Dr Riseley-Prichard for his 20+ years of service to Wiltshire Air Ambulance with a reception at the ASU attended by family, friends and colleagues.

He was presented with a model of the MD 902 Explorer helicopter by Her Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant of Wiltshire, Mrs Sarah Rose Troughton. Speaking at the time Dr Riseley-Prichard recalled the first time he visited the helicopter base in Devizes.

"I came away absolutely inspired by the professionalism and the enthusiasm of the pilots, the paramedics and the police observers, so any contribution I have made has really been a labour of love," he said.

With the joint helicopter partnership with Wiltshire Police coming to an end in 2014 the charity was looking at ways to increase income and it launched the Superdraw, allowing members of its regular Lottery to play with a chance of winning a jackpot of up to £25,000.

To build on the success of its shop in Westbury the charity opened a shop in Devizes in 2016 (pictured below), with TV star Paul Martin (of Flog It!) and the mayor of Devizes, councillor Jane Burton, as the special guests.



One base, one team

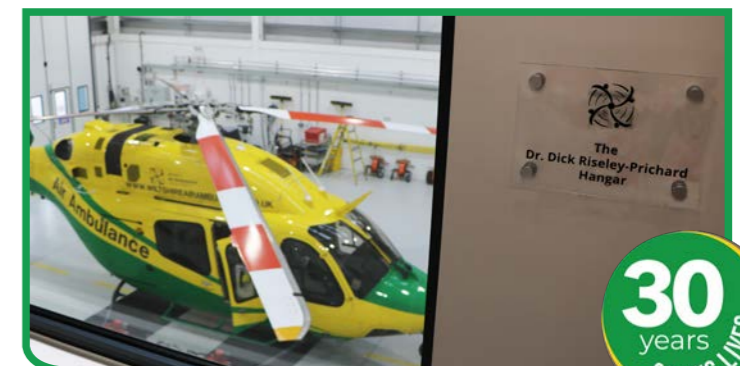
The next major development for the charity was moving to its new airbase at Semington, near Melksham, in May 2018 following a successful capital fundraising appeal.



This major milestone secured the future of the charity, enabling it to continue saving lives.



In a fitting tribute to Dr Riseley-Prichard the hangar at the airbase is named after him.



A unique perspective

Mike Evans was uniquely placed to see the benefits of a joint emergency services helicopter for Wiltshire.



He was a police observer onboard a Gazelle helicopter that Wiltshire Police hired for a six-week period in 1988 to help with the policing operation of the summer solstice at Stonehenge when it was used to airlift a seriously injured woman to hospital.

Mike duly reported the incident and its potential for future collaboration to Inspector Brian Murdoch, then the officer in charge of the unit at Wiltshire Police.

Their enthusiasm, together with the support of senior police and ambulance staff, led to a full-time joint police helicopter and air ambulance – called the Air Support Unit (ASU) - being established in March 1990.

Mike joined the ASU, based at Wiltshire Police headquarters, Devizes, in 1991 as a police observer. He succeeded Inspector Brian Murdoch as head of the ASU in 1993 until he retired in 2007.

As head of the ASU Mike was involved in recruiting police officers and paramedics and explained that they had to have particular qualities.

Mike, who lives near Salisbury, said: "I interviewed prospective paramedics and as well as their medical skills we were assessing their temperament. Could they get on with everyone at the unit and would they be able to cope with the daily exposure to tragic incidents? Not everyone could."

The ASU was a close-knit team and they took part in fundraising for the Wiltshire Air Ambulance Appeal, the original charity set up to pay for the ambulance service's share of the running costs of the helicopter.

One such challenge involved cycling from Land's End to Devizes in 1998 (below), while another was riding the Coast to Coast cycleway in 2001 from Whitehaven in Cumbria to Newcastle in two days – the latter in challenging weather conditions.



A rugged work horse

The first helicopter in service at the ASU was a Bolkow 105 (pictured below) and it had been used elsewhere before it started flying in Wiltshire's skies – including by Surf Life Saving, a community cause in Australia.



Mike said: "The Bolkow was a rugged work horse. It had quite a large load capacity and was designed for the military. It had skids instead of wheels, which were ideal for us in Wiltshire as it meant that it could land virtually anywhere."

"We could load it with search lights and we could take out the seats very easily if required. We also had speakers on the side of it which we could use to broadcast, for example if we were looking for a missing child."

"The rear clam shell doors were standard although it was a bit daunting for patients who were conscious to be loaded underneath the tail rotor. The space was cramped inside and the patient's legs were out of view because they were laid down the rear of the aircraft."

Crew members with the MD 902 Explorer, ambulance and police vehicles, at Police headquarters, Devizes.



Infrastructure improvements

It wasn't until 1993 that a hangar was built at the back of Wiltshire Police headquarters in Devizes to house the helicopter and provide offices for the pilots, paramedics and police officers.

Before then the Bolkow was left outside in all weathers by the side of the force's rugby pitch. The crew were based in an office next to the control room in Police headquarters and when an emergency required their attendance they had to dash from the building to the helicopter.

Mike said: "The hangar was great. As well as housing the aircraft so it was no longer outside in all weathers, we had an office and training facilities."

Another innovation was a machine to lift the helicopter off the ground to manoeuvre it in and out of the hangar.

Before this machine was acquired a steel platform measuring 5 x 4 metres was used (pictured below). This required considerable skill on the part of the pilots to land the Bolkow on to it.

Mike said: "The platform was rudimentary in those days but it worked. Having the machine to lift the Bolkow improved the situation. The machine was very manoeuvrable and it was easier to take in and out of the hangar."



A new and more advanced helicopter

By 1995 the Bolkow was reaching its maximum weight limit with the equipment on board so Mike began researching a replacement helicopter and an MD 902 Explorer (pictured above) was chosen and came into service in December 1998.

Wiltshire's own explorer David Hempleman-Adams (pictured below) was among the guests at its official launch at police headquarters, Devizes.



Extra equipment on the new helicopter included a fixed infrared camera, a night sun, tactical radios and additional medical equipment.

In 2001 the hours of operation were extended to 19 hours a day due to the demand of medical emergencies. Shortly before Mike's retirement the Civil Aviation Authority gave approval for in-flight defibrillation of patients.

How it has changed

Paramedic Ian Potheary has the unique distinction of working on all three helicopters during Wiltshire Air Ambulance's 30 years.

During that time pre-hospital emergency medicine has developed considerably and the operation of Wiltshire Air Ambulance is vastly different to when he started.



Ian (pictured above) began working on the joint emergency services helicopter at the Air Support Unit based at Wiltshire Police headquarters in Devizes in March 1992 after passing a selection process. Before he joined he was a land ambulance paramedic based at Devizes Ambulance Station.

When he began there were five full-time paramedics - who wore green uniforms - and each served for a year at a time. In those days the hours of operation were 8am to 6pm.

The crew consisted of a pilot, paramedic and police observer. The police officers and pilots were trained to assist the paramedics with their medical equipment and the paramedics were trained to assist with navigation, communications and videoing of police pursuits.



The pilots were highly trained ex-military personnel and could land the helicopter in the tightest of spots, including on canal towpaths.

The video camera was handheld and the side door of the helicopter had to be opened so the paramedic operating it could sit on the floor with their feet resting on the skids. The paramedic was securely fastened by wearing a harness attached to them and inside the helicopter.

"I always made sure the harness was on tight!" said Ian. "It was exhilarating, exciting work. The police incidents consisted of a lot of police pursuits and surveillance, there were a lot of ram raids in those days."

The dual role of the helicopter came into its own on countless occasions.

Ian said: "Very often if we were deployed on a police tasking it would turn into a medical incident, for example a search for a missing person and when we found them they needed medical treatment at the scene or a police officer who was injured on the ground in a pursuit would need our help."

When the helicopter was unable to fly, usually due to bad weather, the paramedics used a Saab Rapid Response Vehicle (car) donated to the Wiltshire Air Ambulance Appeal by Causeway in Chippenham.



Ian Potheary (right) and paramedic Ron Schofield receiving a cheque from a local group for Wiltshire Air Ambulance.



Left: Ian Potheary was involved in the launch of Wiltshire Police's Christmas anti drink driving campaign in 1992.

Charity involvement

The first item of merchandise the charity sold was a metal tie pin of the Bolkow, an idea that was inspired when Ian and his family visited the Royal Naval Air Station in Culdrose, Cornwall, on holiday and he saw they were selling metal tie pins in the shape of their helicopters.

Before fundraisers were employed the paramedics often gave talks to schools and community groups.

"I enjoyed giving talks," Ian said. "The public were really interested in the helicopter and asked lots of questions."

Also, Ian and other members of the crew would count up money from the charity's collection tins in between deployments.

Ian returned to work on Wiltshire Air Ambulance from 1998 to 2001 as a relief paramedic. The Bolkow had been replaced by the MD 902 Explorer and Ian said the new helicopter was a considerable upgrade.

No more hanging out of doors!

"The 902 was like a Rolls Royce compared to the Bolkow aircraft (below left). We no longer had a handheld video camera but a built-in unit with forward looking infrared and video. This was controlled by a joystick, so no more hanging out of doors!" he said.



"Inside there was more space for our medical equipment. What had also changed was that patients were loaded into the aircraft at the side, this was much better for the patients and the crew."

The most significant change for Ian was when he returned to do volunteer shifts with Wiltshire Air Ambulance from 2014 to 2018.

Not only was there a new helicopter, the Bell 429 – "an ever more advanced aircraft and kitted out purely as an air ambulance" – but the paramedics on Wiltshire Air Ambulance were specialists in critical care, enabling them to give enhanced drugs for pain relief and sedation, pre-hospital blood transfusions and carry out surgical interventions at the scene of incidents.

Ian, who lives in Semington, reflected: "Everything has improved and progressed - the technology, the aids for flying, the navigation – it's so much safer for the crews.

"The paramedics have additional skills and they use specialist medical equipment, including ultrasound scanners and fluid warmers, while patients are flown to regional trauma centres to receive specialist care quickly, helping their chances of survival."

Ian, who has been a paramedic for 37 years and is currently based at Trowbridge Ambulance Station, said: "I was so proud to work on the helicopter serving the people of Wiltshire. Wiltshire Air Ambulance is something for the whole county to be proud of."



The Saab RRV alongside the MD 902

‘The charity was very low key when I joined’

Barbara Sealy is one of Wiltshire Air Ambulance's long-standing volunteers. She joined in 1992 and lives in Kington Langley, near Chippenham, where she runs the family farm with her husband, son, daughter-in-law and grandchildren.

Barbara joined the charity as a volunteer when it was in its infancy. She responded to an article in the Wiltshire Gazette & Herald newspaper asking for people to help with bucket collections to raise money.

As well as working on the family farm, Barbara also worked as a school secretary but she always found time to volunteer for Wiltshire Air Ambulance.

Volunteering at events

As part of her volunteering roles, Barbara attends cheque presentations, events where the charity has a stall and gives talks.



The charity's volunteers attend events in all weathers and Barbara recalls an occasion when the charity's merchandise proved handy.

She said: "I was at a church fete at Derry Hill and it was so busy. There was so much going on and so many people there. Unfortunately, storm clouds came over and it chucked it down with rain.

"Luckily I had merchandise on my stall which came in very useful - I sold a WAA poncho and all the WAA umbrellas as people sought refuge from the rain! Despite the weather it was a really good fun event."

Barbara tries to volunteer once a month for Wiltshire Air Ambulance and said: "It's the most satisfying job because people want to hear about Wiltshire Air Ambulance and give their money to it.

"One young boy came up to our stall and gave us some of his pocket money and thanked us for saving his dad's life. He was in tears and so was I."

With the charity in its 30th year, what motivates Barbara to continue volunteering with Wiltshire Air Ambulance?

"It's the saving lives aspect - it's an invaluable service saving lives. The whole team are amazing - the pilots, the paramedics, the charity staff, the trustees - just everybody," she said.

"Volunteering is a terrific way of getting out and filling your time. You meet so many lovely people and we are helping Wiltshire Air Ambulance to continue saving lives."

Barbara recalled: "I was one of about 20 volunteers who did bucket collections. We would do it most weekends and we would stand with the buckets for two hours at a time. We wore Wiltshire Air Ambulance sashes that went over our shoulders to our waist so the public could see who we were representing.

"We did this at supermarkets in Chippenham, Calne and Melksham and typically we raised £300 a day, which was a good amount back then."

In the early years the charity used an office provided by Wiltshire Ambulance Service on the same site as Chippenham Ambulance Station, in Malmesbury Road, and Barbara went there to help fill and label envelopes to send to supporters.

She said: "There was only one person in the office co-ordinating the volunteers - the charity was very low key."



Above: Barbara Sealy (right) volunteering at the Beaufort Christmas Fair

Small change can make a difference!

In this article we look at the history and growth of collection tins at Wiltshire Air Ambulance as an important method of fundraising.



Colin Smith with different collection tins used by WAA

Collection tins are an important source of fundraising for Wiltshire Air Ambulance.

Not only do they help to raise vital funds, their visible presence on shop counters, in pubs and at events raises awareness of the charity.

In the early days of the charity, tins were one of the main ways that people could give donations.

For 20 years Colin Smith was the charity's volunteer collection tin co-ordinator, retiring in October 2019.

During his time the number of tins increased from 50 to 1,000 in premises all over Wiltshire, raising in the region of £500,000.

Colin, 80, of Chippenham, said: "When I started volunteering with the charity there were a small number of collection tins and they were concentrated in the Devizes and Chippenham area. The number of tins increased mainly by word of mouth.

"We would take them to country shows and big events such as at Kemble, Hullavington and Castle Combe. People saw them and requested one for their local club or for their workplace."

Counting the money in the tins

As well as distributing the tins, Colin collected them when they were full and counted the money in them.

In the early days Colin and a member of staff at the charity would write out the receipts and letters to those who hosted the tin to inform them how much had been raised.

A real boast to aid the counting of the money in the tins was the introduction of a cash counting machine.

Colin recalled: "Counting by hand was hard work. It could take between five and six hours a day whereas the machine could count the contents of a collection tin in five to six minutes. Another benefit in the last couple of years was that the machine could weigh the notes, saving considerable time with the counting."

The colour of the collection tins has changed over the years. When Colin joined they were blue with a red and white label, followed by a blue and yellow label, then a blue and white label and finally in 2014 yellow tins following a rebranding of the charity's logo and colours.

Colin said: "I'm proud of the amount of collection tins in circulation and the role they have played in raising money for Wiltshire Air Ambulance. All the small change (and notes) that people donate all adds up and helps the charity to save lives."

With contactless payment increasing in society does he think collection tins will continue to have a role in fundraising?

"I think they will continue as long as the banks don't do away with cash," he said.

Contactless technology is good to have at events but collection tins are ideal for places like pubs, where you can put your change in from a round of drinks.

"It's also a good PR exercise having collection tins on display in a pub or a shop.

People see them and they are reminded that Wiltshire Air Ambulance is a charity relying on donations and it may prompt them to raise money on occasions, such as a birthday celebration or wedding."

Everyone at Wiltshire Air Ambulance would like to take this opportunity to thank Colin for his tireless work for the charity over the past two decades.



Colin's retirement with Wiltshire Air Ambulance staff and aircrew



Above: Barbara Sealy (right) with volunteer John Collins

We've saved a generation, help us save the next.

As we mark our 30th year of operation in 2020 we'd like to thank all our supporters. Every donation to our charity enables us to provide our essential Helicopter Emergency Medical Service (HEMS).

Our highly trained pilots, paramedics and doctors, the specialist medical equipment they use and the speed of our helicopter and Rapid Response Vehicles have made the difference between life and death.

Since Wiltshire Air Ambulance began in 1990 we have saved countless lives.

A generation of people have been able to resume their lives after our intervention and celebrate special milestones such as birthdays, wedding anniversaries or the birth of children and grandchildren.

On these pages are the stories of three people whose lives were saved by Wiltshire Air Ambulance.

You can also hear from former patients. Each month throughout 2020 on our social media channels we'll be featuring videos from patients who tell their story.

It costs £3.75 million a year to operate our vital service. We are not funded directly by the Government and receive no National Lottery grants.

We are honoured to serve Wiltshire and surrounding counties. With your help we can be here to save the next generation.

To donate, head to our website by scanning the QR code below on your smartphone. Alternatively, head to www.wiltshireairambulance.co.uk/generation.



Stuart Hershbein (bottom), who was airlifted in 2012 with his wife Cherie and their daughters, Pixie and Harmony.

Help us save the next Donate online now



www.wiltshireairambulance.co.uk/generation



Wiltshire Air Ambulance saved my life after ladder fall

Lynne Merrett (pictured far left with her family) was airlifted by Wiltshire Air Ambulance on 8 August 2000 after a gardening accident caused life-threatening injuries.

Lynne, who was aged 50 at the time, was cutting the hedge adjoining her garden at home in Warminster when she fell eight feet from the ladder she was on, hitting a concrete post and then on to her lawn.

She suffered 22 fractures to her ribs, a punctured lung and a tear in her diaphragm and was airlifted to Salisbury District Hospital.

She was in the High Dependency Unit for two days and was discharged after two and a half weeks.

Lynne, a retired health visitor, said: "I'm very, very lucky. If it hadn't been for Wiltshire Air Ambulance I wouldn't be alive. I needed to get to hospital quickly. I have so much to be thankful for. As a result of being saved by Wiltshire Air Ambulance, I saw my sons get married and I now have three grandchildren."



I owe my life to the professionalism of the aircrew

Stuart Hershbein owes his life to Wiltshire Air Ambulance after he suffered a life-threatening medical emergency on 6 September 2012. But it was not just his life that Wiltshire Air Ambulance saved, because after he recovered Stuart went on to get married and have two daughters.

Stuart, who was aged 32 at the time, was airlifted after he collapsed and lost consciousness at home in Maiden Bradley, Wiltshire.

It was night time and despite the worsening weather conditions and threat of fog, Wiltshire Air Ambulance landed nearby and flew Stuart to Frenchay Hospital in Bristol within 11 minutes.

Stuart had Hydrocephalus (fluid on the brain), which meant his brain was being crushed and he had emergency surgery.

Stuart, who is deputy head of PE at Melksham Oak School, said: "Wiltshire Air Ambulance saved my life, but it's not just my life they saved. It meant I could get married and my wife, Cherie, and I had our beautiful daughters, Pixie and Harmony."

In 2017 Stuart ran the Bath Half Marathon for the first time and raised funds for Wiltshire Air Ambulance. He also ran it in 2019 (pictured above with his daughters). He is also a volunteer with the charity and gives talks to groups about what happened to him.

He said: "Wiltshire Air Ambulance is a charity that everyone in Wiltshire knows about, however unless you require its assistance you don't really appreciate how much it's needed."



A life-changing injury but I'm glad to be alive

Carol Gray (pictured far left with her family) was airlifted by Wiltshire Air Ambulance when she suffered serious injuries in a road traffic collision on the A420 near the Biddestone crossroads on 21 February 2013.

Wiltshire Air Ambulance paramedics treated Carol at the scene before the helicopter flew her to Frenchay Hospital, Bristol, in six minutes.

Carol, who at the time was 58, broke her neck, pelvis, four ribs and had extensive soft tissue damage to her legs. She underwent emergency surgery on her neck and three bones were fused together with a metal plate and pins.

The injury to Carol's neck has been life-changing as she has lost 50% movement in it, but she adapts to situations and is just so grateful that she is alive and able to be independent.

Carol, of Melksham, said: "My family and I do what we can to support Wiltshire Air Ambulance, it needs every penny to continue saving lives.

"Had it not been for Wiltshire Air Ambulance I wouldn't have seen my grandchildren grow up. I'm just so, so grateful for everything they did for me.

"Wiltshire Air Ambulance helps everyone. I never thought I would need it. You get up in the morning thinking the day is going to be a normal day but you just don't know what will happen to you."



Lottery Player Application Form

- Each chance in our regular Lottery costs just £1 per week
- The first prize is £1,000, plus four consolation prizes of £25
- As a member of our Lottery, for an additional £1 a week you can join our Superdraw
- The Superdraw can reach a maximum prize of £25,000

Your Details PLEASE COMPLETE IN FULL - BLOCK CAPITAL LETTERS

Title

First Name

Surname

Date of Birth

Address

Postcode

Telephone

Email Address

I confirm I am 16 years of age or over

This Guarantee should be retained by the payer.

The Direct Debit Guarantee



This Guarantee is offered by all banks and building societies that accept instructions to pay Direct Debits

If there are any changes to the amount, date or frequency of your Direct Debit The Air Ambulance Lottery Society will notify you 10 working days in advance of your account being debited or as otherwise agreed. If you request The Air Ambulance Lottery Society to collect a payment, confirmation of the amount and date will be given to you at the time of the request

If an error is made in the payment of your Direct Debit, by The Air Ambulance Lottery Society or your bank or building society, you are entitled to a full and immediate refund of the amount paid from your bank or building society.

- If you receive a refund you are not entitled to, you must pay it back when The Air Ambulance Lottery Society asks you to

You can cancel a Direct Debit at any time by simply contacting your bank or building society. Written confirmation may be required. Please also notify us.

We would also like to keep you informed about our lifesaving work. Please tick here if you are happy for us to contact you by post by telephone by email by text We are committed to ensuring that your personal data is kept secure. We will not sell, distribute or lease your personal information to third parties. You can update your preferences or opt out of receiving communications at any time by notifying us on hello@wiltshireairambulance.co.uk or calling 01225 300536.

Instruction to your bank or building society to pay by Direct Debit



Please fill in the form and send to:

Air Ambulance Lottery Office, Unit C2, Waterfold Business Park, Bury BL9 7BR

Name and full postal address of your bank or building society

Service user number
4 4 0 7 8 4

To: The Manager Bank/building society

Address

Postcode

Names(s) of account holder(s)

Branch sort code

Bank/building society account number

Reference
A A L S W A A

Instruction to your bank or building society
Please pay The Air Ambulance Lottery Society Direct Debits from the account detailed in this Instruction subject to the safeguards assured by the Direct Debit Guarantee. I understand that this Instruction may remain with The Air Ambulance Lottery Society and, if so, details will be passed electronically to my bank/building society.

Signature(s)

Date

• All customer funds intended for the use in future gambling and or lottery subscriptions will be held in a separate bank account or accounts relating to the relevant affiliated charity lottery and will be completely separate from the society's trading income.
• We are required by our licence to inform customers about what happens to funds which we hold on account for you, and the extent to which funds are protected in the event of insolvency. www.gamblingcommission.gov.uk/consumers/protection-of-customer-funds.aspx We hold customer funds separate from AALS funds. This means that steps have been taken to protect customer funds but that there is no absolute guarantee that all funds will be repaid. This meets the Gambling Commission's requirements for the segregation of customer funds at the level: medium protection.
• The licensee operates a strict no 'cash policy' to prevent the risk of crimes such as money laundering, to avoid the giving of illicit credit and to provide assurances that gambling activities are being conducted fairly.
Banks and building societies may not accept Direct Debit Instructions for some types of account.

By signing this form you agree to the lottery terms and conditions. For a copy of the terms and conditions please visit www.wiltshireairambulance.co.uk or call 0844 567 0844

I would like to play (Tick one box only)

1 Chance		1 Chance + 1 Superdraw
£4.34 Monthly <input type="checkbox"/>		£8.68 Monthly <input type="checkbox"/>
£13.00 Quarterly <input type="checkbox"/>		£26.00 Quarterly <input type="checkbox"/>
£52.00 Annually <input type="checkbox"/>		£104.00 Annually <input type="checkbox"/>

If you do not wish your location details published if you are a winner tick here []

£ Loyal lottery players help keep Wiltshire Air Ambulance saving lives

A key income stream for our charity is our lotteries that raise in excess of £1 million each year towards our lifesaving service.

The Lottery is well supported by the public and approximately one in every ten households in Wiltshire plays it.

Our regular lottery began in 2009 followed by the Superdraw in 2014.

One person who has played our Lottery from the beginning is Richard Reeves, of Calne.

Mr Reeves joined our Lottery after hearing about it from a canvasser at Morrisons supermarket in Chippenham.

He said: "Wiltshire Air Ambulance was my late wife's favourite charity - at her funeral donations that were made went to it. When the canvasser told me that Wiltshire Air Ambulance had a lottery I signed up.

"I tell people I meet about it and why it's important to support the air ambulance and that you also have a chance of winning a prize on it."

Each chance in the Lottery costs £1 a week and there is a weekly top prize of £1,000 plus four £25 consolation prizes. People who play the Superdraw can win up to £25,000.

Mr Reeves has won on our Lottery, scooping £1,000. He said:

"I didn't think I would win when I started playing it but it was a nice little windfall. I will carry on playing the Lottery to do my bit to help Wiltshire Air Ambulance to continue saving lives."

Mr Reeves, a retired mechanical design engineer, said the air ambulance is essential for Wiltshire.

"It's a vital service in our rural county, I see it landing in Calne from time to time," he said.

"I spent a lot of time driving on the motorways and when there are serious accidents the air ambulance is often called.

"It can also reach places that are inaccessible for road ambulances.

The skills of the crew and the speed of the helicopter can make the difference for people who are in urgent need of emergency medical care."

Last year (2019) was the tenth anniversary of our Lottery and during that time it has raised over £6.5 million for our charity.

For more information or to join our Lottery, please visit: www.wiltshireairambulance.co.uk/lottery

Players must be 16 years of age or over.



WAA Lottery player Richard Reeves at the charity's airbase with paramedic and emergency awareness training officer Simon Stigwood.

Contact us on 01225 300536 to get involved or sign up now on our website.

Please complete and return this form to:
AIR AMBULANCE LOTTERY OFFICE, Unit C2, Waterfold Business Park, Bury BL9 7BR

Increased demand for our lifesaving service

Wiltshire Air Ambulance undertook 1,233 missions in 2019 - an increase of 12% on the previous year.

It was also the most number of missions carried out in a year since the charity became a stand-alone air ambulance in 2015.

Of the 1,233 missions last year, 920 were in the Rapid Response Vehicles (below right) while 313 were by helicopter.

During 2019 the charity hired a back up helicopter, an MD 902 (below left), before securing its own Air Operator Certificate (AOC) enabling its Bell 429 helicopter to resume flying in November on HEMS (Helicopter Emergency Medical Service) missions.

David Philpott, chief executive of Wiltshire Air Ambulance, said: "Despite the well documented issues with our Bell 429 helicopter during 2019, our aircrew were busier than they have ever been.

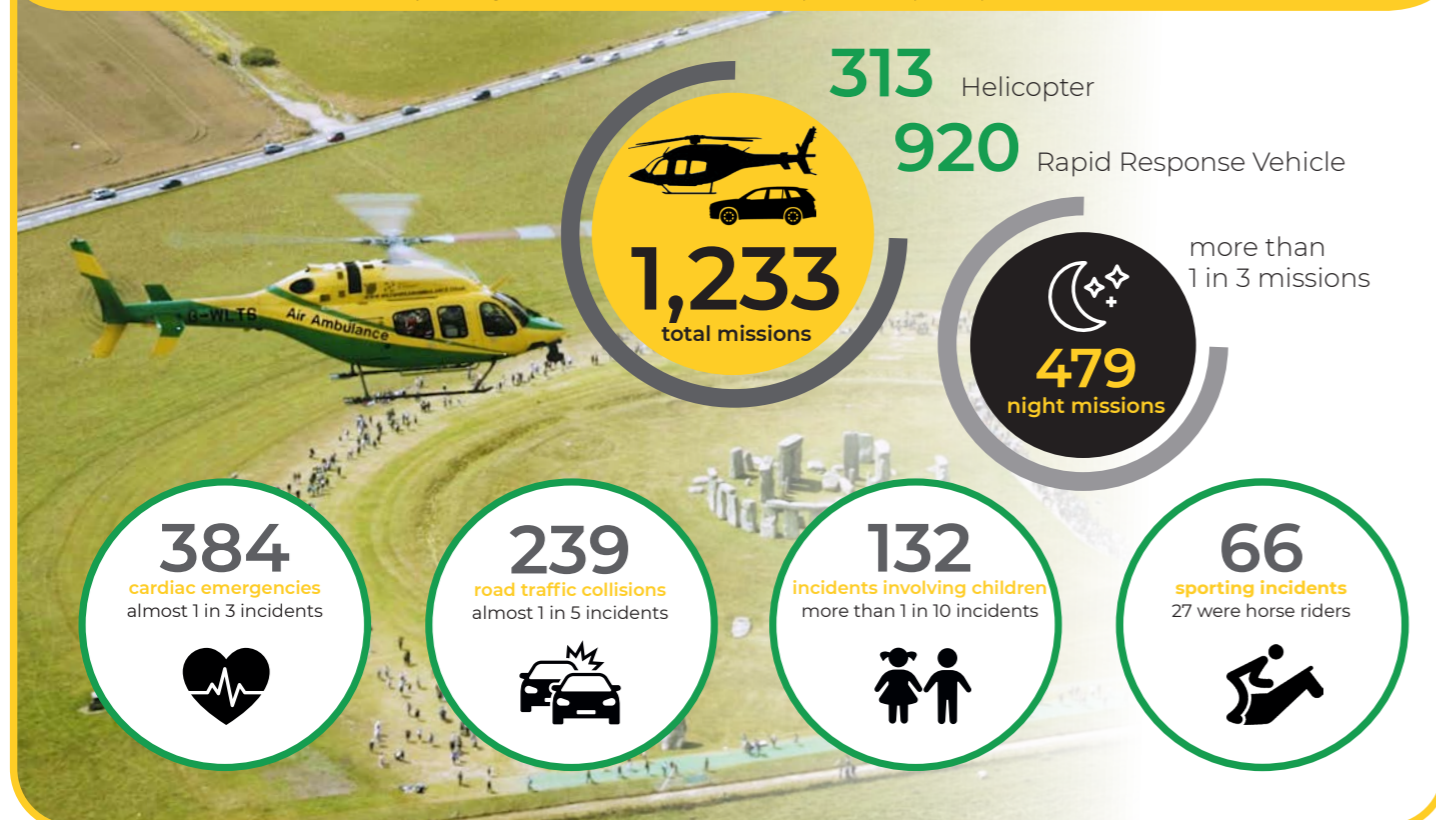
"When our helicopter is unable to fly our critical care paramedics and doctors use Rapid Response Vehicles. The vehicles have the same medical equipment that is onboard the helicopter so we are still able to provide gold standard medical care to patients.

"We rely on donations to provide our essential service so we'd like to thank our supporters for their generosity and our volunteers for their dedication in attending fundraising events and raising awareness of our charity."



Incidents 1 Jan – 31 Dec 2019

All the following statistics are combined – Helicopter and Rapid Response Vehicle (car)



Missions map 2019

1,233 total missions



Note - 31 incidents were jointly attended by the helicopter and RRV, but for illustrative purposes this counts as one incident in that location.

News from the crew room

Driving standards with innovative new RRV

Our new Rapid Response Vehicle (RRV) is not only easily recognisable with its yellow and green branding, but it's also been designed for optimum performance for our critical care paramedics.

A Volvo XC90, pictured below, has excellent off-road capability, particularly when the worst winter weather precludes the use of our helicopter.



Our paramedics designed the interior fit out of it and an innovative feature is a bespoke retractable equipment tray, which was chosen to improve the process for getting their medical equipment out of the vehicle.

Critical care paramedic Dan Tucker said: "Our kit weighs in excess of 100kg, with some individual bags weighing in at around 25kg - equivalent to the weight of an eight-year-old child.

"The bespoke equipment tray in our RRV enables the team to slide their entire equipment out of the boot.

"It also means we can place the heavy rucksacks on our backs without actually taking any weight until we are ready to walk away from the vehicle, meaning we do not have to twist or swing the heavy bags on to our backs and therefore reducing the risk of significant back injuries."

Our charity bought the RRV with a grant from a community group that had disbanded (Friends of Bradford on Avon Community Healthcare).

A partnership with Swindon Town Football Club and their main sponsors, Imagine Cruising, resulted in £12,000 being raised for the fit out. This funding was used for the livery, the blue warning lights, emergency sirens, while inside the vehicle it provided the communication equipment and racking for the storage of the specialist medical equipment.

Melksham-based Cooper Tire Europe, is supplying the tyres for the vehicle while another Melksham company, The MOT Centre & Garage on the Hill, have donated their time and effort to carry out the servicing and MOT.



Plasma provides additional lifesaving capability

Another innovation we have introduced is carrying plasma onboard our helicopter and Rapid Response Vehicles.

This has enhanced the blood products our critical care paramedics and doctors can give to critically injured or unwell people.

We carry two units of plasma along with two units of O negative blood (packed red blood cells). We have been carrying packed red blood cells since August 2015.

Packed red blood cells help carry oxygen around the body and replaces blood lost by patients, while plasma contains essential clotting factors to help stop bleeding.

The plasma we are carrying, called LyoPlas, is freeze dried and is in powder form in a glass vial. It is mixed with water to form a yellow liquid before it is given intravenously.

Ben Abbott, critical care paramedic and operations officer at Wiltshire Air Ambulance, said: "We believe the addition of plasma will make a significant difference to the care of patients who require emergency pre-hospital blood transfusions and improve their chances of reaching hospital alive in order for them to receive further emergency treatment.

"We've been giving pre-hospital blood transfusions since 2015 and we have seen the visible difference they can make to critically injured or unwell patients who are bleeding as a result of trauma or acute medical conditions.

Blood products are a precious commodity and emergency blood transfusions can save lives."

'Everything we have done has pushed boundaries'

We chat with pilot Rob Collingwood, who has been at Wiltshire Air Ambulance since March 2016.



Rob has been a helicopter pilot for 15 years. He served ten years in the Army Air Corps followed by 18 months flying for the oil industry based in Aberdeen before joining Wiltshire Air Ambulance for his first HEMS (Helicopter Emergency Medical Service) posting.



You've been reading the history of Wiltshire Air Ambulance and seeing how the service has developed in its 30 years. What are your impressions?

It's been really interesting looking back through the history and photos. It shows the process of how Wiltshire Air Ambulance has got to where it is today. It has set the culture of the organisation.

Everything that it has done has been pushing boundaries - from undertaking ad-hoc landings at night, being the first air ambulance in the UK to fly at night, the paramedics trained to critical care level, giving critically injured or unwell patients pre-hospital blood transfusions, introducing a new aircraft (the Bell 429) and building a new airbase.

The support given by the public to enable these innovations to happen is nothing short of remarkable.

When did you know you wanted to become a helicopter pilot?

My grandfather was also called Robert Collingwood and he flew Spitfires in World War Two. It was an ambition of mine to be a pilot but I never thought I would end up doing it.

When I moved to England from South Africa I graduated from the Royal Agricultural College at Cirencester with a Masters in business management in the food and agricultural industries.

I probably would have ended up as a farmer in Mozambique farming sugar cane but I joined the British Army as an Officer via Royal Military Academy Sandhurst.

I was interested in a combat engineering role, to support the expeditionary farming ambition in Mozambique, but there was an opportunity to train to be a pilot in the Army Air Corps so I took it.

What is the most rewarding aspect of your role?

It's when everything is stacked against you - when the weather

has worsened or the visibility is poor - and there is a patient that needs you and you can still get the job done. That brings a real sense of achievement.

That feeling is only topped when a patient comes back to visit us. We had a part to play in their survival and that is immensely rewarding.

What makes you proud to work for Wiltshire Air Ambulance?

From day one I felt proud to be here. I love going to work and the camaraderie here.

It's the holistic aspect. Everyone - the pilots, paramedics, the charity team, our volunteers and our supporters - has such an important part to play.

Most people in Wiltshire know someone who has needed us. We are there for you, your neighbours and your community.

What was it like meeting HRH The Duchess of Cornwall at the official opening of the airbase (in December 2018)?

It was fantastic. She spoke really well and you can clearly see that Wiltshire Air Ambulance is close to her heart.



Her exposure and what she brings to our organisation is greatly appreciated and we benefit from those relationships.

If it's a quiet shift how do you occupy your time?

I'm not one for getting bored. I've built a 3D printer and fixed microwave ovens!

I find keeping myself active and engaged maintains my energy levels, particularly on night shifts. Setting myself tasks keeps my cognitive processes working and means I am ready to react better when we get an emergency call.

What hobbies do you enjoy?

Away from my work commitments, I love playing rugby and riding motocross.



✎ ‘My leg was saved thanks to Wiltshire Air Ambulance’

It was Father’s Day 2016 and 24-year-old Jake Clifford was returning to his home in Swindon to spend time with his dad.

He left his brother’s home in Melksham and as he was driving his motorcycle on the A4361, just before the Salthrop junction, he was hit by a car.

The impact was substantial and caused him and his motorcycle to be thrown into a field 80 feet away.

A land ambulance crew arrived and began treating Jake, but due to the seriousness of his injuries Wiltshire Air Ambulance was dispatched.

Jake had suffered a broken pelvis, broken wrist but the major concern was his right leg which was folded up underneath him. Both the tibia and fibula bones (between the knee and ankle) were broken as was every bone in his foot.

Wiltshire Air Ambulance’s paramedics are specialists in critical care and they

are able to give advanced drugs for pain relief. They also use specialist medical equipment, funded by public donations.

Wiltshire Air Ambulance critical care paramedic Jo Gilbert was one of the team who treated Jake.

She says: “Jake had been thrown a considerable distance from the road into a cornfield and had serious injuries. We were concerned about his spine and pelvis but the most severe injury was to his lower right leg.

“We gave him a strong drug (Ketamine) to sedate him and for pain relief before straightening his leg and airlifting him to hospital.”

Wiltshire Air Ambulance flew Jake to Southmead Hospital, Bristol, in ten minutes.

On arrival he was taken straight for a CT scan and into the operating theatre where he underwent an eight hour operation to save his leg.

Jake was in the intensive care unit for four days and had another three operations. Each time he was warned that due to the damage his leg had sustained it may not be able to be saved.

The situation became critical when Jake suffered a major infection in the tibia bone and he was told the bone would have to be removed, meaning his leg would be amputated.

However, at the eleventh hour a specialist doctor proposed a radical operation to remove most of the tibia bone and fix a metal frame on to Jake’s leg to encourage regrowth of the tibia.

This operation was successful and Jake returned home ten weeks later, in August 2016, with the frame on his leg.

A long road to recovery

Jake was unable to return to his physical production operative job so he enrolled at Swindon College to study accountancy.

While the frame was on his leg Jake used crutches to walk and in the later stages of his rehabilitation he used walking sticks.



Jake and his fiancée Darryl



Jake playing the piano at home



Jake with the Wiltshire Air Ambulance crew (l-r paramedic Jo Gilbert, pilot Nicky Smith and paramedic Keith Mills)

The metal frame had tensioned wires which were attached to the unbroken parts of the tibia bone (at the top and the bottom of his leg). Jake adjusted the bolts holding the wires and it was hoped this would enable the bone to regrow.

“It was quite brutal and often it was agony, but the frame was an incredible piece of engineering,” he says.

However, during this period there were several setbacks as Jake developed infections in his leg and he underwent numerous operations where the leg was cleaned out.

But after 18 months the frame had worked, resulting in eight and a half inches of regrowth in Jake’s tibia bone – it is thought this could be the longest regrowth for a tibia bone in Europe.

What was it like when the frame came off?

“It was the start of the rest of my life and to have freedom again, not relying on other people to do things for me,” says Jake.

A month later, in April 2018, he began a new job at Nationwide Building Society in Swindon and in 2019 he and his fiancée, Darryl, moved into their own home in Swindon.

Supporting Wiltshire Air Ambulance

Jake and his mother met some of the Wiltshire Air Ambulance aircrew who treated him. This was just over a year after the accident while he had the frame on his leg.

He said: “It was brilliant to meet them. They see people at their absolute worst and it’s a testament to their character and training how they dealt with my injuries. I was in a bad way and was well looked after by everyone.”

Following the accident Jake, who is Swindon born and bred and went to Kingsdown School, resolved to support Wiltshire Air Ambulance and joined the charity’s lottery scheme. The lottery is an important income stream for the charity to enable it to raise the funds needed to operate its lifesaving service.

He and Darryl also volunteered for a day at the charity’s shop in Devizes in September 2018.

He says: “I just wanted to give something back to a charity that had given me so much. Before my accident I never really thought about Wiltshire Air Ambulance. I was aware of it but didn’t realise how much we all need it until what happened to me.

“We both really enjoyed volunteering at the shop, talking with the staff and volunteers. Everyone was so friendly.”

Jake has ongoing issues with his joints that were injured and undergoes physiotherapy but is full of admiration for Wiltshire Air Ambulance.

He says: “Wiltshire Air Ambulance saved my leg. I would not have my leg if the crew hadn’t got to me quickly, treated me at the scene and then flew me to Southmead Hospital for further specialist treatment.

“My leg will never be the same as it was before the accident but I’m just so grateful that it was saved. It means I can live my life as normally as possible.”

DONATE NOW
www.wiltshireairambulance.co.uk

Corporate support

We are in the business of saving lives and the support of businesses is vital to us. Find out how you can support us within your business.

THE SKY'S THE LIMIT FOR WILTSHIRE AIR AMBULANCE

with Paul Martin



We have created a fantastic challenge backed by our Ambassador Paul Martin, the host of BBC's Flog It! Called The Sky's The Limit, we will give you £50 and your challenge is to use it to make as much money as possible for us!

Paul Martin says: "I believe this new challenge is a great way for businesses to get involved and show their support."

"The charity will give local businesses £50 and all they have to do is be creative and make as much money as possible in return. Use your business skills, be entrepreneurial and be innovative to grow that £50."

The Sky's The Limit is proudly sponsored by Chippenham Motor Company, dealers in new and used cars, with showrooms at Bumpers Farm, London Road and Bath Road in Chippenham and also Paddington Drive in Swindon.

Join the 100 Club

The Wiltshire Air Ambulance 100 Club is an exclusive networking club for supporters offering to pledge £10,000 over a period of two years, or the equivalent of £5,000 each year for two years.

Our aim is to grow a networking group consisting of 100 socially responsible companies, willing to support an essential local charity.

From employee fundraising to matched-funding, there are so many ways your business could get on board and we will provide a dedicated team to support you all the way.



Charity of the year

Many companies choose a specific charity to support each calendar or financial year. This is a great way to inspire employees to form friendship bonds and become involved with a charity over the course of set time period.

You could raise funds by any method with which you feel comfortable, through challenge events, quizzes, bake sales, events planned by yourselves and taking part in any of the challenges and activities organised by Wiltshire Air Ambulance.



Meet our mascots

Our cuddly mascots, paramedic Wilber and pilot Marsha, are hugely popular when they attend events up and down the county.

Wilber and Marsha, sponsored by Soft Options Water Softeners, are always happy to high-five with excited children and pose for numerous selfies.

The pair have also been spotted at local businesses across Wiltshire in the past year, including Nationwide and Thames Water in Swindon, Scarrott's Van & Truck Centre in Royal Wootton Bassett and Qinetiq at Boscombe Down.

It's fair to say Wilber and Marsha are big sports fans too. As well as attending various Half Marathons and 10K runs, they've also featured at matches for Swindon Town Football Club and Swindon Wildcats.

Children and big kids can have fun with Wilber and Marsha on this page, with a spot the difference game and wordsearch to enjoy.



Wilber with Coombe Castle Dairies at Cumberwell Park Golf Club



Wilber at the National Armed Forces Weekend



Marsha with ambassador Nick Mason at Middlewick Open Gardens



Marsha on the pitch at Swindon Town FC's County Ground

Quiz time

with Wilber and Marsha



Wordsearch

Find the following words:

- | | |
|------------|-----------|
| WILBER | PILOT |
| MARSHA | PARAMEDIC |
| HELICOPTER | CHARITY |
| AIRBASE | HELIPAD |



Quiz

Can you answer the below questions on Wiltshire Air Ambulance?

- Where is the Wiltshire Air Ambulance airbase?
- What colour is the Wiltshire Air Ambulance helicopter?
- How much money do they need to raise a year?
- How many years has Wiltshire Air Ambulance been saving lives? (clue: look at the front cover)

Answers on page 34



A meeting with a difference

Wiltshire Air Ambulance is offering local businesses, community groups and training providers the opportunity to hire conference/meeting rooms at its airbase in Semington, near Melksham.

The state-of-the-art airbase, opened in May 2018, is perfectly located in the heart of Wiltshire, offering an exciting meeting place for any company or group.

With meeting rooms overlooking the helipad and viewing point, visitors will get a unique look behind the scenes at the charity's lifesaving service.

There's also the option of a tour around the airbase, including a visit to the Immersive Simulation Suite used by Wiltshire Air Ambulance paramedics during their first-class training, plus the flight room.

Wiltshire Air Ambulance moved from the Devizes premises it shared with Wiltshire Police in May 2018 to a new purpose-built airbase in Semington, near Melksham.

From this central location, the charity's Bell 429 helicopter can fly to anywhere in the county within 11 minutes. The charity's Patron, HRH The Duchess of Cornwall, officially opened the airbase in December 2018.



Bradbury 1

The largest training room at the airbase, overlooking the helipad with room for up to 60 people.



Bradbury 2

A smaller training room, adjacent to the viewpoint overlooking the helipad.



Room hire includes:

- Free on-site parking
- Interactive whiteboard with short throw projector use
- Flipchart easel and whiteboard markers/erasers
- Tea, coffee, sugar and milk
- Water cooler use with glasses
- Free Wi-Fi for trainers and guests
- Use of the viewpoint for lunch and breakout area
- Optional tour of the airbase and the chance to meet the aircrew (subject to operational requirements)

For more information or to book a room, please call 01225 300536

😊 Fundraising round up

We are funded by you, flying for you. Here is a selection of some of the brilliant fundraising undertaken for us by supporters during the past year.



The Urchfont Scarecrow Festival has been a long supporter of Wiltshire Air Ambulance. Held every year during the Bank Holiday in May, the latest event raised £4,180.



Seven-year-old Louie Parks took part in a headshave and raised £477 for the charity.



The Minety Music Festival is held annually in July and from their support, the latest cheque presented to the charity was for £2,302.46.



A team of 26 fitness enthusiasts at New Era Fitness, Melksham, completed a 24-hour workout, which included running, boxing, cycling and yoga. Their efforts raised £8,590.17.



Foxy calendars have been supporting Wiltshire Air Ambulance alongside Hampshire and Isle of Wight Air Ambulance since 2010, raising a phenomenal £160,000.



Staff at Bechtle, Chippenham, supported our charity for the past two years raising £8,221.66. Their fundraising included cake sales and running the Chippenham Longest Day 10K.



Calne Running Club passed on the proceeds from a bake sale at the Compton Bassett Five-Miler, which totalled £347.36.



Oli Sheppard, a director from J Sheppard and Son, Chippenham, took to the skies by completing a Wing Walk and other fundraising included a Blooming Great Tea Party.

If you are planning a fundraising event or would like more information on how to support Wiltshire Air Ambulance please email hello@wiltshireairambulance.co.uk or call the charity team on 01225 300536.

We save lives. Will you?



A gift in your Will costs nothing in your lifetime and means we can continue to save lives in the future.

We rely on your donations to run our vital service. When you leave a gift in your Will, you are leaving a lifesaving legacy.

Gifts in Wills help pay for the aircraft and our rapid response vehicles. They pay for the drugs administered by our highly skilled paramedics. They pay for fuel, for flight suits, for pre-hospital blood transfusions and for immersive simulation training.

Gifts in Wills ensure that, when an emergency occurs, our crew is ready to get to the patient in the fastest possible time, in effect bringing A&E to the scene, and enabling us to treat and stabilise patients before transporting them to the right hospital for their needs.

From cardiac arrests to road traffic collisions, incidents involving children or emergencies in the remotest parts of our county.

Whenever someone is critically ill or injured, we can give them the best possible chance of survival – thanks to your support.

Legacy gifts have also been used to fund exceptional items – for example, with one gift we were able to purchase the land on which we built our airbase, giving us a secure foundation for the future.

However, you don't need to give a lot - gifts of any size make a big difference to our work and to our patients.

FIND OUT MORE
www.wiltshireairambulance.co.uk/wills

£440	could buy two units of freeze-dried plasma to provide blood replacement and clotting factors to a bleeding patient
£2,131	could buy a specialist noise cancelling flight helmet
£3,855	could fully kit out one of our paramedics with specialist items including flight helmet, boots and flight jacket
£8,420	could buy enough freeze-dried plasma to last a whole year
£10,273	could fund our service for a whole day, during which time we attend on average three potentially lifesaving missions
£55,000	could fund a paramedic (including training) for a whole year

figures correct as of November 2019

“Once we'd settled my Aunt's estate, we visited Wiltshire Air Ambulance to see how her gift would be used.

“The crew showed us around the airbase and helicopter, and talked us through the specialist equipment and medication carried on board.

“Seeing it all first-hand and hearing about the emergencies they attend, I really felt as though Aunt Trudy would be looking down and thinking she'd made the right choice.”

Mrs S French, executor.



Sue's story

In 2012 Sue Williams suffered serious life-changing injuries in a road traffic collision on the A303 and was flown by Wiltshire Air Ambulance to Frenchay Hospital, Bristol.

“Wiltshire Air Ambulance saved my life and gave me a second chance.”

The car she was travelling in came off the road and rolled several times before landing on its wheels. She had broken her back, neck, left arm, a rib, and sustained a moderate to severe traumatic brain injury. She was in hospital for a month, including nine days in the intensive care unit.

Sue and her partner Dave (pictured with paramedic Richard Miller, right) decided to include a gift to Wiltshire Air Ambulance in their Wills as a way of saying thank you.

“Before the accident, I never gave the Air Ambulance much thought. Now, I cannot find words to describe how important it is to keep this service flying. They are there for everyone and you never know if one day it might be you who needs them.”

“Having the charity as a named beneficiary in our Wills is the least we could do to help keep this essential service operating to help others in the future.”



We offer a service that enables individuals and couples to have their Will made for free, using qualified solicitors based in their local area. The scheme is open to anyone aged 55 or over and you don't have to include Wiltshire Air Ambulance in your Will (though we hope that you will consider us, once you've provided for your loved ones).

How does it work?

Simply visit our website, fill in the form at the bottom of the page and tick “I'd like to hear about your Free Wills Service”. You can tick more than one box. Our partner, the National Free Wills Network, will send you the names and addresses of at least two (often more) local firms of solicitors taking part in this scheme.

You choose which solicitor you would like to contact, and make an appointment.

The solicitor draws up your Will and, as long as your Will is straightforward, it won't cost you anything.

If your estate is more complex there may be an additional fee; however you will be advised of any costs upfront and are under no obligation to proceed.

www.wiltshireairambulance.co.uk/wills

Our volunteers are priceless



Volunteers are absolutely essential to our charity. By donating their time they are helping to fundraise and spread awareness, enabling our lifesaving service to continue operating.

The volunteering opportunities are varied – from volunteering in our charity shops in Westbury or Devizes, giving talks, attending cheque presentations, manning our gazebo at events or even being our bear mascots! Below, three of our volunteers talk about their experiences.

Jessica Vaughan has been a volunteer for just over a year and attends events that fundraise for our charity. These have included half marathons, a garden party and a music event.



Jessica, of Melksham and who works as a school bursar, said: "I enjoy going to different events and meeting different people. At most events you meet people who have personally benefitted from Wiltshire Air Ambulance, whether it be themselves or family and friends.

"It's great to hear how Wiltshire Air Ambulance has made a difference and highlights the need to continue to make people aware of the charity and the great work it does and raise the vital funds to keep the service going.

"Everyone associated with the charity has been friendly and welcoming, from the charity team, to the paramedics and pilots and of course the volunteers."

John Weller, of Devizes, became a volunteer in May 2016. John, who is retired, joined Wiltshire Air Ambulance after hearing a talk from a volunteer at the charity.



John said: "As my wife had been airlifted to the Royal United Hospital, Bath, a couple of years earlier with a suspected heart attack, fortunately a false alarm, I decided that this was a way I could give something back.

"My main volunteering activity is giving talks to interested groups. I do about eight to ten each year. I enjoy the feedback I get from the talks, particularly the stories of how peoples' lives have been affected.

"I find the talks are very easy as I am preaching to the converted, but so many people are not aware of how much it costs to run the service and that it relies on donations."

Stewart Ackland, of Devizes, has been a volunteer since 2016 and attends community events, often as the charity's paramedic bear mascot, Wilber.



Stewart, who works in IT in Westbury, said:

"Interacting with people while I'm Wilber is really rewarding, especially getting smiles from children.

When I'm not Wilber it's great to meet people at the events I volunteer at and talk to them about Wiltshire Air Ambulance and what they can do to help support the charity."



Some of our volunteers at the airbase in Semington and, top right, at Middlewick Open Gardens 2019.

Contact us on 01225 300536 to get involved or sign up now on our website.

Schoolchildren learning lifesaving skills

We are reaching out to schools all over Wiltshire in our mission to save lives. Last year we launched our Emergency Awareness Training (EAT) programme to pupils at primary and secondary schools.



Bringing emergency awareness to schools. Simon Stigwood, Wiltshire Air Ambulance's emergency awareness training officer, with pupils at Frogwell Primary School, Chippenham.

Topics covered in the interactive training session range from carrying out CPR, making a 999 call, putting an injured person in the recovery position, helping someone who is choking and controlling bleeding.

Richard Miller, Wiltshire Air Ambulance's clinical services and ground base manager, said: "It is our ambition to teach every school age child in Wiltshire how to deliver CPR and other emergency skills. Our programme is a really valuable outreach project delivering vital lifesaving skills.



"We hope that in the event of a medical emergency the children who we train will have the knowledge and confidence to respond accordingly and ultimately their actions may help to save lives."

The programme is delivered by paramedic Simon Stigwood, our emergency awareness training officer, supported by volunteers.

The sessions are tailored to the different age groups and needs of the schools.

The programme has received grants from the Tesco Bags of Help scheme to buy 14 training manikins and from the Malmesbury League of Friends to fund equipment, including four additional manikins and three anti-choking training devices.

During 2019 we attended 100 schools and taught 8,534 children.

A total of 7,748 children were trained to carry out CPR while 7,140 were taught how to make a 999 call. More than 4,500 children learned how to help someone who was choking, while in excess of 3,300 were taught the recovery position and just over 1,000 were taught how to control bleeding. All received a certificate of attendance from Wiltshire Air Ambulance.

Many of the schools who have taken part have gone on to fundraise for our charity.

If your school would like to take part in the Emergency Awareness Training programme please contact us by email emergencyawareness@wiltshireairambulance.co.uk



Simon Stigwood, demonstrating CPR at Frogwell Primary School, Chippenham.

Digital Innovations



Download Helifun on the app store

As a charity we're always looking for new ways to engage with our supporters. If you've bumped into our staff or volunteers across the county in the past few months, you may have noticed a very subtle change.

We now have a host of new gadgets, including contactless donation devices, as well as iPads and Android tablets.

It's been well documented that more and more people are turning to card transactions rather than carrying cash. A study by trading body UK Finance revealed debit card payments had overtaken transactions by coins and notes for the first time in the summer of 2018.

Working with Liberty Pay, we've now secured two contactless donation units to be used for talks, visits and events.



Donors simply tap their debit, credit card or mobile phone on the device to donate in increments of £3, £5 or £10.

That doesn't mean collection tins and buckets are going to become obsolete, it's all about giving our supporters an option that is fast becoming common practice in modern day life.

Meanwhile, the iPads and Android tablets allow us to take our popular Helifun app out across Wiltshire for people of all ages to enjoy.

The fun game, produced and donated by OJO Solutions, tasks you with keeping our helicopter in the skies for as long as possible, avoiding various objects, to post the highest possible score.

Additionally the devices can be used by supporters to sign up to our monthly e-newsletter, Flight Path, as well as a contact form to feed details back directly to our charity.

As well as embracing digital innovation, the new technology is all geared towards helping to generate the funds required to operate our lifesaving service.



Sign up to Flight Path
www.wiltshireairambulance.co.uk/newsletter

Rugby player Tom Dunn becomes Ambassador

Tom, who is from Wiltshire and plays as a hooker for Bath Rugby Club, has pledged to support Wiltshire Air Ambulance as a Charity Ambassador.



Tom, 26, was brought up in Chippenham and went to King's Lodge Primary School followed by Sheldon School.

"Being a Wiltshire boy I know how important Wiltshire Air Ambulance is and that it relies on donations, as it is not funded directly by the Government. The charity airlifted a friend of mine several years ago and it is a vital service. It can mean the difference between life and death if you are critically injured or ill," he said.

He played for Chippenham Rugby Club and the Dorset & Wilts senior team before making his debut for Bath in December 2012, while studying at Bath University.

He made the transition from the academy to the first team at The Rec in 2015.

Tom is in the senior England performance squad and played against the Barbarians last season. He was named in the training camps ahead of the 2019 World Cup, starting in September.

Tom now lives in Bath and has often seen Wiltshire Air Ambulance landing next to the Royal United Hospital's Accident and Emergency department to deliver patients for emergency treatment.

Meet our Board of Trustees

CHAIRMAN
CHRIS LEAR
Chris has a BSc in Biochemistry, an MPhil in Immunology and worked in medical research. His own Biotechnology company was sold to a PLC after 20 successful years. He also flies helicopters as a hobby.

LIFETIME PRESIDENT
RICHARD YOUENS
A retired partner of city loss adjusters Graham Miller & Co, he became a trustee following the Board's inception in 2011. He had previously chaired a pressure group to encourage the NHS to make WAA an independent Trust.



PETER FOSKETT
Peter is a trustee with vast commercial legal knowledge from his work as a solicitor with several firms. Peter also spent time in the Royal Navy.



ANNA COLE
Royal Wootton Bassett-based Anna has been a trustee since 2014 and also has legal background from her work as a solicitor/partner at Novum Law.



MIKE FELLOWS
Mike provides key commercial skills from his roles in the motor and oil industries, where he held posts in sales, marketing and senior management.



ROB KEVAN
With over 30 years of aviation experience, Rob has a wealth of knowledge to bring to the Board of Trustees. He spent 23 of those years in the RAF.



JAMES PHIPPS
Executive chairman of Swindon-based IT specialists Excalibur Group, James became a trustee in April 2019 after years of fundraising for the charity.



PHILIP SHEPHERD
With a career in aviation law, barrister Philip was a very welcome addition to the Board of Trustees in 2019. He is also a part-time judge.

Charity Ambassadors

We are delighted to have the support of celebrity and sporting personalities.

Our Ambassadors have a passion for our charity and are committed to helping to raise awareness and funds in order for us to continue saving lives.



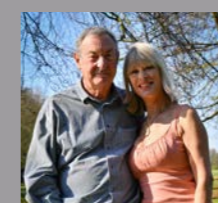
ALAN DEDICOAT
Voice of Strictly Come Dancing and known as the 'Voice of the Balls' on the National Lottery draw TV programme.



LAUREN BOOTH
2017 Champion Paracyclist and member of the British Cycling Academy.



MATT PERRY
Ex-professional rugby union player. Matt played for Bath, England and the British Lions.



NICK & ANNETTE MASON
Nick, a member of the band Pink Floyd, and his wife, Annette, an aviation correspondent and actress.



PAUL MARTIN
Seend-based presenter of BBC TV's antiques programme Flog It!



SHELLEY RUDMAN
Three-time Olympian and former World Champion in the Skeleton Bobsleigh, who hails from Pewsey Vale.



STEPHANIE MILLWARD
Three-time Paralympian Swimmer whose Multiple Sclerosis did not stop her achieving success.



SUZANNA HEXT
International Para Swimmer and Dressage rider who was seriously injured in a horse riding accident and flown to hospital by Wiltshire Air Ambulance.

Events Calendar

If you're looking for ways to challenge yourself or try something new while raising funds for us, take a look at some of the events we have planned for 2020.

To view our full events calendar, please visit our website:

www.wiltshireairambulance.co.uk/events

Skydive, Old Sarum Airfield 31 May



Take a leap this year and help Wiltshire Air Ambulance celebrate 30 years of flying and saving lives. We'd love to see thrillseekers join us for a skydive to remember! Your skydive will take you

over Wiltshire countryside, taking in Salisbury Cathedral and Stonehenge from the skies above. Giving you your own "view from the crew!"

Wing Walk 8 July



Take to the skies and experience the thrill of flying at speed on the wings of a plane! You'll be on a Boeing Stearman biplane experiencing an exciting series of flypasts, zoom climbs, steep dives and

banks in front of the family and friends you bring along on the day! Help Wiltshire Air Ambulance celebrate 30 years of flying and saving lives by taking a leap for your local air ambulance.

Air Ambulance Week 7-13 September



It's yellow and green a plenty in 2020! And what better way to help Wiltshire Air Ambulance celebrate saving lives for 30 years than by turning your school, college or workplace yellow and green!

From crazy hair styles to colourful outfits, there are many different ways you can get involved and help us turn Wiltshire yellow and green!

Race to the Stones 4-5 July



Experience the Britain's oldest path as you walk, jog or run along the historical Ridgeway. Stepping in the footsteps of the travellers who roamed this ancient path over 5,000 years ago. Taking on the 100k,

you'll experience the famous field of dreams some stunning countryside and the comradeship of those taking on the challenge alongside you.

Middlewick House Open Garden 18 - 19 July



By kind permission of our charity ambassadors Nick and Annette Mason, the gardens of Middlewick House will be open to support Wiltshire Air Ambulance and the Wiltshire Bobby Van Trust.

Various stalls and refreshments will be available to enjoy. Venue address: Middlewick Lane, Corsham, SN13 0PX

Quiz Time answers

From page 25

Quiz answers

1. Where is Wiltshire Air Ambulance's airbase?
Semington, near Melksham

2. What colour is the Wiltshire Air Ambulance helicopter?
Yellow and green

3. How much money do they need to raise a year?
£3.75m

4. How many years has Wiltshire Air Ambulance been saving lives?
30 years

Wordsearch



Planning your own event? Get in touch with our team who are always happy to help.

Email us: hello@wiltshireairambulance.co.uk or call the charity team: 01225 300536.



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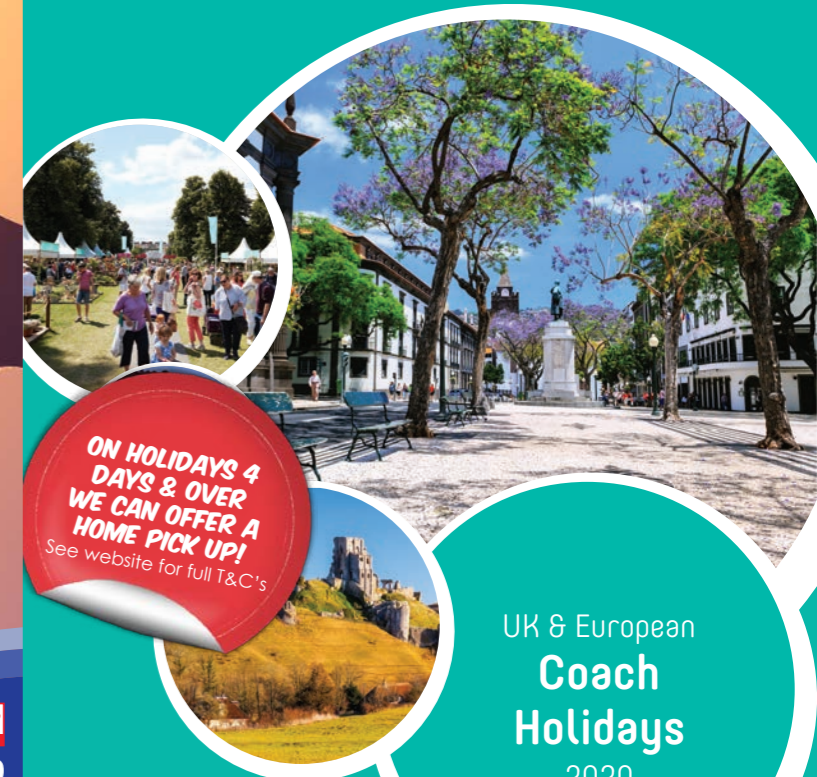
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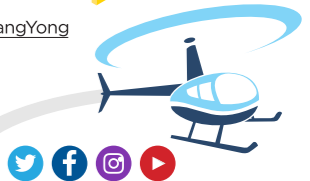
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Savills is proud to support the Wiltshire Air Ambulance



For the best advice on all of your property matters, please contact a member of our team.

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