



# A YEAR OF CHANGE AND GROWTH



**TASC**

THE AMBULANCE STAFF CHARITY

## IMPACT REPORT

2018 | 2019





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# MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR



**Sue Noyes**  
TASC Chair

I'm very pleased to present our latest Impact Report demonstrating what we've achieved for our beneficiaries and the contribution we make towards the wellbeing and resilience of our ambulance community.

The past year has been one of change and growth and I'm incredibly proud of the life-changing work we've achieved. I'm also delighted to welcome new trustees, and new members of staff to the TASC family.

Over the past 12 months, we've been building our support services and increasing our capacity, which has allowed us to deal with the growth in the demand for our support. Most of our growth has been in the provision of mental wellbeing support, with the overwhelming majority of people who contact us suffering from mental health issues, including some with Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) symptoms.

PTSD has become well known over the last few years; but perhaps less well understood is the impact that it has on the lives of those affected and their families. Many of the people we support are unable to work or must take alternative roles, which can – and does – lead to increases in financial and personal problems.

The extent of PTSD within the ambulance community is difficult to identify. Some studies report that 20% of paramedics say they are suffering from PTSD symptoms, but more work needs to be done to fully understand the scale of the problem. What is clear, however, is that there are more people in the ambulance community who need our support than we can currently help. This is where you can help us – either as a donor or as a volunteer. Details of how to donate to our special charity can be found at [www.theasc.org.uk/donate](http://www.theasc.org.uk/donate).

For those who want to become volunteers – thank you! In the last year we have expanded our volunteer activity and I would like to thank all our volunteers for supporting us – without their support we wouldn't be where we are today. If you are moved by what you learn in this report, details of how you can become a TASC volunteer can be found at [www.theasc.org.uk/volunteer](http://www.theasc.org.uk/volunteer).

There are challenges ahead for TASC, not least of which is making sure we have the resources to enable us to continue to meet the growing demand we see in one of our most precious emergency services. We're committed – please join us by showing your commitment and support too.

Thank you.



# WHO WE ARE

We are TASC, The Ambulance Staff Charity, and we're devoted to improving the lives of the people in our ambulance community.

Whether it's for people currently serving in our NHS or private ambulance services, their close family members, retirees or ambulance service volunteers, we're there to provide support during times of need and to help them when they can't help themselves.

Together with our partners, we provide a range of services to help people before they reach crisis point, including:

- Mental health support, including support for stress and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)
- Financial wellbeing
- Physical rehabilitation
- Welfare and advice
- Bereavement support
- Biennial memorial service

In 2018/19 we supported more people than ever before and reached our **1,000<sup>TH</sup> CASE MILESTONE**. Together we can do so much more: find out how you can get involved at [www.theasc.org.uk](http://www.theasc.org.uk).



# WHY WE ARE HERE

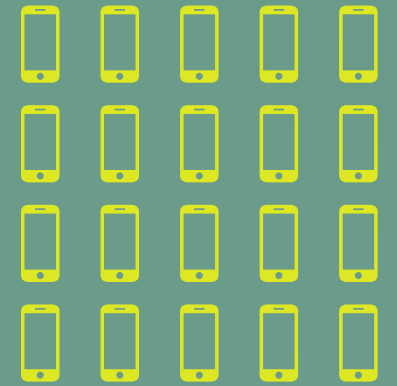


**22%**

of ambulance staff have PTSD <sup>3</sup>

**77%**

of UK employees say that money worries impact them at work <sup>2</sup>



The ambulance service receives over

**20** calls every minute and this number is steadily growing by

**5%** every year. <sup>6</sup>

The ambulance community have one of the most **STRESSFUL** jobs in the UK <sup>8</sup>

Paramedics lost over **50,000** work days due to stress in 2017/18 <sup>9</sup>



Over **50%** of paramedics have musculoskeletal pain or discomfort on a regular basis <sup>1</sup>

Ambulance workers are at a relatively higher risk of **PERMANENT MEDICAL IMPAIRMENT** and **EARLY RETIREMENT** on medical grounds than other occupational groups <sup>1</sup>

# YEAR IN NUMBERS



<b>78,979</b> website page views	<b>1,083,286</b> times our social media posts were seen	<b>1</b> puppy mascot	<b>135</b> attendees at TASC's memorial event	<b>1,572</b> mental health sessions	<b>£73,535</b> raised for TASC
<b>59</b> volunteers signed up to our new volunteer platform	<b>1</b> peer support training programme launched	<b>£69,870</b> in financial grants	<b>43%</b> more phone calls than last year	<b>1</b> sponsored head shave	<b>6,325</b> cups of tea drunk by the TASC team



# BUILDING MENTAL HEALTH RESILIENCE

The ambulance community have to deal with traumatic situations every day. Coupled with life's usual stresses, this can take a real toll on their mental health. We're here to support and help them so they can continue to do the job they love.

By making some internal changes at TASC, we've been able to streamline and improve efficiency, meaning that the average cost of a mental health session has come down by 14%, while still providing the same value to the beneficiary. That means we can provide eight sessions now to every seven we provided before we made the changes.



Mental health continued to be a key topic for the ambulance community in 2018/19, which is why we doubled our investment in our mental health services and provided **77%** more mental health sessions than the previous year.

## NEED TO TALK?

We can provide:

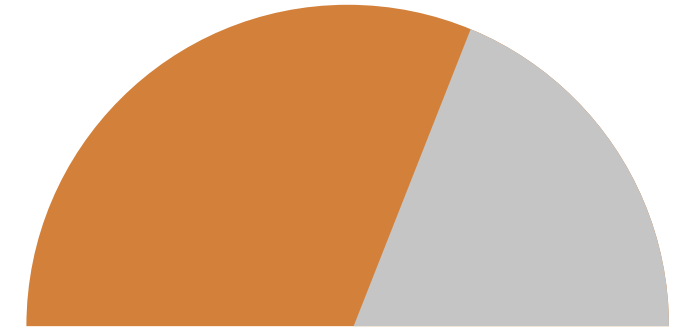
- Confidential one-to-one sessions with a qualified local counsellor
- Support for stress or Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)
- Residential support

Contact us on **0800 1032 999** or book a phone call with the team at [www.theasc.org.uk/booking](http://www.theasc.org.uk/booking)

## >> GET INVOLVED!

We are always looking for partners to help us on our mission to support our ambulance community.

If you would like to talk about how we can work together, email [support@theasc.org.uk](mailto:support@theasc.org.uk)



# 60%

of the interventions we provided in 2018/19 were for mental health support.



## 2 IN 3

ambulance workers reported experiencing intrusive and troubling work-related thoughts either now or in the past.<sup>3</sup>

In 2018/19, we provided

# OVER 1,300 HOURS

of mental health support.

## WHAT OUR BENEFICIARIES SAY

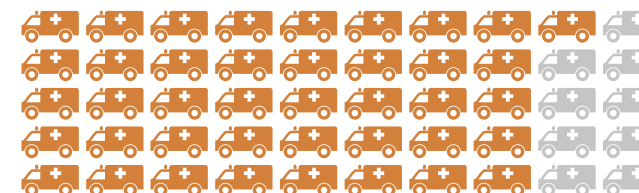
“I have tried counselling in the past but this was the first time I feel it has worked and actually made a difference to my mental health.

I was in such a low place before I started my counselling that TASC arranged for me. My counsellor has been incredible and made such a difference that, even though I have two more sessions to go, I feel more able to cope with all that is going on around me.”

“The counselling I had was very much the missing piece in the jigsaw of the process of getting out of the anxiety and depression that I have been battling with for years. I wasn't sure quite what to expect, but the approach and the very kind way in which I was supported were exactly what I needed. It has helped me immeasurably and I am very grateful for the help that I have received.”



## SUPPORTING PEOPLE WITH PTSD



# 82%

of ambulance workers have experienced a disturbing incident in the last six months.<sup>10</sup>

Each person handles the strain of dealing with disturbing incidents in their own way, often appearing to cope but bearing invisible emotional and mental scars. The effects can lie dormant for months, or even years, before being triggered in some way and resulting in classic Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) symptoms, which can have serious consequences, not just for the ambulance workers directly affected, but for their colleagues, their families, and for the whole community.

Every week we see people experiencing stress or PTSD as a result of their work, sometimes long after the initial trauma.

We are also seeing a growing awareness and acceptance of PTSD in the ambulance community: in 2017/18 only **30%** of the people who came to us for support were experiencing PTSD symptoms, in 2018/19 this had doubled to **62%**.

### >> NEXT STEPS

To ensure we offer the right support at the right time, we will begin working with a qualified counsellor who will assess our cases and use their experience to recommend the right treatment journey for our beneficiaries.



# INTRODUCING DR JENNIFER WILD

We are dedicated to providing safe psychological support led by clinical evidence. To strengthen our mental health services, we appointed Dr Jennifer Wild as our Clinical Advisor in November 2018.

Dr Wild is a Consultant Clinical Psychologist and an Associate Professor of Experimental Psychology at Oxford University with years of experience and significant expertise in researching and treating Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) in emergency service workers.

As well as conducting the first large-scale study of PTSD and depression predictors in newly recruited paramedics, she has also worked to advise the Cabinet Office on developing best practice for interventions to improve resilience and wellbeing in emergency workers.

Jennifer is passionate about reducing suffering in people who dedicate their lives to help others and she has co-developed interventions that are now recommended as first-line treatments for PTSD and social anxiety by the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE). Her work is also regularly featured in *The Times* and on the BBC.



Dr Jennifer Wild

“Studies estimate PTSD by self-report in paramedics at **20%**, whereas research that’s come out of King’s College London has identified between 5-7% of soldiers who are likely to develop PTSD.”

## Dr Jennifer Wild

*Associate Professor at Oxford University and TASC's Clinical Advisor*

# SUPPORTING YOUR PHYSICAL RECOVERY

Working for an ambulance service can be a very physically demanding job and ambulance workers are more likely to have a permanent medical impairment or early retirement on medical grounds than other occupational groups.<sup>1</sup>

An unexpected injury can have wide-reaching consequences which affect every area of your life, including your mental health and your finances. At TASC, we're here to help

the ambulance community when things go wrong and to support their recovery so they can return to work.

Together with our partners at The Fire Fighters Charity and Police Treatment Centres, we provided over **476 hours** of intensive residential physical rehabilitation support to the ambulance community in 2018/19.

## NEED SUPPORT?

We can help with:

- Physical rehabilitation for injuries and musculoskeletal damage
- Support for long-term physical conditions or recovery from surgery
- Intensive residential support

## >> GET IN TOUCH!

Contact us on **0800 1032 999** or book a phone call with the team at [www.theasc.org.uk/booking](http://www.theasc.org.uk/booking)

## >> LOOKING FORWARD TO 2019/20

In 2019/20, we will be making our support more accessible by significantly increasing our physical rehabilitation services to include physiotherapy. As part of the development, people eligible for the service will be offered up to **ten sessions** with a qualified local physiotherapist.

If you would like to learn more about our new service developments for 2019/20 and how you can get involved, email [support@theasc.org.uk](mailto:support@theasc.org.uk)



### OVER 50%

of paramedics have musculoskeletal pain or discomfort on a regular basis.<sup>1</sup>



# MICHAEL'S STORY

“Three years ago, I was attending an incident when I was attacked, sustaining multiple fractures in my right leg, which required surgery. I have continued to suffer leg pain and an array of emotional turmoil, but I wouldn't let it beat me.

I had further surgery on my leg a few months ago and TASC provided funding for me to attend The Fire Fighters Charity treatment centre for a physical rehabilitation programme to help my recovery.

The centre is fantastic and I received my treatment in a supportive environment with others on similar recovery journeys.

My personal treatment programme built on my knowledge from previous physiotherapy and counselling, and included hydrotherapy, circuit training, workshops for healthy living and mental wellbeing sessions.

I found the blend of therapies and rehabilitation empowering and it has made a 100% difference.”

**Michael**

*Paramedic, Northamptonshire*



# GETTING FINANCES BACK ON TRACK

During financial difficulty even the simplest tasks, such as food shopping or paying a bill, can cause extraordinary worry and stress. For ambulance staff, this comes on top of what is already one of the most stressful jobs in the UK.<sup>1</sup> Together with our partners at Auriga, we support people to get their finances back on track, so they can focus on their vital work.

The number of financial wellbeing interventions we provide continues to grow: in 2018/19 we provided more than ever before, with an **8% increase** on the previous year. We also increased our investment in financial wellbeing services by **50%** to provide almost **£75,000 worth of support** in 2018/19.

## A HELPING HAND

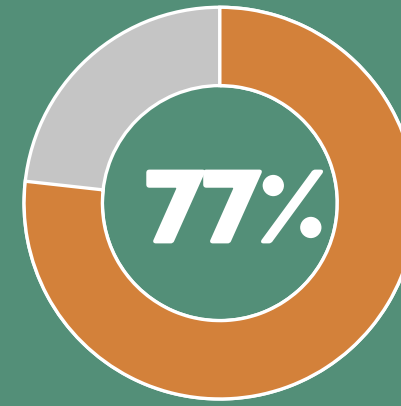
In 2018/19, **3 in 4** of our financial interventions involved a financial grant for things such as:

- Household bills or living costs
- Disability equipment
- Convalescent breaks

## >> GET INVOLVED!

We are always looking for partners to help us on our mission to support our ambulance community.

If you would like to talk about how we can work together, email [support@theasc.org.uk](mailto:support@theasc.org.uk)



of UK employees say that money worries impact them at work.<sup>2</sup>

**28%**

of our total interventions were for financial wellbeing support.

Our average financial grant in 2018/19 was

**£812**

Emergency Department





## WHAT OUR BENEFICIARIES SAY

“I think your organisation is absolutely fantastic and I have recommended you to colleagues. I would not hesitate to contact you again.”

“Thank you so much for helping me try and raise funds for my new wheelchair. You are brilliant, and I thank you so much for being there for me.”

“I was awarded a grant that helped me with my very difficult financial situation. It took a lot of pressure off me, which in turn left me able to fully focus on my mental health.”





# OTHER SUPPORT WE OFFER TO THE AMBULANCE COMMUNITY

## SUPPORTING BEREAVED FAMILIES

When someone passes away suddenly, it can be a very difficult and confusing time for their family members. At TASC, we are there to support the bereaved family members of ambulance staff who died in service, as well as those who recently left the service due to terminal illness.

To honour the memory of the ambulance staff no longer with us, we also host the national ambulance memorial service every two years.

## FREE ADVICE AND GUIDANCE

Sometimes all it takes is a quick chat and a bit of advice, which is why we provide information and advice on a range of topics from benefits and universal credit to advice on payday loans and other avenues for support.



Follow TASC's Support Team  
on Twitter: @TASCsupport

Image: Welsh Ambulance Service NHS Trust



“The more people who know about the great support network that's out there to assist, especially from TASC, the better.”

Nicole

**In 2018/19, we doubled the number of bereavement interventions we offered to family members.**





## 2018 MEMORIAL SERVICE

Every two years, TASC hosts the national ambulance memorial service at the National Memorial Arboretum to honour those who died while working for the ambulance services of England, Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland, the Republic of Ireland, Guernsey, Jersey and Gibraltar.

On the 13th September 2018, 135 people including representatives of ambulance services, retirement associations, the Independent Ambulance Association, the Association of Ambulance Chief Executives, charities and Unison paid tribute to colleagues who are no longer with us.

The event began with a poignant service at the Arboretum's Chapel of Peace by Rev Kevin Charles, Chaplain at East Midlands Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust, followed by a procession to the Garden of Remembrance led by piper Ian Walley from West Midlands Ambulance. The names of 57 ambulance personnel who have died in service since the last national memorial service were then read out from the ongoing Roll of Honour.



# WORKING TOGETHER TO SUPPORT THE AMBULANCE COMMUNITY

At TASC, volunteers are at the heart of what we do, allowing us to reach and support more of our ambulance community when they need help. 2018/19 was a revolutionary year for TASC's volunteers.

## DEVELOPING PEER SUPPORT VOLUNTEERS

One of our proudest achievements in 2018/19 was launching a training workshop in November 2018 to teach currently serving ambulance staff how to become **TASC PEER SUPPORT VOLUNTEERS** and support their colleagues' wellbeing in times of need.

## GOING DIGITAL

In January 2019 we launched our online volunteering registration and induction hub to digitise our processes and provide our volunteers with the training they need to promote TASC and support the ambulance community. In the first three months after launching, **59** people signed up to be volunteers on the new hub.

## LAUNCHING VOLUNTEER GROUPS

In November 2018, our volunteers in the Scottish Ambulance Service joined forces to form our very first volunteer group to help promote TASC and support their colleagues' wellbeing. Beginning with only three members, the group has increased rapidly over the last few months and now has 21 members with a range of diverse roles from dispatchers and paramedics to air ambulance crew and students.

I joined as I didn't know there was this much support for independent ambulance staff. TASC needs to be a well-known name in every household and workplace.

**Vickie**  
TASC volunteer





# RUTH'S STORY

“A few years ago, I badly hurt my shoulder in a fall at work. I was put on alternative duties and was told I may lose my job as a HART Paramedic due to my injury. My mental health was in bits – I love my job, it's the one thing that gives me a sense of purpose and I couldn't bear the thought of losing it.

I called the charity and was told straight away they would be able to help, and within a week I had been approved to receive a two-week residential rehabilitation programme at a Police Treatment Centre after surgery to fix my shoulder. The support I received at the treatment centre was superb and eventually led to me being able to return to the job I love.

TASC saved my life and my career, and more people need to know that they are there to help, so when two of my colleagues said they were TASC volunteers, I signed up straight away. I've since started promoting TASC to all my colleagues.

I know what it's like to be off work, or to want to do the job but not be able to due to circumstances beyond your control. We need to support each other more, which is why my next step is to take part in TASC's training to become a TASC Peer Support Volunteer and use my experiences to support my colleagues in their time of need.”

**Ruth**

*HART Paramedic, Yorkshire*



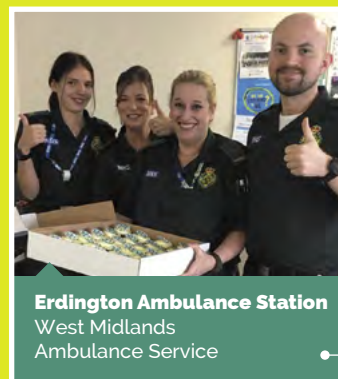


# VOLUNTEERS' WEEK

During 2018's Volunteers' Week, TASC staff set off on a **1,700-MILE TOUR** to ambulance stations, hubs and headquarters across the country to thank our volunteers for their support and encourage others to get involved.



**Bromsgrove Ambulance Hub**  
West Midlands  
Ambulance Service



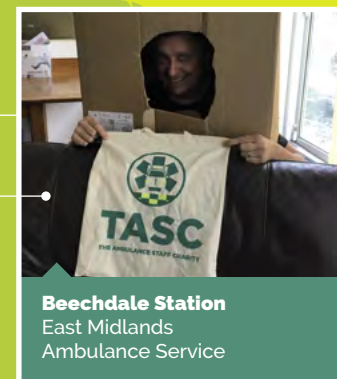
**Erdington Ambulance Station**  
West Midlands  
Ambulance Service



**Lichfield Ambulance Hub**  
West Midlands  
Ambulance Service



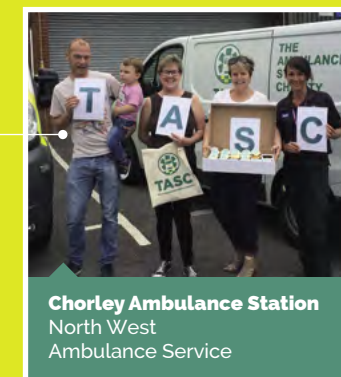
**Lancaster Royal Infirmary**



**Beechdale Station**  
East Midlands  
Ambulance Service



**Kingsmill Station**  
East Midlands  
Ambulance Service



**Chorley Ambulance Station**  
North West  
Ambulance Service



**Oxford City Station**  
South Central  
Ambulance Service



**Brighton Ambulance Hub**  
South East Coast  
Ambulance Service



**Lewes Fleet Hub**  
South East Coast  
Ambulance Service



**Marianne (Volunteer Mgr)**  
South East Coast  
Ambulance Service



**Dartford Ambulance Station**  
South East Coast  
Ambulance Service



# TOGETHER WE CAN DO EVEN MORE

We're always striving to do more for the people we support by raising vital funds. These pay for a whole range of services, from offering counselling and arranging therapy sessions to awarding financial grants and supporting bereaved families.

But we can't do it alone. We rely on passionate people and businesses to support our work and spread the word.

Our supporters donated over **£35,000** through one-off donations and regular giving in 2018/19. With this money we could provide:

- **490** extra hours of mental health support
- or
- **845** extra physical rehabilitation sessions

## EVERY DONATION COUNTS

**£5**

a month could pay for a physical rehabilitation session.

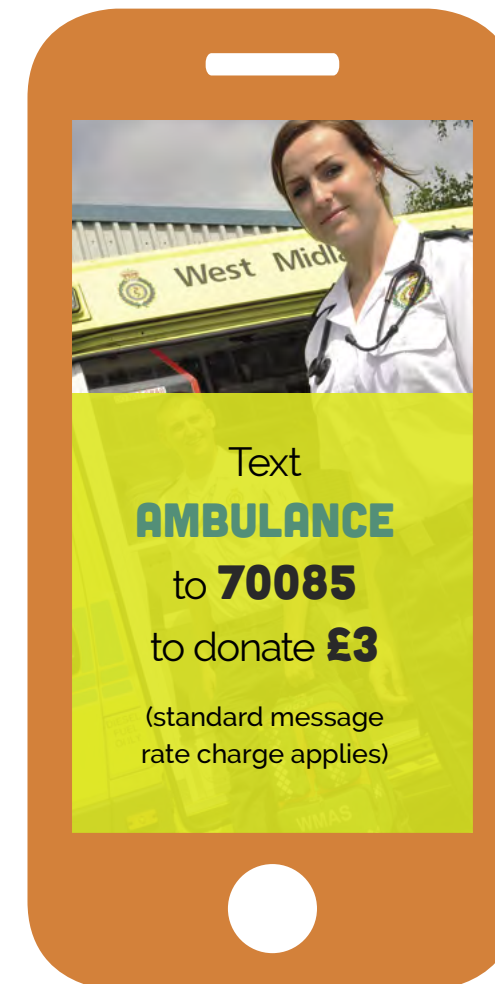
**£10**

a month could pay for three debt advice sessions.

**£20**

a month could pay for three counselling sessions.

# SUPPORT THE AMBULANCE COMMUNITY



- Make a one-off donation at [www.theasc.org.uk/donate](http://www.theasc.org.uk/donate)
- Set up a monthly donation at [www.theasc.org.uk/donate](http://www.theasc.org.uk/donate)
- If you would like more information on how you can support TASC, visit [www.theasc.org.uk/donate](http://www.theasc.org.uk/donate) or get in touch with the Fundraising Team at [fundraising@theasc.org.uk](mailto:fundraising@theasc.org.uk)
- Shop online using **Amazon Smile** or **Give As You Live** and raise money for TASC for free
- Leave TASC a gift in your will
- Make a donation in memory of a loved one
- Play the TASC lottery at [www.theasc.org.uk/lottery](http://www.theasc.org.uk/lottery)



# MAKING A DIFFERENCE

In 2018/19, our fantastic supporters took part in bake sales, bog snorkling, golfing tournaments, marathons, and even a sponsored head shave, to raise over £11,000 for TASC.

That's OVER 155 HOURS OF EXTRA SUPPORT for the ambulance community.

“Running for TASC was my way of saying thank you to the ambulance staff who helped my mum when she needed them the most. From the minute I decided to run for TASC, the charity was nothing but supportive, encouraging and an overall an amazing charity to fundraise for and I look forward to fundraising for them again in the future.”

**Chloe**  
TASC fundraiser

“I have worked for the Scottish ambulance for nearly 8 years now. I love my job however it can be demanding and challenging, physically and mentally. I have seen colleagues leave or retire early through injury and illness and what attracted me to TASC is that they have a great support network for ambulance crews across the UK. I hope by achieving my goals, that I will be able to promote other colleagues to maybe consider raising money for charity and especially TASC in the near future.”

**Alastair**  
TASC fundraiser





# CORPORATE PARTNERSHIPS

## BLUE LIGHT EVENTS

### Paul's story

I was a firefighter with West Sussex Fire Service for 10 years before I was medically discharged after suffering an ankle injury. I was told I would never walk again, but with the help of The Fire Fighters Charity I've since gone on to take part in a half marathon. I wanted to give back to the organisation who helped me and I also wanted to thank the ambulance service who helped me when I was injured. I had close relationships with paramedics in my job, so I decided to help them by raising money for TASC. Plus, my partner Roxanne is a police officer and she wanted to get involved and do something to help them too.

After my first fundraising event in April 2018, I decided to create a non-profit organisation called Blue Light Events which puts on sporting events to raise money for four emergency charities: TASC, The Fire Fighters Charity, Flint House Police Rehabilitation Centre, and Sapper Support.

Every month we hold a cycling spinathon in public places such as shopping centres and we also have bigger events, either for one of the individual charities or for all four. In April 2019, we held a **50k bike ride** in Brighton to raise money for TASC and, so far, we've managed to raise over **£1,000**.

When I started the company, our target was to raise **£5,000** in the first year, but we have doubled that by raising just over **£10,000**. We are determined to keep raising money for these charities as they are all very deserving causes.



Whether it's holding a staff fundraiser over coffee and cake, offering their business and professional skills pro bono or setting up a payroll giving scheme, the support we receive from companies can make a lasting difference to the lives of those we support.

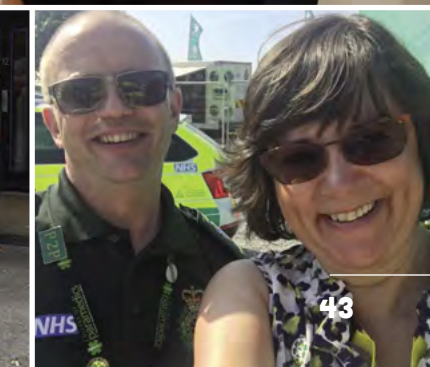
If you are interested in becoming a corporate partner, or would like more information on how we work with companies, please get in touch with the Fundraising Team at [fundraising@theasc.org.uk](mailto:fundraising@theasc.org.uk)

In 2018/19, organisations donated over  
**£26,500**  
 to TASC.





# OUR YEAR IN PHOTOS





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Image: Scottish Ambulance Service



# WHAT PEOPLE THINK OF AMBULANCE STAFF



**Question:** What three words would you use to describe ambulance staff?  
**Sample:** Targeted audience

# MANAGEMENT

CHAIR

Sue Noyes

TRUSTEES

- Edward Weiss
- Gordon Enstone
- Gerry Brown
- Carl Ledbury
- Dinesh Vidavadia
- Roger Diggle – joined July 2019
- Kulvinder Naga – joined July 2019
- Mark Sanderson – joined July 2019
- Tony Arrowsmith – joined July 2019
- Mik Webb – left July 2019

MANAGEMENT

- Karl Demian  
*Chief Operating Officer*
- Daniel Squibb  
*Director of Engagement and Service Development*
- Jenny Armour  
*Head of Finance and Governance*
- Jasmin Rana  
*Head of Income Generation, Marketing and Communications*
- Angie Crashley  
*Support Services Manager*
- Marieanne Curtis  
*Volunteer Manager*



## GET IN TOUCH

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W: [www.theasc.org.uk](http://www.theasc.org.uk)  
E: [enquiries@theasc.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@theasc.org.uk)

T: @TASCharity  
F: TASCharity  
L: [www.linkedin.com/company/TASCharity](http://www.linkedin.com/company/TASCharity)

### SUPPORT SERVICES

T: 0800 1032 999 (freephone)  
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### VOLUNTEERING

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### FUNDRAISING

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REGISTERED CHARITY NO. 1163538 / SC046384



Department  
for Culture  
Media & Sport