

Cambridgeshire Search and Rescue

Trustees' Annual Report 2023-24

This report covers the financial year beginning 1st July 2023 and ending 30th June 2024.

Contents

1	Registration and trustees.....	2
2	Structure and management.....	3
2.1	Governing document.....	3
2.2	How the charity is constituted	3
2.3	National governing body	3
2.4	Trustee selection methods.....	3
2.5	Charitable objective.....	3
3	Activities, achievements and performance	4
3.1	Introduction.....	4
3.2	Callouts	4
3.3	Finance.....	4
3.4	Fundraising	5
3.5	Recruitment and Membership	6
3.6	Training.....	7
3.7	Updates on the Workgroups	7
3.8	Other Activities in the Year.....	8
3.9	Outlook.....	9
4	Financial review	10
4.1	Reserves policy	10
4.2	Independently examined accounts	10
5	Declaration.....	10
Appendix A	Summary of accounts	11
Appendix B	Independent Examiner's report.....	13
Appendix C	Reserves policy	14



**The Queen's Award
for Voluntary Service**

The MBE for volunteer groups

1 Registration and trustees

Charity name:	Cambridgeshire Search and Rescue		
Other names known by:	CamSAR		
Registered charity number:	1118622		
Principal address:	Unit 1 Mount Pleasant Industrial Estate Pymoor, Ely CB6 2DY		
Trustees:			
<i>Name</i>	<i>Office (if any)</i>	<i>Dates acted if not whole year</i>	<i>Person/body entitled to appoint trustee</i>
Barry Carter	Chair		AGM (terms 2019-21, 2021-23)
Ian Woods	Treasurer		AGM (term 2021-23)
Stephen Hobbs	Vice-Chair (from 24 th October 2023)		AGM (term 2019-21, 2021-23)
Heather Franks			Trustees (21/12/2022)
Simon Jones			AGM (term 2021-23)
Ciara Witty	Secretary		Trustees (16/03/2023)
Louise Wyatt			Trustees (16/03/2023)
Lee Rockall			Trustees (16/03/2023)

Annual General Meeting was held on Wednesday 24th October 2024.

All Trustees remained at end of the reporting period.

2 Structure and management

2.1 Governing document

CamSAR is governed by a constitution, adopted 1st August 2006 and subsequently amended on 6th January 2013, 30th October 2014, 29th November 2018, 24th September 2019 and 20th October 2023.

2.2 How the charity is constituted

CamSAR is a registered charity constituted as an unincorporated association.

2.3 National governing body

CamSAR is a member unit of Lowland Rescue, registered charity number 1150317.

2.4 Trustee selection methods

The Trustees are the members of the Executive Committee as described in the constitution, which consists of between 3 and 8 members, including the Chair, Secretary and Treasurer (the officers) and a Vice Chair. Trustees are elected at General Meeting for a term length of 2 years.

The trustees may also appoint new trustees and officers subject to conditions set in the constitution. One such appointment did occur in this reporting period, with a term until the next AGM.

2.5 Charitable objective

CamSAR's objective, as stated in the constitution, is:

The provision of search and rescue assistance, both independently and in association with the full-time emergency services and other voluntary aid societies, and to assist in the relief of suffering amongst persons endangered by accident or natural hazard and the preservation of life, principally in Cambridgeshire but without geographical limitation.

Consequently, CamSAR's primary role is as a specialist search and rescue team, called by Cambridgeshire Constabulary to plan, manage and undertake searches for high-risk vulnerable missing people. CamSAR trains its members to national (Lowland Rescue) standards as Search Managers, Search Operations Managers, Search Planners, Team Leaders and Search Technicians, and maintains equipment and several vehicles necessary to perform this role.

3 Activities, achievements and performance

Chairperson's report to AGM, 20 October 2023

3.1 Introduction

First, let me start by saying that we have all greatly benefited from another good year of contribution and support from the other Executive Trustees helping us to remain in a strong position financially and resource-wise. This has enabled us to continue to provide a strong assistance to the police and communities of Cambridgeshire, and most importantly of course to the vulnerable and high-risk missing persons and their families.

This year we run the charity with a full complement of eight (8) Trustee places filled with individuals each offering a balanced knowledge, opinion and counsel both to me as Chairman and the charity as a whole. You may remember that last year Ciara Whitty was voted in as Trustee and Secretary, Steve Hobbs re-elected as Trustee and also as Vice Chairman, Lee Rockall and finally re-joined by Louise Wyatt both as Trustees.

It has been yet another busy year for the charity and team. We have continued to grow and develop whilst successfully overcoming various issues that have routinely come our way. This report will attempt to summarise and focus on our achievements (and there have been many).

The following will summarise team developments over the year.

3.2 Callouts

Our team members gave a total 1,972 hours responding to 44 calls for assistance in the year (the same as the previous year) and averaged 15 members per call (again the same as the previous year). We had five (5) finds, two (2) of which were unfortunately found deceased (both in water).

A summary breakdown is (note that some MISPERs can be classified as more than one category)

- 32 male (73%) and 11 female (27%).
- 21 suicidal (48%)
- 10 despondent (23%)
- dementia (11%)
- 1 mental illness.
- 1 child.
- 1 autism.
- other.

3.3 Finance

3.3.1 Treasurer

A lot of work goes into preparing our annual accounts for both scrutiny then submission to the Charity Commission and thankfully we were able to submit our accounts significantly earlier compared to the year before. For the year in question we were able to report an income of £46k and outgoings of £83k which included the purchase of the new Ford Ranger and paying for it to be fitted out to our specification.

Our annual budgeting takes input from the Workgroup Champions to ensure that we can anticipate growth and support project initiatives, so we not only maintain what we have, but also ensure we continue to develop going forward. It is often difficult to reconcile what the charity can readily support or what needs to be the focus of fundraising projects and it is important that we as a charity continue to consider our budgeting needs.

We started the last financial year with just over £100k across our accounts

We ended the financial year with £69k across our accounts but an increase in the assets that we hold (equipment, vehicles etc.)

Budget for 2024-25 has been set at £33k, however there we are in the planning stages for replacing drones and adding an all-terrain vehicle to the fleet.

3.3.2 Annual Return

The Trustees' Annual Report for 2022-23 was successfully submitted in June 2024.

3.3.3 Finance Team

During the financial year we continued the good work of the finance committee in delivering on the following:

- Quicker turnaround on member expense claims.
- A reserves policy.
- Insurance cover reflected the value of our assets should they need to be replaced.
- Moved to using Enthuse as an online fundraising platform, meaning gift aid could be automatically claimed.

3.3.4 Budgeting

Our annual budgeting takes input from the Workgroup Champions to ensure that we can anticipate growth and support project initiatives, so we not only maintain what we have, but also ensure we continue to develop going forward. It is often difficult to reconcile what the charity can readily support or what needs to be the focus of fundraising projects and it is important that we as a charity continues to consider our budgeting needs.

3.3.5 Asset Tracking

John Stockwell has continued to add our equipment to a central register and putting asset labels to everything to help us keep track of everything.

3.4 Fundraising

Closely linked to our finances and indeed the ability of the charity to function at all are our efforts of the team to fundraise to be able to continue to sustain the team. Our Fundraising Team met throughout the year and continued to make and secure a series of successful grant applications and helped to organise our attendance to a series of events to raise the vital funds we need as well as raising the necessary awareness that has helped the team to grow. Again we should all be reminded that they are just coordinate our efforts and they do not do all of our fundraising. My sincere thanks goes to Anne Ninham, Debbie Jones, Wayne Bent and Alan Tack for doing this, but their energies do not absolve anyone of us in anyway from also contributing in any way we can. The fundraising responsibility lies with every team member. No-one is exempt and this is fundamental to every individual being a part of the charity.

Some notable events or fundraising initiatives that we attended included:

- Isle Fest (Jul 23 and Jun 24).
- St Mary's Summer Fete (Jul 23).
- Sutton Squirrels (Jul 23).
- Pop-Up Café in March (Jul 23).
- Sutton Picnic in the Park (Sep 23).
- March Armed Forces Fair (Sep 23).
- East Anglian Copdock Bike Show (Sep 23).
- Rampton Horse Show (Sep 23) – £700
- Pymoor Fireworks (Nov 23) – £1k

- Santa Parades to Soham, Milton, Little Downham and Pymoor (8 nights in December) and Waynes Christmas Quiz – raised a phenomenal – £7.6k
- Redrow South Midlands Community Fund (Feb 24) – £1.7k for two kayaks
- Charity FitSteps (Mar 24) organised by Zoe Kellock
- Ely Eel Day (May 24).
- Bark in the Park (May 2024).
- Cambridgeshire County Show (Jun 24)
- Strawberry Fair (Jun 24) – £1.8k
- Little Village Feast (Jun 24).
- Garden Party by Sue and Bob (Jun 24) – £1.1k.
- Littleport Community Primary Summer Fair (Jun 24).
- Pymoor Coffee Mornings (five during the year) – >£1k

The team project of having a Water Team was finally realised this year which cost us over £26k to achieve – a lot of money – but what an achievement by all concerned. It cost £4.7k to train and it is over £1k for all of the PPE for one SRT alone, purchased the RIB/ motor and trailer (£5.2k) and the sled (£840) and another £1.3k spent to upgrade the helmets for the kayakers and bank searchers.

Incidentally, you will remember that we were extremely lucky to receive a Postcode Lottery grant last year which went towards adding the Ford Ranger. We added more fundraising go towards fitting it out how we wanted it. We finally collected this vehicle in Aug 23 and is proving useful especially for towing the water kit.

As listed above, we also successfully received grant funding of £1.7k from the Redrow South Midland Community Fund that was submitted in Jul 23 and granted in Mar 24 for two additional team kayaks (which Gary Tyler will collect tomorrow).

You should note that many of these grant opportunities come from team members just identifying and highlighting their existence. Others will love doing all the form filling and supplying the supporting information required.

There were 31 awareness and fundraising talks given by Wayne Bent or Barry Carter to various groups and organisations all over the county – including Squirrels, Beavers, Scouts, the NHS and Dementia UK, Lions, Police Cadets etc. We continue to encourage team members to actively identify such opportunities and even help deliver these.

After a lot of consideration it is agreed that our next big fundraising project for the coming year is for an all-terrain vehicle (ATV) as we have found that this would greatly help with getting team members out or back over difficult ground, including medics and even being used to extract a casualty and so avoiding some of the manual handling, and it would also double up as being the next generation Santa Sleigh.

3.5 Recruitment and Membership

3.5.1 Recruitment – Candidate Days

Candidate recruitments took place in Aug 23 (training started in Sep 23), Feb 24 (training started in Mar 24) and Apr 24 (training started in Jun 24) and as noted elsewhere many thanks go to the smooth running of these by Simon Hale and the Training Team. A lot of effort goes into producing effective probationary Search Technicians including all of the associated record keeping, DBS and police checks, and safeguarding training (both online session and two certifications).

3.5.2 Current Status of the Membership

The current position with our members is that we have:

- Operational 49 (was 47 last year) consisting of 36 operational 13 non-operational.
- Membership was 71% male and 29% female.
- We have two non-operational team members who greatly help us as fundraisers.
- We had 13 new joiners in the year (of which four have since retired and two are still trainees).
- We had 14 team members leave (including the above 4 trainees)
- The most common reason for retiring remains as “changes in personal circumstances” (26%).
- Despite our best efforts, many still seem to underestimate the level of commitment required to complete the training as well as be a useful member of the team.

3.6 Training

As a team we undertook 130 (105 last year) separate training events in the year equating to over 4,536 volunteer hours (3,652 previous year). Critically, these sessions can only be achieved with the help and willingness of those stepping out of the shadows to plan and deliver them and we are fortunate to have a strong and diligent Training Team, with Ken Dench as our Training Officer and ably supported by Simon Hale (who leads on the trainee training) and Wayne Bent (delivery and resilience day planning) and the small group of training support members.

There were nine (9) practical Sunday team workshop/ resilience sessions during the year around at different venues in the county and also 12 online sessions (one per month) in the evenings. Without all this work, the team would not be able to continue to demonstrate the competence and professionalism needed or there be the confidence and faith in the team by the PoSAs that we have earned.

3.7 Updates on the Workgroups

3.7.1 Licenced Search Technicians

You will know that this role has been undergoing some refinement by Lowland Rescue and the Training Team has been working towards getting everyone ready and qualified to this for the start of the coming calendar year. Unfortunately, despite a number of additional training sessions put on to help team members, there is still fear that some will not be up to date in time and requiring to be made non-operational i.e. not be “licenced” until they can catch up.

3.7.2 Team Leader

Ken Dench has done a great job of teaching all what is required to be a good Team Leader. His experience really comes to the fore in this, and we now have a strong group of 12 Team Leaders (some awaiting final LR assessment) providing the necessary leadership to teams out on the ground.

3.7.3 Search Planners

Steve Rowsell and Ken Dench completed the training course in Jul 23, and both are great to have in search management.

3.7.4 Medical Responder/FREC3/ FREC4

We were lucky to have benefited from having 8 qualified medical first responders in the team during the year. Whilst the charity has funded the training, the training and qualifying itself is not easy and it is recognised as the role as having a big responsibility with the role – including obviously needing to keep current and competent with continuous CPD. Thanks again to Joss Minterne who has led this development as well as all the keeping on top of the changes that come through from Lowland Rescue and overseeing medical kit maintenance.

3.7.5 Kayak

Kayak training has continued to be looked after by Gary Tyler with some good sessions at the Cambridge Canoe Club and also indoor training at the Cambridge Parkside Pool.

Another three (3) team members completed their British Canoeing Paddlesport Safety and Rescue training and certification in Oct 23 (and we now have a total of 9 kayakers in the team).

3.7.6 Drone

In Oct 23 we had three (3) pilots convert to the CAA GVC (Specific Category) pilot qualification and they continue to maintain the minimum flying hours needed to keep safe and operational.

3.7.7 Bike

We ran another of the 2-day bike training weekends to qualify some more bike team searchers in Nov 23 and it is great to see that we have used the bikes a lot more this year. We currently have eight (8) qualified MTB Searchers in the team. Incidentally, outside scope of this report but worth mentioning is that for 2024/25 we have managed to get the agreement of Andre Noel take on being the Workgroup Champion and so additional training dates are in the pipeline.

3.7.8 Boat Helm

Another three (3) team members were put through the RYA Powerboat Level 2 training in Nov 23 giving us a total of eight (8) in the team and the rigid-inflatable boat (RIB) itself has started to be used really well in searches this year.

3.7.9 Swiftwater and Flood Rescue Technicians (SRTs)

The team sent another four team members for accredited training in North Wales in Oct 23 and a final four in Mar 24. We are now blessed to have 12 team members as Swiftwater and Rescue Flood Technicians within our ranks – a massive boost to our water search, rescue and recovery capabilities but also to the viable flood resilience assets available to the county. Of course, this can only have been achieved through some hard fundraising for this as a dedicated project to pay for the training and all the equipment enabling it – and of course the time and effort put in by those team members to make it happen.

3.7.10 K9

Our dog team put in an additional 317 hours of their time to train their dogs, Penny (John Stockwell), Pip and Oscar (Louise Wyatt) and since April the addition of Riley (Matt Johnson) – including long training weekends away on the Isle of Wight and Kent. You may remember that the team also forms the provisional NSARDA team for Cambridgeshire and we have benefited from Brian Gregory joining the team in Apr 24 as an experienced trainer and our handlers have now started to get through the necessary tests of scent boxes, obedience, stock tests and focussing on their trails which they have long been grooving in readiness for final assessment hopefully in the coming year. These will be great additions to the team when we can deploy them for assisting in searches.

3.8 Other Activities in the Year

- Attendance and voice to the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Water Safety Meetings run by the CFRS (quarterly).
- Attendance and voice to the BCH Drone Consortium Meetings (still the only volunteer member of this consortium with the police and fire services of the three counties).
- The Water Showcase at LiquidSkilz (Aug 23).
- Being a runner-up to the BBC Radio Cambridge Make a Difference Awards 2023 (Sep 23).
- Chief Constables Commendation (May 24).
- Kings Coronation Medal Presentation by the Lord-Lieutenant of Cambridgeshire and our Patron, Julie Spence OBE QPM (Jun 24).

3.9 Outlook

It can be seen that we remain in a financially sound position as a charity but that must continue to be managed and monitored as we live in times of change. We must never become complacent and keep vigilant to the issues and challenges around us.

The team continues to develop, and we have still not entered into that period of consolidation that I have made mention of before. That said, we have demonstrated that we are flexible and good at evolving and overcoming the difficulties that have come our way from time to time.

So, I will again take this my opportunity to record my personal thanks to my fellow Executive Trustees for their continued counsel, support, and diligence in helping to manage the charity (and me) – note that the charity itself is now in its 17th year of existence.

So finally, a big thank you to you, all of our team members – operational and non-operational – for the continued support in helping get the team where it is. It is easy to take for granted, but it takes a lot of effort and commitment otherwise the charity will cease to be able to provide its service. Its members have given 9,370 hours of their time (up from 8,581 on the previous year) with many more hours given that were not recorded anywhere and the charity thanks all of you all for doing. We also never forget the sacrifice, support and understanding that our families and friends make for us in allowing us to do what we do.



Barry Carter, Chair, 24 October 2024

4 Financial review

4.1 Reserves policy

CamSAR has a reserves policy which is annexed to this report – see Appendix C.

4.2 Independently examined accounts

CamSAR's income during this period was **£42,925**. Expenditure during this period was **£82,205**, including the previously restricted funding of £25,000 grant from Postcode Lottery.



The remaining sum of £1820,09 that was identified last year was either returned to the donator, or donated to the Red Cross Ukraine fund.

Accounts have been prepared on the receipts-and-payments basis and independently examined. These are annexed to this report, as is the Independent Examiner's report – see Appendices A and B.

5 Declaration

The trustees declare that they have approved the trustees' report above.

Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees:

Signature(s)		
Full name(s)	Barry Carter	Ian Woods
Position(s)	Chairperson	Treasurer
Date	05 August 2025	05 August 2025

Appendix A Summary of accounts



Cambridgeshire Search and Rescue

1118622



Receipts and payments accounts

CC16a

For the period
from

01/07/2023

To

30/06/2024

Section A Receipts and payments

	Unrestricted funds to the nearest £	Restricted funds to the nearest £	Endowment funds to the nearest £	Total funds to the nearest £	Last year to the nearest £
A1 Receipts					
Donations and legacies	19,317	4,333	-	23,650	58,663
Income from fundraising	17,291	-	-	17,291	18,592
Trading activities	882	-	-	882	731
Investment income	1,315	-	-	1,315	644
HMRC refunds	-	-	-	-	9,942
Sub total (Gross income for AR)	38,805	4,333	-	43,138	88,572
A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).					
Vehicle/Asset Sale	164	2,804	-	2,968	380
Sub total	164	2,804	-	2,968	380
Total receipts	38,969	7,137	-	46,106	88,952
A3 Payments					
Cost of raising funds	727	-	-	727	424
Cost of charitable activities:					
Administrative	15,091	-	-	15,091	8,385
Bikes	-	-	-	-	218
Fleet	6,387	-	-	6,387	9,008
Flood	417	-	-	417	3,041
IT & Comms	1,980	-	-	1,980	1,183
K9	-	-	-	-	147
Kayak	-	-	-	-	1,239
Land	-	333	-	333	110
Medical	1,304	365	-	1,669	429
Uniform	3,318	-	-	3,318	679
Water	1,085	5,814	-	6,899	-
Grants - Ukraine Lifeline	50	1,635	-	1,685	3,880
Sub total	30,359	8,147	-	38,506	28,743
A4 Asset and investment purchases, (see table)					
Other equipment (asset)	8,011	36,495	-	44,506	14,613
Sub total	8,011	36,495	-	44,506	14,613
Total payments	38,370	44,642	-	83,012	43,356
Net of receipts/(payments)	599	(37,505)	-	(36,906)	45,596
A5 Transfers between funds	(17,981)	17,981	-	-	-
A6 Cash funds last year end	78,946	26,578	-	105,524	59,928
Cash funds this year end	61,564	7,054	-	68,618	105,524

Section B Statement of assets and liabilities at the end of the period				
Categories	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
B1 Cash funds	Held in main current account	3,703	-	-
	Held in secondary current account	-	-	-
	Held in savings account	57,861	7,054	-
	Total cash funds	61,564	7,054	-
	(agree balances with receipts and payments account(s))	OK	OK	OK
	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
B2 Other monetary assets	None	-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
B3 Investment assets	None		-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
B4 Assets retained for the charity's own use	Vehicles	Unrestricted		-
	Kayaks, rescue sled, water PPE	Unrestricted		-
	Kayaks, rescue sled, water PPE	Restricted		-
	Drone and night vision equipment	Unrestricted		-
	Drone and night vision equipment	Restricted		-
	Communications equipment	Unrestricted		-
	Other Equipment	Unrestricted		-
	Details	Fund to which liability relates	Amount due (optional)	When due (optional)
B5 Liabilities	None		-	
			-	
			-	
			-	
			-	
Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of all the trustees		Signature	Print Name	Date of approval

Appendix B Independent Examiner's report

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees For the year ended

I report to the Trustees on my examination of the accounts of the charitable company for the year ended 30th June 2024.

Responsibilities and basis of report

The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts, and they have considered that an audit is not required for this year under section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 (the Charities Act) and that independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to:

- Examine the accounts under section 145 of the Charities Act.
- Follow the procedures laid down in the general directions given by the Charity Commission for England and Wales (under section 145 (2)(b) of the Charities Act, and
- To state whether any matters have come to my attention.

Independent examiners statement

I have concluded my examination which includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records.

It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosure in the accounts and seeking explanation from the trustees concerning any such matters. The procedure undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently no opinion is given as to those matters set out in the statement below.

The accounts examined were presented in the 'receipts and payments' method.

In connection with my examination, no material matters have come to my attention which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- Accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act, or
- The accounts do not accord with the accounting records

I have not come across any matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Approved on 29th July 2025



Haroon Ashfaq FCCA

Appendix C Reserves policy

Purpose

The reserves that we have set aside provide financial stability and the means for the development of our principal activity.

Policy

We intend to maintain our reserves at a level which is at least equivalent to the average over 4 years of our annual running operating expenditure (Opex) and the average over 4 years expenditure on capital items (Capex) (replacement of vehicles, drones and other large capital items). For simplicity in these calculations we round results to the nearest £10.

Summary at end of financial year 2023-24

Element	GBP
Operating reserve (average spend over last 4 years)	33,440.00
Capital reserve (average spend over last 4 years)	22,730.00
Additional reserve elements:	
• None currently	0.00
Subtotal reserves	56,170.00
Restricted funds	8,170.00
Total	64,340.00

Review points

The Trustees review reserves required to ensure that they are adequate to fulfil our continuing obligations annually.