



Membership Matters - Winter 2026

10 min read

Welcome to the Winter 2026 edition of SECAmb's Membership Matters, a newsletter, providing you, our members, with the latest news and developments taking place across your local ambulance service



We provide 999 & 111 services to close to five million people across Kent, Surrey, Sussex and north-east Hampshire

Each year, across our 111 and 999 services, we respond to in excess of two million calls - that's more than four calls every minute



We employ some 5,000 staff - 90 per cent are operational, caring for our patients either face-to-face or over the phone

Looking for a career in the ambulance service? Keep an eye on [NHS Jobs](#) for opportunities



We're supported by hundreds of volunteers, including some 300 Community First Responders (CFRs)

Keen to volunteer? Visit our [website](#) to find out how you can get involved

As an NHS Foundation Trust, our structure is designed to provide our patients and our communities with assurance that we are putting patients at the heart of everything we do.

Our [Council of Governors](#) consists of publicly and staff-elected governors as well as governors appointed from organisations that we work closely in partnership with. It plays a vital role in the governance of the Trust, appointing our Chair and Non-Executive Directors, is kept informed on Trust plans and is involved in key developments.

Being a [Trust Member](#) means you can help us shape the future of your ambulance service. Membership is free and open to all those in the communities we serve, aged 16+. It's a great way to support and engage with your local ambulance service and could lead to future opportunities as a colleague or volunteer.

Message from our Chair, Michael Whitehouse

Dear Members

Welcome to our latest membership newsletter. As anticipated, we've experienced a busy start to 2026 and as we and the wider NHS continue to face high demand, I

would like thank all our staff and volunteers for their continued dedication and professionalism in rising to this challenge.



We continue to make progress towards forming a Group Model with South Central Ambulance Service. As I write, the process for appointing both a Group Chief Executive and Chair is ongoing and we will share further news on this as soon as we can. You can read more about the plans [here](#).

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who voted in our most recent Council of Governor elections. I welcome our new and re-elected governors who will take up their new three-year terms in March and would like to thank all those who have served in this vital role representing you and working closely with our Trust Board.

Looking back on the first part of winter, despite higher demand than last year, our Category 2 response times improved in December. We recognised there remains more to improve our performance across all categories of call but the initiatives outlined below show our commitment to delivering the care patients rightly expect and deserve.

While we prioritise our response to our most seriously ill and injured patients, it is also important that calls categorised as less serious receive the right response. A new initiative involving our volunteer community first responders (CFRs) aims to enhance the care we provide to patients who have suffered a fall. Many of these patients are not seriously injured and our CFRs, liaising with our clinicians, can perform a vital role and ensure our ambulances are kept as available as possible to attend our most seriously ill and injured patients.

Remaining on the subject of our CFRs, and with February being National Heart Month, I welcome the work Worthing responder, Sally Holmes has been undertaking to break the stigma of women receiving CPR. It is vital we all have the confidence to deliver life-saving CPR should we be called upon and I'd encourage everyone to take the time to find out more via our website, including how to sign up to be a GoodSam responder here: <https://www.secamb.nhs.uk/cpr/>

With it clear that technology is playing an increasing role across all areas of our lives, it is good to see that we are exploring how artificial intelligence (AI) may help free up the time of our Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) clinicians. A pilot of the use of ambient voice transcription sees an AI tool used to transform their conversations with patients into structured medical notes.

While exploring new technologies is vital, it is clear to me that what continues to stand out is the expert and compassionate human care delivered by our teams each and every day. Throughout the year we reunite many patients and their families with the SECamb teams which have come to their aid. December also saw us host our first-ever Celebration of Life carol service. I invite you to read more on these touching stories below.

I'd like to conclude with a tribute to our former colleague Alice Clark. Alice tragically lost her life while on duty for SECamb just over four years ago. I was pleased to see that she has been awarded the Elizabeth Emblem, a recently-introduced national honour awarded by the King to the next of kin of public servants who lose their lives in the line of duty. The award will be presented to Alice's parents later this year as we also continue to remember Alice each year with an award in her name presented to newly-qualified paramedics.

Thank you for your time and for your continued support.

What's happening across SECamb?



Demand high in 2026 - thank you for your support

As expected, demand has been high in the first few weeks of 2026 and we'd like to thank all our staff and volunteers for their hard work as we've handled in

excess of 3,000 calls on the busiest days.

We'd also like to thank you all for your support in choosing NHS services wisely. By making use of alternatives to 999 including speaking to a pharmacist, a GP or using NHS 111, you can help us ensure our resources are more available for our most seriously ill and injured patients.

[Read more](#)



Recruitment of Group model CEO and Chair

As we continue towards forming a Group Model with South Central Ambulance Service (SCAS), the process for appointing a Group Chief Executive and Chair is progressing with appointments expected in the coming weeks.

SECamb and SCAS CEOs Simon Weldon and David Eltringham have both recently shared with colleagues that they have not applied for the Group CEO role.

Both leaders remain wholly committed to guiding their organisations through the winter period and supporting a smooth, well-managed transition as the new Group model evolves.

[Find out more](#)



CFRs supporting fallers and enhancing patient care

A new initiative will see our community first responders (CFRs) help enhance the care we provide to patients who have suffered a fall.

The new approach will involve CFRs attend suitable patients who fallen and guide appropriate patients through a remote clinical consultation with an Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) clinician to determine next steps in the patient's care plan.

Where safe to do so, the patient can be referred and discharged without the need for an ambulance to attend ensuring they receive a prompt response and the correct care while ambulances are more readily available to attend more seriously ill and injured patients.

[Find out more](#)



New ambulances set to join SECamb fleet

We're looking forward to the first of the new consignment of MAN ambulances to start arriving at Make Ready Centres across the Trust.

In total, 92 new vehicles will be joining our fleet between now and the end of March. They will replace our oldest Mercedes Sprinter ambulances and 34 Fiats ambulance which end their lease in the summer.

[Read more](#)



High satisfaction in patient questionnaire as compliments increase

High levels of satisfaction have again been recorded in our latest quarterly patient experience questionnaire.

The questionnaire, which covers the final three months of 2025, saw 90 per cent of respondents report that they were very satisfied or satisfied with the time taken to answer their call. A similar percentage (88 per cent) were very satisfied or satisfied with their initial contact with the call taker.

During the same three-month period, the Trust received 510 compliments from the public – up from 480 in 2024.

[Read more](#)



Thank you for voting in our Governor elections

Thank you to all who voted in our recent Governor elections. More than 500 votes were cast and we would like to thank everyone who put their names forward to stand to serve in this important role.

The three-year terms will begin on 1 March 2026 and we look forward to being joined by both our newly-elected governors and those who have been re-elected for another three-year term.

Elections are held in our public and staff constituencies on a rolling basis and as members you will be notified when elections are due to take place.

[Find out more](#)



AI pilot targets improved efficiency and patient care

We're pleased to be piloting the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in our Emergency Operations Centres (EOCs) in a move we hope will improve efficiency and free up clinicians' time to provide assistance to more patients.

Clinicians in our EOCs are piloting the use of an AI tool which uses ambient voice transcription to listen to and digitally transcribe their conversations with patients, automatically transforming their spoken words into structured medical notes.

[Find out more](#)



Worthing volunteer breaking the stigma of women receiving CPR

A West Sussex community first responder (CFR), is shining a light on gender disparities in CPR and defibrillator delivery by supporting a vital campaign #BraOffDefibOn.

With 27 per cent of women less likely to receive CPR from bystanders than men in a cardiac arrest, Sally Holmes has been helping tackle the stigma and delivering CPR training in the Worthing community, emphasising the message 'Bra Off, Defib On'.

This February Heart Month, please take the time to read more about the campaign's aims to raise awareness that women wearing bras are less likely to have CPR conducted on them than men and normalise the taboo of bra removal in lifesaving circumstances.

[Find out more](#)



Alice recognised with national honour

A young paramedic's dedication to the job she loved has been formally recognised by the King.

Alice Clark, who had only just started her dream career with us when she tragically died, has been awarded the Elizabeth Emblem which is a national honour awarded by the King to the next of kin of public servants who lose their lives in the line of duty.

Based out of Paddock Wood in Kent, Alice was the passenger in an ambulance which collided with another vehicle in January 2022 when she was aged just 21. The award will be presented to Alice's parents, Gill and Graeme Clark, in recognition of her service later this year.

[Find out more](#)



Determined Hastings girl reunites with life-saving team

A 10-year-old from Hastings, shared she is determined to run again after being reunited with the SECamb team who helped save her life.

Scarlett Stockley, who collapsed during a gymnastics class in May 2024, thanked the team after a lengthy recovery over the past year including nine surgeries and ongoing rehabilitation for hemiplegia affecting one side of her body.

Her mother, Laura, expressed deep gratitude to everyone involved in her daughter's care and pride in Scarlett's strength throughout her recovery journey.

[Read more](#)



SECamb initiative shortlisted for prestigious HSJ Digital Award

An innovative SECamb project is in the running for a prestigious HSJ Digital Award. Introducing an automated text messaging system to deliver welfare calls which used to be sent manually has freed up clinical time, helping teams to reach more patients in a timely manner.

Welfare texts were previously sent manually by call handlers in the Emergency Operations Centre.

The project has produced significant benefits, ensuring call handler and clinician time is maximised for our most seriously ill and injured patients.

[Find out more](#)



Trusts host first ever Celebration of Life Service

More than 200 people attended our first-ever Celebration of Life service. The service, held at St Nicholas Church in Sevenoaks ahead of Christmas, brought together patients, colleagues, local residents and pupils from Sevenoaks Prep School.

Our Soundwaves Choir delivered their first-ever live performance, conducted by Michelle Thompson, filling the church with festive favourites, while the pupils supported the congregations' rendition of The Twelve Days of Christmas.

The service also provided people with a chance to find out more about the [SECAmb Charity](#) and how through it we aim to support a range of activities to improve community resilience.

[Find out more](#)

Please help us help you this winter



Please help us help you this winter

- check medicines cabinets contain useful, in-date medication
- ensure repeat prescriptions are ordered and collected on time
- check on vulnerable family and friends
- seek advice on health issues ahead of them becoming more pressing

For more advice on how to help us this winter please visit our [website](#)

Upcoming events

Trust Board Meetings

Date: Thursday 5 February 2026 - 10.00 – 16.00

Venue: Banstead Make Ready Centre, 2nd Floor Redhill Suite, The

Horseshoe, Bolters Lane, Banstead, SM7 2AS

Online: [Join the meeting here](#)

Date: Thursday 2 April 2026- 10.00 – 13.00

Venue: Banstead Make Ready Centre, 2nd Floor Redhill Suite, The Horseshoe, Bolters Lane, Banstead, SM7 2AS

Online: [Join the meeting here](#)

Council of Governors meeting

Date: Thursday 26th February 2026 10.00 – 13.00

Venue: Banstead Make Ready Centre, The Horseshoe, Banstead, Surrey SM7 2AS

Online: [Link available via our website soon](#)

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Until next time

Thanks for taking the time to find out about your local ambulance service.
If there is anything further you would like to know about the Trust, then we would love to hear from you.

If you no longer wish to receive this newsletter, please email -
corpgovmeetings@secamb.nhs.uk

Contact us