

Keeping the ambulance airborne.

"We are hugely grateful for the amount of money saved." –
Sherie Williams
Ellen.



The economics of maintaining an air ambulance service are frightening.

Hampshire's facility, which covers the ninth-largest county in England – plus the 150 square miles of the Isle of Wight – is called out three to five times per day, on average. It costs

over ninety thousand pounds per month to run. Nevertheless, its provision is an entirely charitable endeavour.

"We receive no government funding and no national lottery money. All our money is raised by the charity and comes thanks to the generosity of the community," says Sherie Williams Ellen, Administration Manager at the Southampton-based charity.

Sherie comes with many years of experience in the not-for-profit sector, and is very clear as to the strengths of the charity – and the challenges it faces.

"We have a very small, very tightly-run administration team here – just seven people, including the fundraisers. Donors don't want to see a huge infrastructure," she says. "But if you want to run a charity properly, you do need to be efficient. We need to keep a very tight rein on income and expenditure – and you can't do that without computers."

"We use email and Skype to communicate because we don't want the fundraisers to be here in the office. We want them to be out there, on the ground, raising funds," she adds.

The Air Ambulance became a beneficiary of the CTX scheme as more people joined the fundraising team. "Without CTX, we'd have had to not give them computers," says Sherie. "Either that, or we'd have had to consider spending valuable charity funds – and I wouldn't have been comfortable with that. Everybody recognises that sometimes funds are needed in order to set up an office – but wherever possible you try to conserve charity funds."

Sherie was aware of CTX from her previous job, and went through the process of ordering Microsoft Windows 7 and Office through the scheme.

"The process was very simple, efficient and quick – all done via email," she says.

"There is a misconception that charities don't need to spend money on IT, and that they don't need the best equipment and software to run them," she says. "But this is a business, and we are obliged to run it efficiently."

"Organisations such as CTX are vital to small charities," she continues. "We are hugely grateful for the amount of money saved, and are still slightly amazed by it! So thank you – you don't come across this very often."

Who are they?
Hampshire and Isle of Wight
Air Ambulance.

Where are they?
Head office in Southampton.

What do they do?
The charity that entirely funds
the region's air ambulance
service.

How big are they?
A staff of 7.

What did they receive?
Microsoft Windows 7
Professional Upgrades, Office
Professional Plus.

The outcome?
Fundraisers have fully
equipped laptops to allow them
to communicate with the office.

www.hiow-airambulance.org.uk