



NORTH WEST
Air Ambulance
CHARITY

April 2018

Skylines

Newsletter

**Pilot of the
year-Neil
Airey**

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**Meet our
new team
member...**

pg 8

NORTH WEST
Air Ambulance
CHARITY



Registered charity no: 1075641

www.nwaa.net | 0800 587 4570

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Contact Us

Your regional fundraisers

Liz Greenwood
Manchester and East Lancs
Tel: 07718 190 366

Sarah Thompson
Cumbria and North Lancashire
Tel: 07802 324 378

Deborah Millican
Cheshire and Wirral
Tel: 07808 706 766

Lynne Whittaker
Merseyside and West Lancashire
Tel: 07802 324 376

Enquiries

fundraising@nwaa.net
enquiries@nwaa.net
Tel: 0800 587 4570

Volunteering enquiries

Rebecca Haynes
Email: volunteer@nwaa.net
Tel: 07718190367

Welcome

Dear Supporter

Welcome to your new look Skylines magazine, we hope you enjoy the format!

We may have reduced the size of the magazine but we certainly have not reduced the content and we will be working hard to make sure each edition brings you all the news that you want to hear.

It has been a busy few months for the North West Air Ambulance Charity, with lots of exciting achievements and developments.

Our cover star for this edition is our amazing pilot, **Neil Airey**. Neil recently won '**Air Ambulance Pilot of the Year**' competing against some of the best air ambulance pilots from across the country! Neil is an amazing ambassador for the North West Air Ambulance Charity who works tirelessly to get our crew to patients quickly and safely. He also volunteers in his spare time, giving talks to local groups about the work that we do. We are so proud of his achievements and grateful for the first-class work that he continues to do for the charity. You can read more about his story on [page 4](#).

Recent developments for the charity have also included the addition of our first **Air Ambulance Response Unit** (Ru for short!). This will allow the North West Air Ambulance Charity to continue operating even when our helicopters are unable to fly, due to adverse weather for example. You can find out more about our brand new service on [page 8](#).

This edition of Skylines also marks the start of a new summer **Prize Draw**, giving you a chance to **win £5,000**—perhaps to put towards a holiday of a lifetime! It is easy to support us by purchasing a book of tickets. If you would like to buy tickets or order more, then please do get in touch.

These developments, awards and achievements have only been possible because of you and we are continually humbled by your incredible generosity.

Our lifesaving work starts with your support, making you the most vital part of our team. We really wouldn't be here without you. It's only together that we can continue to save lives.

Thank you for being a lifesaver!



Heather Arrowsmith, CEO



Up, up and away with Captain Airey

Captain Neil Airey has been with our charity for nearly 17 years, and was recently crowned the UK's 'Air Ambulance Pilot of the Year'. We took a visit to the cockpit to chat awards, aviation and all things NWAA!

When did you join the North West Air Ambulance Charity?

I've been flying from our Blackpool base since 2001. Before this, I had been an RAF combat helicopter pilot for over twenty years, flying all over Brunei, Norway, Belize and Turkey.

After this, I moved on to become an outdoor pursuits instructor in the Lake District but foot and mouth disease meant the entire countryside was closed down. I decided to get back to my flying roots and applied for the air ambulance.

In the 16 years that you've been with the charity, how many missions have you flown out on?

I imagine it's over 6,000 now—and counting! It's been a great honour to fly out on every single one.

What are the greatest challenges an air ambulance pilot faces?

The main challenge with air ambulance piloting is weather. You can imagine flying up in the mountains in the Lakes, as we do, fog, high winds and turbulence affect us. Usually we're flying to badly broken people, but we give everybody the best chance we can of survival.

What would you say is your number one duty as a pilot with the charity?

Our main mission is to get the paramedics and consultants on scene as fast as possible and then transport people, if necessary, to the appropriate place. The speed we go is 150mph, so we can get to places pretty quickly. It can make such a vital difference to patients in need of emergency care.

**Flown
Over 6,000
Missions!**



To support the fantastic work of our pilots, such as Neil, paramedics, consultants and engineers, please visit nwaa.net/donate-now/ or call **0151 547 7830.**

After nearly 17 years with the charity, you'll be setting off on your last flight with us this summer. Do you have any plans lined up for retirement?

Well, later this year, I turn 60. The law states that at this age I am no longer able to be a commercial pilot, unless I'm accompanied by another crew member who is aged up to 59 years-old. As I'm the only pilot in the front, I sadly must step down. I will miss it very much, but I will move on to other things. I plan to continue flying in the air show scene—I fly a Vietnam Huey helicopter at the Blackpool Air Show.

You were recently crowned the best air ambulance pilot in the UK—well done! How did it feel to be recognised with the award?

Even getting nominated was wonderful—my crew had done it in secret and I'd no idea I'd even been shortlisted! I'm honestly blown away by the recognition from the Association. I could never have predicted that after boarding the charity's helicopters for the first time all those years ago, I would've received this award. Knowing my part in helping people—often in particularly grave situations—has been recognised, is humbling.

I want to thank my wonderful crew and everyone on the ground at the charity for their unwavering support, and every single one of our generous supporters and donors for keeping us in the air over the years. It's been an honour to fly for the North West Air Ambulance Charity, and an honour to have received such an important award.

David's Story



Keen cyclist, 48 year-old David Wozny, was enjoying a 30-mile bike ride from his home in Newcastle-under-Lyme to Nantwich on Friday 31st July 2015 when he was hit by a car.

A severe head injury rendered David unconscious and it was quickly apparent to the paramedics on the scene that his injuries were life-threatening.

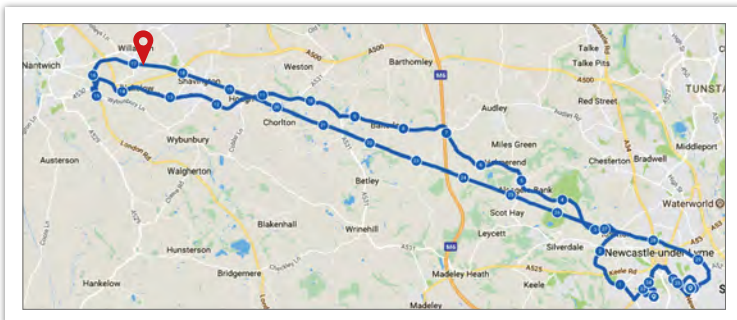
With a head injury requiring urgent expert care, our crew made the decision to fly David in the air ambulance to the University Hospital of North Midlands in Stoke-on-Trent.

A GPS tracking device worn by David on the day of his accident recorded his route, including the flight in the helicopter to the hospital.

The map shows his journey changing from cycling on twisty roads to a straight line—the air ambulance flight to the hospital.

The GPS data recorded the duration of the flight. The 15 mile journey should have taken approximately thirty minutes by land. It took just nine minutes by our helicopter.

David reflects: “For four weeks after the accident I was in a coma. I was in critical care for a further two weeks once I came out of the coma and, in this time,



Map showing David's air transport to a nearby hospital

I had numerous operations, including surgery on my brain. I then had to spend a further six weeks in a recovery unit.

“My family were able to visit me the evening of the accident, but it must have been awful for them to see me that way.”

“I almost certainly wouldn’t have made it without the response of the North West Air Ambulance.”

David had fractured his skull in several places, broken both cheekbones, fractured a rib and suffered severe blood loss.

It has taken David two years to recover from the brain trauma sustained in the accident and he still experiences minor ongoing issues associated with the injury.

David has begun to record his experience on his website: inedeeditobeneeded.com

David explains: “Before my accident I was a ‘high flyer’, professionally speaking, but I have only recently recovered well enough to be able to return to work. I desperately wanted to be useful again so during my recovery I volunteered at my local library where I was able to empathise and understand people’s needs.

“Although I don’t remember anything of the accident, I am aware that I almost certainly wouldn’t have made it without the response of the North West Air Ambulance. I had no idea until after my accident that it’s a charity.

“It’s a magnificent service and I am so grateful to them for their care and rapid response.”

Mission Tracker

Cumbria
(293)

Lancashire
(551)

Greater
Manchester
(301)

Merseyside
(101)

Cheshire
(309)

Other (4)

**Year to date total
(Apr 17–Jan 18)**

1,559

Meet Ru!

We were recently fortunate enough to welcome an Air Ambulance Response Unit (AARU) to our fleet of helicopters.

Affectionately nicknamed Ru, the unit was made possible thanks to the incredible support we receive from people day in and day out.

Ru is decked out in our iconic yellow and blue to match our three helicopters.

Here's what our Clinical Service Manager, Mark Evans, had to say about the exciting new arrival:

“Our team is highly-skilled in major trauma incidents and dealing with life-threatening medical emergencies, and are dedicated to treating patients whenever they need them – our service is ready to go 365 days a year. With this new vehicle, our advanced medical team will be able to bring their expertise to as many patients as possible, in a significantly increased timeframe or when we’re unable to land safely or the weather prevents us from flying. We will feel very proud to use our blue lights and siren!”

We've been so glad to see how thrilled many of our supporters are about our new addition. Understandably, there has been a lot of curiosity about the AARU, so we'd like to answer a few questions on the difference Ru will make to our service.

Why has the charity purchased a vehicle?

Our helicopters and crew are on call every day of the year. There are times, though, when poor weather and low visibility means it isn't safe to fly the aircraft. Sometimes, we need to reach patients in places where our helicopters are unable to land.

Ru will allow our specialist crew to get out to these missions, no matter the weather or conditions on the day. It'll help us be there for even more people across the North West when they need it the most.

What type of vehicle is it, and how much did it cost?

We acquired Ru from the BMW Government & Authorities Division. It is an X5 and cost £65,000.

The purchase of the unit was only possible thanks to the wonderful donations and fundraising efforts of our supporters. We are constantly blown away by your generosity. You help our crew deliver lifesaving care to so many patients.

Where will Ru be based? Will you purchase more units?

Ru has arrived to our Barton base and will be used wherever it is needed across the North West. We're hoping to eventually add two more to the fleet — one for each helicopter.

What is the difference between Ru and the helicopters?

Pretty much only the wheels! Ru will carry all of the medical equipment that is available in our helicopters, and of course, our fantastic paramedics and consultants. It also comes equipped with a bull horn and blue lights.

Why did you choose that particular vehicle?

It took a long time to choose a car that could best fit our needs. We compared and tested lots of different models, and found that, for us, the X5 had the right amount of space and capabilities needed when answering emergency calls.

Ru means we can continue to treat patients across the region, come rain or shine. It's a really useful addition to our fleet and will be a real benefit to our charity.

Together with our helicopters, which you'll still see flying up in the sky, the AARU will help us continue to deliver lifesaving care to people across the North West.



May 19-20th

Bleasdale Tower Open Gardens

In aid of the NWAA

Bleasdale Tower is opening its gates and inviting members of the public to visit its beautiful gardens in aid of our service. Come along and enjoy the beautiful surroundings, abundant with azaleas, rhododendrons, and much more.

May 20th

Great Manchester Run

Join Team NWAA and raise pounds by pounding the pavement this May at the Great Manchester Run. Take in some of Manchester's iconic sites in the hugely popular 10K, or challenge yourself in the half marathon. If you would like to apply for one of our NWAA team places, would like more information or if you have already signed up to run on behalf of Team NWAA, please contact:

fundraising@nwaa.net
0800 587 4570

Jun 9-10th

Slaidburn Steam Rally

Come and visit our stall at the 38th Annual Slaidburn Steam and Vintage Vehicle Display. There will be lots to see and do with Steam Engines, the Original Bounty Bus, vintage vehicles, tractors and more.

For more information visit:
slaidburnsteam.co.uk



Jun 19-20th

Royal Cheshire County Show

Pop by and say "hello" to us on our stall at the Royal Cheshire County Show, or come and help by volunteering with us at this fantastic event. For more information, email:

fundraising@nwaa.net
0800 587 4570

Jun 28th

Cheshire Star Ball

In aid of the NWAA

Get your tickets for an exclusive night of live music and amazing entertainment. Tickets are just £90 and include a drinks reception, a 3-course gourmet meal, live bands and surprise guests. Table packages are available. For more information or to purchase your ticket visit:

cheshirestarball.com

or email:

hannah.brown@devere.com

Jul 28th

A Family Fun Day

In aid of the NWAA

Oldham Ambulance Station is organising a Family Fun Day on Saturday 28th July at the Vestacare Stadium, Oldham. The day will include a charity football match between ambulance staff working at Oldham and Rochdale ambulance station. For more information, visit:

eventbrite.co.uk/e/air-ambulance-fun-day-tickets-39289536060



Sep 7-9th

Motor Bike Women North Rally

In aid of the NWAA

The first Motorbike Women North Rally aims to bring like-minded women riders together to have fun, talk motorbikes, encourage and support each other and raise money for charity. The rally is unique in that it is for women riders only. For more information, visit:

motorbikewomen.com

or email:

motorbikewomennorth@gmail.com

Sep 9th

Great North Run

With over 57,000 runners, this is your chance to take part in the world's biggest half marathon. The course will take you on a 13.1 mile journey from the centre of Newcastle upon Tyne to the coast in South Shields. To apply for one of our limited charity places, or to let us know you will be running for us on the day, contact:

fundraising@nwaa.net

0800 587 4570

Oct 14th

Take to the Skies

Experience an adrenaline rush like no other whilst being supported by qualified instructors from the Black Knights Parachute Centre at our Take to the Skies event this autumn. To book your place, or to find out more information contact:

fundraising@nwaa.net

0800 587 4570





Our Lottery Canvassers

Did you know?

Last year alone, our Lift Off Lotto members raised nearly £4 million, helping to fund over 50% of all our lifesaving missions.

Not only does the Lift Off Lotto provide valuable funds for the charity, it is also a simple and fun way to support us. Every week, each one of our members is in with a chance of winning a cool £1,000—for just £1 a week!

The lottery has become such an essential part of our fundraising thanks to the hard work of our team of canvassers. They work long hours on our behalf, often in the North West's famously unfavourable weather conditions, to tell people about the Lift Off Lotto. They have introduced a phenomenal number of new supporters to the charity and we are very grateful to them all.

Why use canvassers?

Although the figures speak for themselves, we are sometimes asked why we choose to use this method of fundraising.

We work very closely with our supplier, Tower Lotteries Ltd, to ensure that the team reflect NWAA's commitment to upholding the conditions of our Gambling Commission license. With the correct approach, this method of fundraising is a friendly way to introduce people to the lottery, and helps to raise awareness of our services.

The whole team undergo regular training to ensure that they are well equipped to detect any signs of vulnerability. As registered members of Dementia Friends, they work to prevent vulnerable people being signed up. Further training is also undertaken to ensure that what our teams do is in-keeping with both the ethical values of the charity and our code of Social Responsibility.

Very simply, without our lottery members and the team that introduced them to us, we would not be able to continue to provide our specialist emergency service.

In fact, if all of the 24,920 new members that were introduced to us in 2016/17 played the lottery for just one year, it would raise a huge £1,295,840! This could fund over 140,000 minutes of flight time and shows how important the lottery is to our lifesaving service. We want to thank all our fantastic lottery members and wonderful canvassers!

We do understand that there can be concern about whether people knocking on your door are genuine. If you are concerned about the legitimacy of anyone claiming to be acting on our behalf, here are some things to look out for to give you peace of mind.

All of our canvassers wear Hi-Vis Air Ambulance jackets and carry photographic ID. They also carry electronic tablets, an information pack and Lift Off Lotto leaflets. Many will also carry a photograph of themselves giving a big smile next to one of our helicopters!

NWAA representatives will never ask, or agree, to enter your home.

Refuse any such request by anyone claiming to be a canvasser, close the door and get in touch with ourselves and the police on 101, if necessary.

Our genuine agents complete any sign-ups on the door step...

...where they will ask you some questions and verify your details to set up a Direct Debit using the hand-held device. Electronic tablets are used as they are a very secure way of handling

data. All personal details are hosted securely and cannot be accessed via the tablet once the sign-up is complete. Unlike paper pads, if a tablet is lost or stolen, they can be locked remotely making them inaccessible.

If you choose to sign up, you will be handed a 'Thank You' leaflet...

...containing details of the charity, the lottery and the next steps.

Canvassers will never ask you for, or accept, any cash donations.

If you are still unsure but interested in becoming a member of our Lift Off Lotto, you can ask for a sign-up leaflet to be left with you to consider your decision. An ID number should be recorded on the leaflet which can be used to verify if the canvasser is genuine by calling Head Office on 0151 547 7840. You can also check our team's photographs on our website. Go to www.nwaa.net/lottery, scroll down the page and click on 'Our Representatives'.

If you would like to sign up for our lottery or have any further questions then please get in touch with our team at lottery@nwaa.net or call 0151 547 7830.

Meet the Crew!

Skylines caught up with Andy Duncan, one of our HEMS (Helicopter Emergency Medical Service) Team Leaders, to find out more about his job.

Have you always wanted to be a paramedic?

No, when I was younger I wanted to join the Army just like my big brothers!

What advice would you give to anyone interested in becoming a HEMS paramedic or MERIT Doctor?

Stay focused. It won't come easy, but if you work hard, you will eventually get where you want to be. One of our pilots has a mug that says "It will all be alright in the end, and if it's not alright, it's not the end." I identify with that message a lot.

What has been your most memorable mission?

There are lots, and one in particular is a patient I see socially, who still insists on trying to buy me a drink. I always refuse, because the fact he's able to offer me his appreciation is reward enough.

What's a quirky fact about your job?

On emergencies, we are given an Alpha category call sign, which means everyone in the air has to divert out of our way—

even the Queen's flights! Thankfully, we have never asked Her Majesty to move aside—yet!

Have you ever been involved with any fundraising?

Yes, because it's really important I understand the lengths our supporters go to to keep us flying.

If you had a message to our supporters, what would it be?

Thank you. It sounds simple, but it's meant with such commitment. We consider our supporters part of the team.

It starts with our generous supporters and ends with our clinical team arriving on scene to help people in dire need. I'm always in awe of the kindness of our supporters.

Finally, can you finish this sentence: Did you know ...

...that according to the rules of aerodynamics, a bumblebee can't fly! Good job bumblebees don't study aerodynamics.



A Gift for the Future

Did you know that gifts in wills currently fund one in every six of our vital missions?

We are truly honoured and humbled to receive gifts through our supporters' wills. We understand that when making a will it is important to think about friends and family first. However, if you do consider leaving us a gift, we promise to apply it with care and attention.

Our Legacy Officer, Gaynor Lanceley, says: "I am honoured to liaise with the families and friends of those of our supporters who have recently passed away. At such a difficult time, it is touching to hear the personal stories behind the gifts we are so fortunate to receive. We would like to express our gratitude for the many legacies we have recently received."



Mr and Mrs Davey (pictured above, circa 1970), were both kind enough to remember North West Air Ambulance Charity in their wills.

Their thoughtfulness and generosity will help to save many lives in the future.

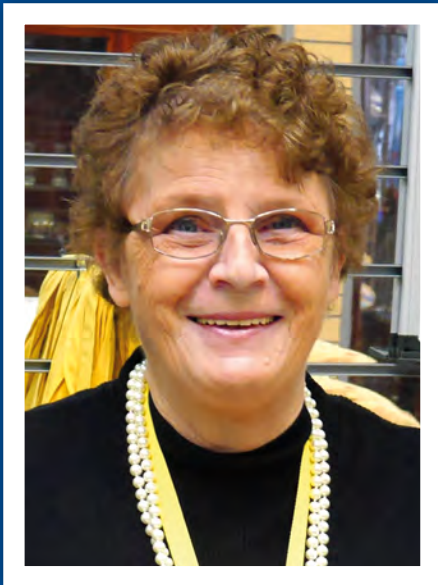
If you have chosen to remember the North West Air Ambulance Charity in your will and would like to let us know about your decision, we would be very happy to hear from you. If you would like more information on how to include a gift in your will, please contact Gaynor either at gaynor.lanceley@nwaa.net or by calling 0800 587 4570.

Volunteering for the NWAA Charity

Every year, hundreds of volunteers from across the region give up their time to support the work of the North West Air Ambulance Charity.

Our volunteers are so important to ensuring people across the North West have access to a Helicopter Emergency Medical Service seven days a week, 365 days a year. They are our presence on the ground, helping us to raise awareness of our vital service, develop new initiatives and attend and support our fundraising events.

Without our volunteers, who selflessly donate their time and skills, we would not be able to continue delivering our lifesaving service.



Josie's Story

Josie began volunteering after her husband suddenly passed away. At home and at a loss, she decided to start volunteering her time to local charities.

“As an auxiliary nurse I have cared for people for most of my life, so to me, I am still caring by volunteering.”

After hearing that a North West Air Ambulance Charity shop was opening near to her home in Blackburn she decided to sign up as one of our retail volunteers.

“This is the first time in years that I have looked forward to coming into work. It’s a lovely atmosphere, the managers are marvellous and everyone gets on. It’s like a family, it’s a second home.

“I do Monday, Wednesday and Saturday every week, but in between, when passing, I will pop in and stay for a few hours.

“As an auxiliary nurse I have cared for people for most of my life, so to me, I am still caring by volunteering.

“When people come into the shop I let them know we are in need of volunteers. I take them through to the back and show them our stock, and quite a few people have signed up from that.

“My favourite part of working here is serving on the till and answering the phone, I enjoy speaking to people. I know quite a few people from around the area and I have made new friends. Working here is so addictive, I love it!”

Lyndsey, one of our store managers, says:

“Josie has been with us since before we opened, helping with the initial set up of the shop. She is an all-rounder and nothing is too much trouble for her. She is very passionate about our charity. We have had at least four volunteers who have signed up from Jo chatting to them about her experience with us. She’s fab—in fact, all of our volunteers are.”



Volunteer

If you are interested in finding out more about volunteering with the North West Air Ambulance Charity, and the roles available, please contact volunteer@nwaa.net or call **0800 587 4570**.

Alternatively, you can contact Rebecca Haynes, our Volunteer Development Manager, at rebecca.haynes@nwaa.net.

Thank You!

We wouldn't be able to continue our service without our amazing supporters and we're so grateful to every single one of you. Here are just a few stories from the past few months...

We would like to say a massive thank you to Mark who, along with his fellow Pace amputees, made it to the summit of Snowdon in June 2017, raising almost **£3,000**. Mark chose to support us after we airlifted him following a catastrophic accident. The group were supported on the climb by friends, families and clinicians, and even had an escort from soldiers of the Yorkshire Regiment, attached to the Duke of Lancaster's Regiment.



Mike Sweeney, Radio Manchester DJ, teamed up with some of your favourite soap stars, football legends and even some of our own crew for the All Stars football match, hosted at Trafford Football Club, which raised over **£3,000**. Thank you everyone!

Furness Building Society raised a wonderful **£80,000** for us through their affinity accounts and various branch fundraising activities. Since the partnership began, they have donated over £1.2 million. Thank you so much.

We want to pass on our thanks to everyone at Playdale Playgrounds who, as part of their Charity of the Year activities, have taken part in lots of office based fundraising as well as the Keswick to Barrow Walk, which has raised over **£1,300** so far.

A big thank you to all of the Do It for Joe team, whose coast-to-coast walk raised over **£20,000**. Bringing their overall fundraising total to nearly £58,000.

A massive thank you to everyone who visited our shops last year, either donating or buying goods.



Thank you to B&M Retail Plc for supporting us throughout 2017. Their generous donation of **£20,000** helped us to purchase three LUCAS Chest Compression Systems. These vital pieces of equipment will help us to continue our lifesaving work and enhance the impact of our Helicopter Emergency Medical Service (HEMS) for our patients.

A huge thank you goes to Darwen Spiritualist Church, who raised an amazing **£12,000** by collecting donations from church members.

With the support of Sika, whose annual Sika Cycle raised a staggering **£9,962**, our charity has been able to purchase a much needed Oxylog ventilator. Thank you to everyone at Sika and all those who got on their bike to support us.

Sandra Mawdesley held many fundraising events throughout the year, including raffles and tombolas, which raised an incredible **£2,000**. Thank you, Sandra!

Thanks to everyone who took part in our September Prize Draw. Your brilliant support has helped to raise close to £100,000 for our charity.

And last, but certainly not least, thank you to all of our supporters who sent back baubles for our crew this Christmas. Not only did you provide much needed support over Christmas, your incredible generosity has also helped to raise over **£50,000**.



Ideas to make a difference

There are lots of ways you can fundraise for the North West Air Ambulance Charity and help to make a lifesaving difference across the North West. To order one of our inspiration packs or talk to one of our fundraisers, please call 0800 587 4570 or email fundraising@nwaa.net.

Did you know we have 10 charity stores in the North West?

Check out our map below to discover your nearest store. Pop in to say hello, shop or donate your goods!

1. Blackburn

Tel: 01254 839 000

2. Garstang

Tel: 01995 602 063

3. Lytham

Tel: 01253 737 999

4. Lytham At Home

Tel: 01253 708 863

5. Southport

Tel: 01704 549 267

6. Kirkby Lonsdale

Tel: 01524 548 540

7. Hale

Tel: 0161 914 6153

8. Wilmslow

Tel: 01625 900 912

9. Blackburn At Home

Tel: 01254 958 962

10. Kendal

Tel: 01539 756 018

For more information visit: nwaa.net/retail

**Donated items
always needed!**



Urgent Stock Appeal

Furniture Needed

We are in urgent need of furniture for our shops. We recognise that sometimes it can be hard to travel with large furniture to one of our retail shops, so we offer a free collection and delivery service if you live within the North West Air Ambulance's area of operation. To book your free collection please call **0800 587 4570**.