



Press Release – Embargoed until Tuesday 3pm 23.12.08

22.12.08

GREAT WESTERN AMBULANCE RENEWS AIR AMBULANCE CONTRACT

Great Western Ambulance Service has now signed a contract with Wiltshire Police to provide air ambulance cover for the patients of Wiltshire. The contract extends the current service for five years.

Chief Executive Anthony Marsh made the announcement on a visit to the Air Support Unit in Devizes this afternoon. He said:

“I am absolutely delighted to announce an extension to the contract and to the service we provide to the people of Wiltshire. This deal will ensure effective air ambulance cover continues for the people of Wiltshire and with it, the best clinical care possible.”

Mr Marsh also took the opportunity to thank Philip Selwood, the interim Chair of the Wiltshire Air Ambulance Appeal Sub Committee, who has been leading negotiations with the police on behalf of the Great Western Ambulance Service.

Mr Selwood welcomed the new contract and said:

“It is clear that the Air Ambulance has a special place in the hearts of the people of Wiltshire, without their generosity the helicopter would simply not be available to meet the needs of our patients. It is a well-loved charity that has kept the air ambulance going for the last 15 years.

“I would like to thank all concerned for their support for the Wiltshire Air Ambulance Appeal – support that is vital if we are going to ensure the continued development of this essential service.”

Chief Constable Brian Moore of Wiltshire Police added:

“The retention of the helicopter is clearly what our communities have asked for and I am pleased that the Police Authority has allowed it to fly for 5 more years.”

Ends

Photo call

Messrs Marsh and Selwood along with Chief Constable Brian Moore will be at the Devizes Air Ambulance and Police Helicopter headquarters for a photo call at 3pm on Tuesday 23 December 2008. Operational requirements permitting, the helicopter and crew will also be available.

For further information please contact:



Great Western Ambulance Service **NHS**
NHS Trust

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Notes to editors

The Wiltshire Air Ambulance Appeal is operated under strict criteria set down by the Department of Health. This means that the funds from Wiltshire Air Ambulance Appeal will only be able to be transferred to a charity with that same purpose, to provide air ambulance cover in Wiltshire. The Great Western Ambulance Charity is an umbrella charity, which includes the Wiltshire Air Ambulance Appeal. The Great Western Air Ambulance Charity, which funds the Filton-based air ambulance, is a completely separate charity, independent of Great Western Ambulance Trust and the Great Western Ambulance Charity - www.wiltshireairambulance.co.uk