

Agenda Item 142/16

Cornwall Air Ambulance

Saving Time. Saving Lives.

Cornwall Air Ambulance
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Mr Robin Turner (The Clerk)
Withiel Parish Council
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St Austell
Cornwall
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5th September 2016

Dear Mr Robin Turner (The Clerk)

I am writing to ask whether Withiel Parish Council would consider making a donation to the Cornwall Air Ambulance Trust in 2016 to help continue our lifesaving work across Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly.

Cornwall particularly lends itself to needing an air ambulance as land ambulances can sometimes struggle to reach incidents in the more rural parts of the county - especially during the summer months when demand increases and the small country roads are congested. Also our remote cliff tops, beaches and moors are more easily accessible by helicopter. When it comes to transferring a patient to hospital and the specialist treatment and equipment they need, every minute can count and the speed at which the air ambulance can fly can sometimes mean the difference between life and death. Not only that, the minutes that have been saved can vastly improve the quality of the patient's life after an accident or medical emergency.

As you may be aware, Cornwall Air Ambulance attends over 700 rescue missions a year delivering fast and effective medical care to patients in their moment of need. Cornwall Air Ambulance can, on average, be at the scene of an incident within 12 minutes of a 999 call being made and can reach the Isles of Scilly in less than 30 minutes. We treat patients on-scene or take them to the hospital that best suits their needs, whether in Cornwall or at specialist hospitals out of county; we can reach these specialist centres in minutes, rather than the hours it can take by road.

One such mission involved 12 year old Ross. It was the first day of the summer holidays so Ross and his friend Arthur decided to spend their day crabbing at Padstow Harbour. Whilst pulling in the last line Ross lost his balance and fell off the harbour wall. He landed on a boat and then ricocheted into the granite harbour wall in front of him, badly cutting his forehead, before dropping into the sea. A passer-by ran over and jumped onto the boat below, and dragged Ross out of the water onto the deck while an onlooker called 999. Ross' forehead was bleeding profusely. A first responder arrived on scene and called for the air ambulance. Cornwall Air Ambulance took just five minutes to reach Padstow but there was not enough space to land in the harbour. The helicopter had to land on a sandbar and the crew were ferried to Ross on a Rigid Inflatable Boat. It took just 11 minutes to get Ross to Treliske hospital where he had an X-ray and CT scan which confirmed a fractured skull. He was kept in for 24 hours under observation before going home. Ross has thankfully made a full recovery and is looking forward to going crabbing in Padstow again soon.

Even though we are considered an integral part of Cornwall's emergency services – in fact as one of the paramedics I am employed by South Western Ambulance Service - we receive no direct central government support to help with our running costs, which include: specific pieces of equipment for the helicopter, fuel, pilots and specialist training. It costs over £3 million every year to keep the helicopter in the air and raising this amount is not an easy task, but it is achievable if our supporters continue to come together and back this most Cornish of charities.

We would be very grateful if Withiel Parish Council would support our life saving work. Every penny makes a difference and helps to ensure we can continue to help people in their moments of need.

Please do feel free to get in touch with our fundraising team on 01637 889926 if you would like to arrange a talk about the work we do, where your donation would go or any more information.

From myself, the crew and our airlifted patients thank you for considering supporting us!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Steve Garvey". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Steve Garvey
Aircrew Paramedic
Cornwall Air Ambulance Trust