



CASE STUDY

Essex and Herts Air Ambulance Trust

Why periodic consulting can create
the perfect fundraising partnership

For some charities, especially those going through structural or strategic change, investing in periodic consultancy support can be the perfect solution to a variety of fundraising challenges. For the Essex and Herts Air Ambulance Trust (EHAAT), it was the question of how to diversify its income streams and establish a successful major gifts programme that brought them to Gifted.

"I'd worked with the Trust several years ago," says Gifted's Chairman and Director, Andrew Day. "But this time, the fundraising needs were very different. After meeting with the Charity's leaders, it was obvious that the most effective service we could offer was a package of ongoing support that would guide them through the next strategic steps."

Three steps to success

For many years, EHAAT had been dependent on income received through lottery sales and sponsorships. It was clear, though, that the Charity had to become less reliant on lottery revenue drawn from its more deprived catchment areas and more proactive about building stronger relationships with potential major givers across the two counties it serves. Working closely with trustees, Andrew developed a tailored fundraising plan that focused on evaluating and rating prospective individual givers, developing a persuasive fundraising case and creating a bespoke stewardship programme. This involved;

1. Briefing trustees on how to build a sustainable individual giving programme that would diversify income streams, reduce institutional risk and more equitably spread the philanthropic support. This included helping leaders to see that with thoughtful engagement, an individual donor could be invited to give regularly and ultimately, consider leaving a gift in their Will.
2. Identifying a suitable specific project with the capacity to attract significant philanthropic investment, rather than one-off small gifts and grants. In this case, it made sense to focus on what the service does best – increasing its capacity to save lives around the clock.
3. Deciding how to resource the new fundraising plan with the right staffing, website support and marketing collateral.

Side by side

Over the following months, Andrew met regularly with the Trust's leadership to shape the project vision and assist with the recruitment of an experienced major gifts fundraiser. Working side by side, they drafted a compelling case for the purchase of a new A169 Helicopter and appointed an executive search and selection agency to help fill the new permanent fundraising role.

"We knew we needed an exceptional fundraising specialist with the expertise and tenacity to remain focused on the strategic objectives," says Andrew. "Finding the right person wasn't easy, but trustees persevered and, in the end, appointed someone with the perfect skill-set and an outstanding track record."

Small details and big picture support

With a new major gifts fundraiser in post, Andrew was able to provide one-to-one support and advise on the more detailed aspects of everything from prospect evaluation to organising information events and asking for money. At the same time, he was able to keep a well-trained eye on the bigger picture and reassure trustees about the progress being made.

“Moving away from too much reliance on traditional revenue streams has created a healthier fundraising culture at the Trust,” he says. “Over a 12-month period, a new approach has been adopted, a key staff member recruited and a six-figure total has already been achieved towards the Campaign’s £1m target. We still have a way to go, but the seeds of change have been sown and EHAAT can look forward to a much more resilient future.”

Gifted Philanthropy would be delighted to have a no-obligation conversation with you about conducting a feasibility study and how we might help you to achieve your fundraising goals. Either get in touch with one of our directors or contact us via our website.

Amy Stevens - 0113 350 1337

<https://www.giftedphilanthropy.com/amy-stevens>

Chris Goldie - 020 3627 3437

<https://www.giftedphilanthropy.com/chris-goldie>

Andrew Day - 01926 674137

<https://www.giftedphilanthropy.com/andrew-day>