



Visitors' Guide

Welcome to Great Western Air Ambulance Charity's Emergency Operations Base in Almondsbury. We hope you enjoy your visit with us and we look forward to showing you around and telling you more about our charity. You will find information and directions on how to find us at the end of this document.

Please inform your host of any special requirements prior to your visit so they can ensure we do our best to accommodate you. You must remain with your host at all times throughout the visit, and children must be supervised at all times. In the event of a fire alarm sounding, please ensure you follow your host and follow signs to the overflow car park. Please note that this is a non-smoking site.

Please be aware that this is a fully operational emergency response base for the air ambulance and for police helicopters. This guide is designed to help you prepare for your visit and to assist us keeping you safe while you are here.

Please ensure you read all the information in this document before your visit. We look forward to seeing you soon!

Your tour

Each tour will have a dedicated guide. Their main role is to ensure that you have a rewarding and safe visit to our air base.

If they can, they will introduce you to our amazing Advanced and Specialist Paramedics in Critical Care, Critical Care Doctors, and Pilots and show you around our helicopter, our critical care cars, operations room and clinical training facilities. Because we are busy providing critical care cover there will be times when the helicopter and crew may not be at the base during your visit or they might get called away in the middle of your tour; please give the crew space to take the call and plan their response. In the event of this happening, your guide will still have plenty of important things to show you, all of which help us save lives. Please ask lots of questions and enjoy the visit.

COVID-19

It is really important that we keep our clinical and aviation crew free from the virus so that they can continue to be ready to provide critical care to patients in need of our service across the West Country and beyond. So please do not visit us if you have COVID-19 symptoms, any likely possibility of having COVID-19 or have been in contact with someone who could have COVID-19.

These restrictions are subject to change and you will be informed of any updates by your host.



Critical care cars

As you drive into the base you may meet critical care cars coming the other way at high speed. Please drive with caution and give way on all occasions, there are numerous passing places on the entry road.

Helicopters

You are visiting a busy helicopter base and there are many associated hazards. It is very important that you listen to your guide's instructions. In general, never approach a helicopter unless you have been invited by GWAAC staff to do so. Helicopters operate from the apron, which is the fenced off concrete area with large yellow circles on it, and a 500 metre long adjacent grass runway. Never enter those areas unless your guide invites you to do so. If you are airside when a call comes in or the aircraft is returning from a job, please follow your guide and relocate quickly but safely back inside. Please also be careful not to have loose items that can fall from your pockets; loose items can be a hazard to aircraft. We have a meeting room in which you can safely leave all your belongings when you arrive. These instructions also apply to helicopters in the hangar where you must stay on the yellow path and never approach the aircraft unless invited to do so.

Clinical equipment

You will see lots of clinical equipment throughout your visit. Please only touch or handle this equipment if invited. You will be aware that equipment is expensive for the charity to have to replace and is needed to support our lifesaving service.

Photography permission

It will be possible to take photographs but do please ask your guide on each occasion. There will be times when it is not appropriate to take photographs; do also remember that mobile phones and cameras are loose articles and can cause a hazard to aviation. They must be able to be safely secured in a pocket or with a secure strap so that they cannot come loose.

You are now ready to enjoy your visit to Great Western Air Ambulance Charity. Your guide looks forward to meeting you. Thank you for coming to see us and for taking the time to understand our important work.

If you have any questions about your visit, please contact your host directly, or contact the Charity Office on info@gwaac.com or by calling 0303 4444 999.

Directions

How to find us

Our postcode is BS32 4FB.

The base entrance is only accessible from the A38 southbound carriageway. If you are coming from the south, such as the M4, you will need to pass The Almondsbury Interchange Hotel on the right hand side and find a safe and legal place to turn onto the southbound carriageway.

On driving south, you will pass The Swan Hotel on your left, followed by a postbox and The Almondsbury Interchange Hotel. The hotel's car park entrance is on the left and the GWAAC entrance is the turning immediately after, just past a 40mph sign and before the bus stop. As you turn in you will see a warning sign with a helicopter on, which will indicate you are in the right place.



Find us using what3words

We highly recommend that you download the what3words app, free to your device. The app helps emergency services locate those in need, by segmenting the whole world into three metre squares, each one with its own unique three word phrase that pinpoints the exact location. South Western Ambulance Service use it in their control rooms to locate patients, which means it helps GWAAC too. But it is also good for directions, and you can use it to find us!

Our entrance can be located by typing in 'arts.releasing.farmer' to the What3Words app.

Follow us on social media

Keep up to date with what we're up to at Great Western Air Ambulance Charity at:

 Great Western Air Ambulance Charity

 @GWAAC

 @GWAAC

 Great Western Air Ambulance Charity

Travelling by bus

The T1 and T2 First Bus services run from Bristol City Centre to Thornbury. If on these buses, you will need to get off at the Almondsbury Depot bus stop, which is the one immediately north of the M5/A38 junction. The base entrance is slightly north of this, immediately adjacent to the southbound bus stop. The driveway to the base is around 700m long (est. 10 - 15 minute walk from the bus stop).

Parking and arrival

When you have entered the GWAAC driveway, the road will bend to the right and you will reach the set of black gates. If you press the GWAAC buzzer, someone will be there to let you in. Follow the road up to the car park.

If driving, you should park in the visitor's car park to the left of the base as you arrive. If you require a disabled parking spot, then please turn right towards the base and park on the right.

All visitors must report to the GWAAC reception, which can be found at the far end of the building. Please only come to the base if you have a booked appointment - someone will then be on hand to meet you.

