

Northumberland Dog Rescue

England & Wales · Charity number 1170022

Details

Other names ALEXA'S ANIMALS, DOG RESCUE

Status Registered

Legal form CIO

Registered 2016-11-03

Register [View on the Charity Commission register](#)

Contact

Address Pattersons Cottage
Charlton Mires
Alnwick
Northumberland
NE66 2TJ

Phone 01665517505

Email northumberlandogrescue@gmail.com

Website www.northumberlandogrescue.co.uk

Activities

Objects: TO RELIEVE THE SUFFERING OF DOGS IN NEED OF CARE, RESCUE AND ATTENTION AND IN PARTICULAR TO PROVIDE AND MAINTAIN FACILITIES AND HOMES FOR THE RECEPTION, CARE AND TREATMENT OF SUCH ANIMALS BY SUCH MEANS THAT ARE EXCLUSIVELY CHARITABLE.

Activities: To relieve the suffering of dogs in need of care, rescue and attention and in particular to provide and maintain facilities and homes for the reception, care and treatment of such animals.

Classification

- **How:** Provides Services
- **What:** Animals
- **Who:** The General Public/mankind

Geography

- Gateshead
- Newcastle Upon Tyne City
- North Tyneside
- Northumberland

Finances

Period end	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Employees
2024-12-31	£149,442	£188,567	-	-
2023-12-31	£174,766	£172,164	-	-
2022-12-31	£100,218	£118,451	-	-
2021-12-31	£117,937	£118,986	-	-
2020-12-31	£112,122	£110,395	-	-

Trustees

Name	Role	Appointed
Karen Larkin	Chair	2024-09-01
Nickie Hutton-Johnson		2025-08-11
claire Watson-Armstrong		2024-12-13

Northumberland Dog Rescue

England & Wales - Charity number 1170022

Accounts

B4 Assets retained for the charity's own use			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
	Details	Fund to which liability relates	Amount due (optional)	When due (optional)
B5 Liabilities			-	
			-	
			-	
			-	
			-	
Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of all the trustees	Signature	Print Name	Date of approval	
	<i>Klarkin</i>	Karen Larkin	28/10/25	
	<i>A. Wallace</i>	Annie Wallace	28/10/25	

Northumberland Dog Rescue

England & Wales - Charity number 1170022

Accounts

Northumberland
Dog Rescue



Northumberland Dog Rescue

Registered Charity 1170022

Annual Report and Financial Statement

1st January 2023 - 31st December 2023

1. Administrative Details

Registered Charity Number

1170022

Working Name Rescue	Northumberland Dog
Address for charity correspondence	Patterson's Cottage, Charlton Mires, Alnwick, NE66 2TJ
Trustees (December 2023)	David Francis Chair Michelle Biddle Lee Fraser Annie Wallace
Bankers	Barclays Bank Alnwick Co operative Bank
Independent Financial Examiner	Ivan Smith (from 2024)

Summary of the purposes of the charity

The objects of NDR are to relieve the suffering of dogs in need of care, rescue and attention, and in particular to provide and maintain facilities and homes for the reception, care and treatment of such animals by such means that are exclusively charitable.

Structure, Governance and Management

The charity is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation, governed by a constitution which follows the Charity Commission ‘foundation model’, which means that our trustees are also the sole members of the charity.

The trustees normally meet at roughly six-weekly intervals, sometimes in-person and sometimes by video call. There are no committees.

Recruitment and Appointment of Trustees

At the start of 2023 we had 4 trustees, David Francis (Chair) Lee Fraser, Michelle Biddle and Katherine Grant.

Katherine stepped down as trustee in August 2023. Annie Wallace joined as a trustee in September 2023

David Francis (Chair) indicated his intention to retire as Chair after 7 years at the helm. David remained as chair with NDR throughout 2023.

Summary of the main activities of NDR

To provide a safe kennel or foster environment for rescue dogs

In 2023 we rescued 30 dogs. We are seeing an increase in dogs needing both medical and behavioural support meaning dogs tend to remain with us longer before rehoming. The number of dogs waiting to be rehomed has increased and we have waiting lists of 20+ dogs at any one time to come into our rescue.

To work with rescue dogs and provide rehabilitation services for the dogs in our care

During 2023 we worked with staff and our dog behaviourist to develop training programmes specific to each dog. In addition each dog has a “key worker” either staff or volunteer who is responsible for ensuring the dogs enrichment and training programme is working effectively

Work collaboratively with local services to support the dogs in our care

We continue to have good relationships with council warden services and our vets. We have developed good relationships with local businesses and services, for example;

- Two fundraising partnerships with Bamburgh castle and The pets at home foundation

- Donations of goods and services for example; building materials, internet services
- 6 food donation bins
- 10 collecting tins in venues across North Northumberland

To find suitable long term and forever homes for the dogs in or care

We have rehomed 35 dogs in 2023, this is slightly up from last year, though the aftermath of covid, the cost of living and a general consumer attitude to buying dogs is still having an impact on the amount of dogs being rehomed

We continue to offer follow up support post adoption

NDR adopted Jessie the XXL bully when it became apparent new legislation prevented us from finding a home external to the kennel environment.

Support dog adopters to manage rescues in their homes

We offer veterinary support to 8 dogs in their homes due to existing conditions

All adopted dogs remain NDR dogs for life, we offer telephone and in some cases face to face support with a volunteer. Adoptees are provided with information about dog services in the area.

We maintain a Friend of NDR adopters facebook page

We offer NDR guided walks 4 times a year for adopted dogs and their adoptees

Public benefit.

We work closely with vets, animal welfare and the public to provide a safe space for dogs needing to be rehomed. The Charity has 3 aims; rescue, rehabilitate and rehome each are discussed at every trustee meeting.

Volunteers

We maintain a strong volunteer base with over 35 volunteers helping at the kennel, fostering, fundraising and a plethora of administrative and practical tasks. We, in keeping with national trends, have struggled to recruit volunteers to staff our shop. We intend to recruit a new trustee to our team with a retail and volunteering background to strengthen our charity.

Fundraising activities

Our fundraising activities went from strength to strength this year. The partnership with Bamburgh Castle helped us raise much needed funds. The addition of a fundraising/ social media lead to our trustee board gave us an increase in social media presence. We introduced branded merchandise which we are able to sell during fundraising and at 2 outlets. The Charity shop did extremely well and we are now able to open 6 days a week, though this is reliant on a small but dedicated group of volunteers

Financial Review

We had a mixed year in terms of our financial successes. Our boarding income stream was reduced while the kennels were closed to do some renovation work to replace an old kennel block. We also had extensive repair work to complete on the cottage owned by the kennels and housing our kennel manager. However donations, fundraising and shop income were all up on last year. We reviewed our outgoing and managed some savings in our utility bills. Wage bills increased as we employed more kennel staff.

We were awarded 2 grants in year and we intend to complete the building work afforded to us by a legacy fund in 2024.

We ended the year with £33,916 in restricted funds and £26,146 in unrestricted funds.

Thanks

We are extremely fortunate to benefit from an enormous number of friends and supporters, who have helped in so many ways: whether with caring for the dogs, financial help, practical work at the kennels, donations of dog food, co-operation with partner organisations, governance and management, technical expertise, and so much more. Our grateful thanks, to you all.





CHARITY COMMISSION
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

NORTHUMBERLAND DOG RESCUE

1170022

Receipts and payments accounts

CC16a

For the period
from

01/01/2023

To

31/12/2023

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					
Grantscape	-	1,290	-	1,290	-
Pets at Home Foundation	-	14,650	-	14,650	-
Grant	-	-	-	-	1,000
Charity Shop	66,464	-	-	66,464	30,034
Fundraising and Donations	40,532	-	-	40,532	17,597
Refunds	13,844	-	-	13,844	-
Boarding / adoptions	31,686	-	-	31,686	45,585
Cottage Rent	6,300	-	-	6,300	6,000
Sub total (Gross income for AR)	158,826	15,940	-	174,766	100,216
A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).					
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total receipts	158,826	15,940	-	174,766	100,216
A3 Payments					
Kennel Expenses	2,364	14,722	-	17,086	1,382
Staff	71,634	-	-	71,634	60,004
Cottage Repairs	10,450	-	-	10,450	-
Shop Expenses / Shop Rent	8,249	-	-	8,249	8,086
Utilities	31,816	-	-	31,816	17,891
Loan	10,005	-	-	10,005	13,340
Vet	15,076	-	-	15,076	13,488
PR / Fundraising	2,602	-	-	2,602	990
Insurances	3,355	-	-	3,355	3,898
Sundry expenses	1,891	-	-	1,891	1,624
Sub total	157,442	14,722	-	172,164	120,703
A4 Asset and investment purchases, (see table)					
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total payments	157,442	14,722	-	172,164	120,703
Net of receipts/(payments)	1,384	1,218	-	2,602	- 20,487
A5 Transfers between funds	-	-	-	-	-
A6 Cash funds last year end	24,762	32,698	-	57,460	77,947
Cash funds this year end	26,146	33,916	-	60,062	57,460



Section A Independent Examiner's Report

**Report to the trustees/
members of**

Charity Name
NORTHUMBERLAND DOG RESCUE

**On accounts for the year
ended**

31 DECEMBER 2023
**Charity no
(if any)** 1170022

Set out on pages

(remember to include the page numbers of additional sheets)

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended 31/12/2023.

**Responsibilities and
basis of report**

As the charity trustees of the Trust, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act").

**Independent
examiner's statement**

I report in respect of my examination of the Trust's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination, I have followed the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

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

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed:

Ivan Smith

Date:

19/10/2024

Name:

IVAN SMITH

**Relevant professional
qualification(s) or body
(if any):**

ICAEW

Address:

8 LINNET COURT, CAWLEDGE BUSINESS PARK, ALNWICK,
NORTHUMBERLAND, NE66 2GD

Section B Disclosure

Only complete if the examiner needs to highlight matters of concern (see CC32, Independent examination of charity accounts: directions and guidance for examiners).

Give here brief details of any items that the examiner wishes to disclose.

NOT APPLICABLE

Northumberland Dog Rescue

England & Wales - Charity number 1170022

Accounts

Northumberland
Dog Rescue



Northumberland Dog Rescue

Registered Charity 1170022

Annual Report and Financial Statement

1st January 2022 – 31st December 2022

1. Administrative Details

Registered Charity Number	1170022
Working Name	Northumberland Dog Rescue
Address for charity correspondence	Patterson's Cottage, Charlton Mires, Alnwick, NE66 2TJ
Trustees (December 2022)	David Francis Chairman Russell Bambling Treasurer Samantha Gibson M David Young MRCVS Michelle Biddle Katherine Grant
Bankers	Barclays Bank Alnwick
Independent Financial Examiner	Nigel Jack, ACMA, MBA (from 2021)

2. Structure, Governance and Management

Our charitable dog rescue and rehoming service has been operating since the early 1990s, originally with the name of Alexa's Animals. We only adopted a constitution and became a registered charity much more recently, on 3 November 2016. The charity is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation, governed by a constitution which follows the Charity Commission 'foundation model', which means that our trustees are also the sole members of the charity. Prior to the formation of the charity, a number of our fund-raising activities were undertaken under the auspices of the charity Community Action Northumberland.

The objects of NDR are to relieve the suffering of dogs in need of care, rescue and attention, and in particular to provide and maintain facilities and homes for the reception, care and treatment of such animals by such means that are exclusively charitable.

The trustees normally meet at roughly six-weekly intervals, sometimes in-person and sometimes by video call. There are no committees. It is likely that, in due course, it will be necessary to form a trading subsidiary company, which is wholly owned by the charity, in order to continue some of our income-generating activities, including our charity shops.

3. Recruitment and Appointment of Trustees

At the start of the year, 3 of our trustees (including our founder, Alexa Nisbet) retired from the charity, and in the following months we were joined by two new trustees: Michelle Biddle and Katherine Grant. At the end of the year, as previously planned, 3 further trustees stood down, but we are pleased to report that they continue to provide support to the charity in a voluntary capacity. During the year, volunteer Annie Wallace provided the secretariat to the trustees. A further trustee, Lee Fraser, was appointed shortly after the year-end.

4. Review of Achievements and Performance

Following the establishment of our charity, we had an aspiration to have our own premises, and in February 2018 we finally took possession of and moved into Patterson's Cottage kennels at Charlton Mires, beside the A1 North of Alnwick. From the start, we have operated the kennels through two elements: our charitable dog-rescue activities, and a charged-for dog boarding and day-care service. More recently, we have also raised the profile of our work, and generated income, by running a charity shop: first in Wooler, then latterly moving to Amble.

- i) **New homes and new lives for dogs.** Our main charitable purpose is to rescue dogs who are facing ill-treatment or uncertainty, and to find appropriate and loving new homes for them. Dogs come to us for a variety of reasons, for example: family breakdown, owners going into residential care, household poverty, a change of home circumstances, owners not being able to care responsibly etc. We are also one of the few rehoming options that are open to the County Council's animal welfare and adult social care services.

During 2022 we rehomed only 27 dogs, compared with 30 in 2021 and 52 in 2020. Numbers coming into the rescue side had certainly not decreased. We believe the slow down in rehoming is due to an over-supply: the amount of dogs that were bred and purchased by households during the Covid pandemic. We are however expecting a lot of Covid lockdown bought dogs to show- up in rescue establishments such as ours, with people having returned to work and the dogs now being 'surplus to requirements'

Our busiest month for rehoming was August when we rehomed 6 dogs while during April, May and July no dogs were rehomed .

A surprise for us was the influx of fox red Labradors that came in: we had a total of 5, from 8 weeks old to 3 years old . Fox red seem to be the fashionable colour of the moment , but they are like a different breed to the usual black , chocolate and yellow, and require a lot more exercise , they are more highly strung and take a lot more training . As a result, people were finding they had bitten off more than they could chew. Luckily we always have people willing to take on a Labrador.

No surprise was the usual number of lurchers , and we did see more saluki mixes this year. Unfortunately the element of people wanting to use these dogs for hunting and then disguarding them has not waned. People are often put- off from adopting these amazing dogs due to a lack of understanding about the dogs, thinking they will need lots of exercise and have a lust for blood.

We are hoping to change that attitude through education. Overall, 2022 saw significantly increased pressures for dogs needing rescue, but this was not matched by an increased demand for adoption and rehoming, so our kennels became full.

- ii) **Dog boarding and day care service.** The vitality of this service depends enormously on the state of the domestic and international holiday market. Most of our customers are either local people who board their dogs with us while going away on holiday, or they are visitors to the county who put their dogs in our day-care facility while visiting facilities which are unable to

accept dogs. In addition, local people use the service if, for example, they are working away from home, or are attending a hospital appointment or shopping trip.

5. Premises

We own and operate the premises which are known as Patterson's Cottage Boarding Kennels, which are located beside the A1 Road, some 5 miles North of Alnwick. They include 25 kennel units, each with its own 'run', an enclosed exercise paddock, various office and storage buildings, and the cottage itself which is let on an assured shorthold tenancy to our Kennels Manager. The kennel units are divided roughly 50-50 between those that are used for rescue and rehoming, and those that are used for commercial boarding and daycare.

During the year, with the help of our skilled and energetic volunteers we began a number of further maintenance and improvement tasks, including new pedestrian access facilities and the removal of oversized leylandii trees. We also benefited from an anonymous legacy, which enabled us to plan some more ambitious improvements at the front and rear of our premises, to be undertaken during 2023 and 2024. We also have ambitions to become 'greener': both through harnessing more energy-efficiency and renewable energy technology, and by composting more of our waste on-site.

During the year, we continued to follow the progress of the planned dualling of the A1 trunk road in our locality. Regrettably, this has now been delayed several times, presumably awaiting the Government to allocate the funding. The dualling, if it goes ahead, will have considerable benefits for us, by turning the current trunk road immediately in front of our kennels into a quiet cul-de-sac, and by creating a safe walking route in both directions, thus connecting us to the Newcastle-Alnwick-Berwick bus service. .

6. Voluntary activity

- i) **Overview** This year saw a significant uplift in our volunteering, from a low base at the start, but ending with a total of 34.
- ii) **Dog care and other help** During the Covid pandemic, we restricted the involvement of our dog walkers within the kennels themselves, and we carried out a certain amount of our rehoming activity at arms' length, making use of video calls and other remote means. Following the ending of these restrictions, we rebuilt our volunteer base, both with the return of

some 'trusted old hands' and the recruitment of fresh ones. We continued to receive much-valued help with a variety of services, including dog-grooming, grounds maintenance, joinery, general repairs, transport, gardening, veterinary advice, and much more.

- iii) **Fund-raising** As the result of a nationwide review by the Pets at Home foundation (formerly, Support Adoption for Pets) we became the chosen Charity Partner of the Morpeth Pets at Home store, having previously been linked with the Kingston Park store. . We undertook a number of fund-raising days in front of the store, some of them linked to specific campaigns, such as the Christmas Santa Paws appeal.. The staff there voluntarily raised much needed funds, and we were in receipt of donated pallets of food for our dogs, and many of their customers also donated food, toys, treats etc.

Although traditional on-street fund-raising has pretty-much come to an end, we have benefitted from the kind efforts of volunteers undertaking busking, café events, donations at dog-related events, and much more besides. We also receive donations of dog food with the kind support of local stores, including Sainsbury's in Alnwick and Morrison's in Amble.

- iv) **Charity shops** At the start of the year, we vacated our Wooler shop to concentrate on the shop which we had opened on the main street in Amble just 6 months earlier. This involved the recruitment of a new team of volunteers and we became fully operational again at the end of March 2022, receiving enthusiastic praise from local residents and holiday-makers. We also continued, on a modest scale, some on-line selling of donated goods.
- v) **Trustees** In addition, our trustees have contributed not only in the formalities of governance, but also in supplying professional input, accountancy, publicity, website administration, public education, staff training, fund-raising, grass cutting, dog care etc

7. Quality control

Surprisingly, charitable animal rescue services are subject to very few external monitoring or validation requirements. We had expected that the Government would address this by introducing an inspection and licensing regime as part of DEFRA's published work programme. However, this seems to have been dropped, during the turmoil experienced within the Government during the year. Fortunately, pet boarding businesses are subject to a strict regime of defined quality standards that are set by DEFRA (Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs) and administered by the County Council through a licensing system. At the start of 2022, we received confirmation of a continuation of our 5-star licence status.

8. Name change

Shortly into the following year (2022) our founder Alexa Nisbet retired from the charity and, at her request and with the consent of the Charity Commission, we changed our formal title to Northumberland Dog Rescue. The Charity Commission continues to hold and retain control over our previous name of Alexa's Animals, Dog Rescue.

9. Financial Review

A change in our trustee composition early in the year also brought a lull in our income-generating activity, not least arising from the cessation of our Wooler shop and the temporary closure of our Amble shop, for nearly three months. Thankfully, the growth of a new team of volunteers has brought dividends not only from the heightened turnover at the now re-opened shop, but also from a range of other income-generating and enjoyable activities. These activities have hugely raised the profile of our charity and work, and have generated significantly more interest among people wishing to support us. However, 2022 was also a year of significant inflation in prices, not least the National Living Wage and utility bills. With a combination of reduced income during the first quarter, and higher costs throughout, we were not surprised to arrive at the year-end with a deficit of about £18k.

- i) **Income:** During the year, income derived from boarding and daycare at the kennels continued to do well and, as previously stated, we were able to recover during the year from the temporary closure of our shop. To a large extent, this retailing has taken over from our previous focus on street collections. We also introduced measures to make it easier to differentiate between various income streams, including achieving greater clarity over the income and the costs of our retail activity.
- ii) **Operational costs:** inevitably, staffing costs (ie salaries) are the single largest item of our expenditure, and these increased significantly from about £45k to £59k. This was due in part to significant rises in the National Living Wage, and two re-gradings, and also in a conscious decision to increase our staffing cover during pressured times of the working day. With fewer rescue dogs in our care, veterinary fees remained relatively unchanged from the previous year. As previously reported, we are keen to pursue the use of renewable energy, and of better energy efficiency: for

the good of the environment, to increase the comfort for our dogs and staff, and also to reduce our overall costs.

- iii) **Premises:** we undertook no major improvement work on the kennels during the year. However, with kennels and associated buildings that are forty years old, and a cottage which dates from the early 19th century, there are always repairs and improvements to be made. The premises are on an exposed site in the open countryside, and so attention is required from time to time to damage caused by high winds and flooding. Remarkably, the premises were not as badly affected by Storm Arwen, as some communities in Northumberland were, but we still had to incur a certain amount of clearance and building repairs..
- iv) **Capital and funds:** The closing bank balance at the end of the year was £57459. This may appear superficially as an improvement on the previous year's closing balance of just under £50k, but account should be taken of the receipt of a £41.6k legacy which is a restricted fund for capital expenditure, of which about £10k was spent before the year-end.

10. Thanks

We are extremely fortunate to benefit from an enormous number of friends and supporters, who have helped in so many ways: whether with caring for the dogs, financial help, practical work at the kennels, donations of dog food, co-operation with partner organisations, governance and management, technical expertise, and so much more. Our grateful thanks, to you all.

Northumberland Dog Rescue, Charity Registration Number 1170022

Financial Statement, Income and Expenditure, 1 January 2022 to 31 December 2022

Income

	<u>2021</u>	<u>2022</u>
Donations Unrestricted	17,641	2,800
Adoptions	845	3,475
Fundraising (events)	0	14648
Grants	17,306	1000
Boarding - Kennels	3,953	42110
Rental Income	6,000	6,000
Shop & Boarding	71,326	30034
Gift Aid	593	0
Other Incoming Resources	273	149
Total	117,937	100,218

Expenditure			
Kennels	Insurance	3,233	3898
	Vet Fees	13,417	13488
	Kennel Consumables	2,613	662
			720
	Shop Expenditure	11,301	8086
Marketing/PR	Fund Raising Expenses		293
	Marketing Costs	247	697
Admin	Bank Charges	457	601
	Card Charges	105	
	Wages and Salaries	41,154	59150
	Pension Costs	3,748	
	Staff Training and Welfare	1,236	854
	Motor Expenses	4,282	902
	Office Supplies	166	87
	Licences		34
	Telephone and Internet	1,821	1,328
	Other	2,259	
Premises	Loan Repayments	16,675	13,340
	Repairs and Maintenance	4,673	
	Electric Costs	10,486	16563
	Water Rates	1,113	
Sub-total		118,986	118451

Restricted income for capital improvements £41776. Capital expenditure £23359

**Northumberland
Dog Rescue**



Northumberland Dog Rescue

Registered Charity 1170022

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A surprise for us was the influx of fox red Labradors that came in: we had a total of 5, from 8 weeks old to 3 years old . Fox red seem to be the fashionable colour of the moment , but they are like a different breed to the usual black , chocolate and yellow, and require a lot more exercise , they are more highly strung and take a lot more training . As a result, people were finding they had bitten off more than they could chew. Luckily we always have people willing to take on a Labrador.

No surprise was the usual number of lurchers , and we did see more saluki mixes this year. Unfortunately the element of people wanting to use these dogs for hunting and then disguarding them has not waned. People are often put- off from adopting these amazing dogs due to a lack of understanding about the dogs, thinking they will need lots of exercise and have a lust for blood.

We are hoping to change that attitude through education. Overall, 2022 saw significantly increased pressures for dogs needing rescue, but this was not matched by an increased demand for adoption and rehoming, so our kennels became full.

- ii) **Dog boarding and day care service.** The vitality of this service depends enormously on the state of the domestic and international holiday market. Most of our customers are either local people who board their dogs with us while going away on holiday, or they are visitors to the county who put their dogs in our day-care facility while visiting facilities which are unable to

accept dogs. In addition, local people use the service if, for example, they are working away from home, or are attending a hospital appointment or shopping trip.

5. Premises

We own and operate the premises which are known as Patterson's Cottage Boarding Kennels, which are located beside the A1 Road, some 5 miles North of Alnwick. They include 25 kennel units, each with its own 'run', an enclosed exercise paddock, various office and storage buildings, and the cottage itself which is let on an assured shorthold tenancy to our Kennels Manager. The kennel units are divided roughly 50-50 between those that are used for rescue and rehoming, and those that are used for commercial boarding and daycare.

During the year, with the help of our skilled and energetic volunteers we began a number of further maintenance and improvement tasks, including new pedestrian access facilities and the removal of oversized leylandii trees. We also benefited from an anonymous legacy, which enabled us to plan some more ambitious improvements at the front and rear of our premises, to be undertaken during 2023 and 2024. We also have ambitions to become 'greener': both through harnessing more energy-efficiency and renewable energy technology, and by composting more of our waste on-site.

During the year, we continued to follow the progress of the planned dualling of the A1 trunk road in our locality. Regrettably, this has now been delayed several times, presumably awaiting the Government to allocate the funding. The dualling, if it goes ahead, will have considerable benefits for us, by turning the current trunk road immediately in front of our kennels into a quiet cul-de-sac, and by creating a safe walking route in both directions, thus connecting us to the Newcastle-Alnwick-Berwick bus service. .

6. Voluntary activity

- i) **Overview** This year saw a significant uplift in our volunteering, from a low base at the start, but ending with a total of 34.
- ii) **Dog care and other help** During the Covid pandemic, we restricted the involvement of our dog walkers within the kennels themselves, and we carried out a certain amount of our rehoming activity at arms' length, making use of video calls and other remote means. Following the ending of these restrictions, we rebuilt our volunteer base, both with the return of

some 'trusted old hands' and the recruitment of fresh ones. We continued to receive much-valued help with a variety of services, including dog-grooming, grounds maintenance, joinery, general repairs, transport, gardening, veterinary advice, and much more.

- iii) **Fund-raising** As the result of a nationwide review by the Pets at Home foundation (formerly, Support Adoption for Pets) we became the chosen Charity Partner of the Morpeth Pets at Home store, having previously been linked with the Kingston Park store. . We undertook a number of fund-raising days in front of the store, some of them linked to specific campaigns, such as the Christmas Santa Paws appeal.. The staff there voluntarily raised much needed funds, and we were in receipt of donated pallets of food for our dogs, and many of their customers also donated food, toys, treats etc.

Although traditional on-street fund-raising has pretty-much come to an end, we have benefitted from the kind efforts of volunteers undertaking busking, café events, donations at dog-related events, and much more besides. We also receive donations of dog food with the kind support of local stores, including Sainsbury's in Alnwick and Morrison's in Amble.

- iv) **Charity shops** At the start of the year, we vacated our Wooler shop to concentrate on the shop which we had opened on the main street in Amble just 6 months earlier. This involved the recruitment of a new team of volunteers and we became fully operational again at the end of March 2022, receiving enthusiastic praise from local residents and holiday-makers. We also continued, on a modest scale, some on-line selling of donated goods.
- v) **Trustees** In addition, our trustees have contributed not only in the formalities of governance, but also in supplying professional input, accountancy, publicity, website administration, public education, staff training, fund-raising, grass cutting, dog care etc

7. Quality control

Surprisingly, charitable animal rescue services are subject to very few external monitoring or validation requirements. We had expected that the Government would address this by introducing an inspection and licensing regime as part of DEFRA's published work programme. However, this seems to have been dropped, during the turmoil experienced within the Government during the year. Fortunately, pet boarding businesses are subject to a strict regime of defined quality standards that are set by DEFRA (Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs) and administered by the County Council through a licensing system. At the start of 2022, we received confirmation of a continuation of our 5-star licence status.

8. Name change

Shortly into the following year (2022) our founder Alexa Nisbet retired from the charity and, at her request and with the consent of the Charity Commission, we changed our formal title to Northumberland Dog Rescue. The Charity Commission continues to hold and retain control over our previous name of Alexa's Animals, Dog Rescue.

9. Financial Review

A change in our trustee composition early in the year also brought a lull in our income-generating activity, not least arising from the cessation of our Wooler shop and the temporary closure of our Amble shop, for nearly three months. Thankfully, the growth of a new team of volunteers has brought dividends not only from the heightened turnover at the now re-opened shop, but also from a range of other income-generating and enjoyable activities. These activities have hugely raised the profile of our charity and work, and have generated significantly more interest among people wishing to support us. However, 2022 was also a year of significant inflation in prices, not least the National Living Wage and utility bills. With a combination of reduced income during the first quarter, and higher costs throughout, we were not surprised to arrive at the year-end with a deficit of about £18k.

- i) **Income:** During the year, income derived from boarding and daycare at the kennels continued to do well and, as previously stated, we were able to recover during the year from the temporary closure of our shop. To a large extent, this retailing has taken over from our previous focus on street collections. We also introduced measures to make it easier to differentiate between various income streams, including achieving greater clarity over the income and the costs of our retail activity.
- ii) **Operational costs:** inevitably, staffing costs (ie salaries) are the single largest item of our expenditure, and these increased significantly from about £45k to £59k. This was due in part to significant rises in the National Living Wage, and two re-gradings, and also in a conscious decision to increase our staffing cover during pressured times of the working day. With fewer rescue dogs in our care, veterinary fees remained relatively unchanged from the previous year. As previously reported, we are keen to pursue the use of renewable energy, and of better energy efficiency: for

the good of the environment, to increase the comfort for our dogs and staff, and also to reduce our overall costs.

- iii) **Premises:** we undertook no major improvement work on the kennels during the year. However, with kennels and associated buildings that are forty years old, and a cottage which dates from the early 19th century, there are always repairs and improvements to be made. The premises are on an exposed site in the open countryside, and so attention is required from time to time to damage caused by high winds and flooding. Remarkably, the premises were not as badly affected by Storm Arwen, as some communities in Northumberland were, but we still had to incur a certain amount of clearance and building repairs..
- iv) **Capital and funds:** The closing bank balance at the end of the year was £57459. This may appear superficially as an improvement on the previous year's closing balance of just under £50k, but account should be taken of the receipt of a £41.6k legacy which is a restricted fund for capital expenditure, of which about £10k was spent before the year-end.

10. Thanks

We are extremely fortunate to benefit from an enormous number of friends and supporters, who have helped in so many ways: whether with caring for the dogs, financial help, practical work at the kennels, donations of dog food, co-operation with partner organisations, governance and management, technical expertise, and so much more. Our grateful thanks, to you all.

Northumberland Dog Rescue, Charity Registration Number 1170022

Financial Statement, Income and Expenditure, 1 January 2022 to 31 December 2022

Income

	<u>2021</u>	<u>2022</u>
Donations Unrestricted	17,641	2,800
Adoptions	845	3,475
Fundraising (events)	0	14648
Grants	17,306	1000
Boarding - Kennels	3,953	42110
Rental Income	6,000	6,000
Shop & Boarding	71,326	30034
Gift Aid	593	0
Other Incoming Resources	273	149
Total	117,937	100,218

Expenditure			
Kennels	Insurance	3,233	3898
	Vet Fees	13,417	13488
	Kennel Consumables	2,613	662
			720
	Shop Expenditure	11,301	8086
Marketing/PR	Fund Raising Expenses		293
	Marketing Costs	247	697
Admin	Bank Charges	457	601
	Card Charges	105	
	Wages and Salaries	41,154	59150
	Pension Costs	3,748	
	Staff Training and Welfare	1,236	854
	Motor Expenses	4,282	902
	Office Supplies	166	87
	Licences		34
	Telephone and Internet	1,821	1,328
	Other	2,259	
Premises	Loan Repayments	16,675	13,340
	Repairs and Maintenance	4,673	
	Electric Costs	10,486	16563
	Water Rates	1,113	
Sub-total		118,986	118451

Restricted income for capital improvements £41776. Capital expenditure £23359

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES OF
Northumberland Dog Rescue

I report on the Income & Expenditure of the Trust for the year ended 31st December 2022.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

The Charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The Charity's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to

- Examine the accounts under section 145 of the 2011 Act;
- Follow the procedures laid down in the general directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act;
- State whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of independent examiner's report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the general directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination 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 disclosures in the accounts and, seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts represent a "true and fair view" and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

Independent examiner's statement

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

- (1) Which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements:
 - To keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the 2011 Act;
 - To prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the 2011 Act have not been met; or
- (2) To which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn on order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signature:

N. Jack

Name:

NIGEL JACK

Date:

29/10/23

Northumberland Dog Rescue

England & Wales - Charity number 1170022

Accounts



Alexa's Animals

Dog Rescue

Registered Charity 1170022

Annual Report and Financial Statement

1st January 2021 – 31st December 2021

1. Administrative Details

Registered Charity Number	1170022
Working Name	Alexa's Animals Dog Rescue
Address for charity correspondence	Patterson's Cottage, Charlton Mires, Alnwick, NE66 2TJ
Trustees (at 31 Dec 2020)	David Francis Chairman Russell Bambling Treasurer Carole Green Secretary Alexa Nisbet Samantha Gibson Bridget Kohler M David Young MRCVS
Bankers	Barclays Bank Alnwick
Independent Financial Examiner	Nigel Jack, ACMA, MBA (from 2021)

2. Structure, Governance and Management

Alexa's Animals has been operating since the early 1990s, but it only became a registered charity much more recently. The charity is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation, governed by a constitution which was formally registered with the Charity Commission on 3 November 2016.

The objects of the charity are to relieve the suffering of dogs in need of care, rescue and attention, and in particular to provide and maintain facilities and homes for the reception, care and treatment of such animals by such means that are exclusively charitable.

The trustees are also the sole members of the CIO, although it is possible that a broader membership structure might be established in the future. The charity's Annual General Meetings are open to all of our volunteers and supporters

The trustees normally meet at roughly five-weekly intervals, but this pattern was severely disrupted during the year due to Covid restrictions. There are no committees. It is likely that, in due course, it will be necessary to form a trading subsidiary company, which is wholly owned by the charity, in order to continue some of our income-generating activities, including our charity shops.

3. Recruitment and Appointment of Trustees

The constitution, as amended on 23 August 2017, provides for a board of trustees of between 3 and 9 people. During the year, Russell Bambling joined the board as a trustee and honorary treasurer. There were no other changes.

4. Review of Achievements and Performance

From the start, we have operated the kennels through two elements: our charitable dog-rescue activities, and a commercial dog boarding and day-care service. We have also operated a charity shop, in Wooler, in recent years to provide a new income source to compensate for a general reduction in income from on-street collections. The commercial activities exist to support our charitable activities, which would not otherwise be viable if based on fund-raising efforts alone. The Covid 19 pandemic, which took hold in March 2020, continued to impact on our activities throughout 2021. Although the nationwide lockdown of the previous year eased to some extent, there was a continuing level of self-isolation by many people. Our kennels remained open throughout, but as a precaution we reluctantly reduced visits by our volunteers and the wider community. Our staff team continued to operate our core charitable activity, the intake and rehoming of dogs, but with significantly greater Covid-security measures in place.

- i) **New homes and new lives for dogs.** Our main charitable purpose is to rescue dogs who are facing ill-treatment or uncertainty, and to find appropriate and loving new homes for them. Dogs come to us for a variety of reasons, for example: family breakdown, owners going into residential care, household poverty, a change of home circumstances, owners not being able to care responsibly etc. We are also one of the few rehoming options that are open to the County Council's animal welfare and adult social care services.

The year of 2021 was another quite difficult year for rescue services due to Covid. We only rehomed 30 dogs which was down by 22 on the previous year's figure of 52 rehomes. Our busiest months for rehoming were January with 6 dogs rehomed when we were in lockdown, and March when we also rehomed 6 dogs. At this time, schools had reopened but there were still many restrictions in place, so the desire to own a dog was still great and the price of puppies was very high. As the year continued and more restrictions were lifted, people took advantage of being able to travel, and so were reluctant to consider adopting a dog at this time. Regarding breeds, lurchers were the commonest dogs in need of homes with Staffordshire bull terriers closely behind them. We were also starting to see the 'designer dogs' coming in to be rescued and successfully rehomed: a westypoo and a jackapoo. Overall, 2021 saw significantly increased pressures for dogs needing rescue, this was not matched by an increased demand for adoption and rehoming, so our kennels became full.

- ii) **Dog boarding and day care service.** The vitality of this service depends enormously on the state of the domestic and international holiday market. The service was never closed during the height of the pandemic, but there were fewer customers when the possibility of holidays and travel was severely curtailed. Boarding had a difficult start to the year with the country in a new lockdown. However, in July quarantine-free travel was allowed and people were keen to travel/holiday. In 2020 we only had 758 overnight stays, but this increased in 2021 to a total of 1602. This was made up of 1228 single dogs, 322 from 2-dog families, 48 from 3-dog families and 4 stays from an 8-dog family. Our day-care also increased from only 68 in 2020 to 393 in 2021. This consisted of 371 single dogs, 21 from 2-dog families and 1 3-dog family. The busiest months for overnight boarding were August, October and November with our busiest day-care months being July, August and December.

5. Premises

We own and operate the premises which are known as Patterson's Cottage Boarding Kennels, which are located beside the A1 Road, some 5 miles North of Alnwick. They include 25 kennel units, each with its own 'run', an enclosed exercise paddock, various office and storage buildings, and the cottage itself which is let on an assured shorthold tenancy to our Kennels Manager. During the year, we undertook a range of maintenance tasks, as well as making a range of modest improvements to the play facilities in the exercise paddock.

During the year, we continued to assist National Highways and their consultants with a range of investigative surveys on various aspects of the biodiversity, ambient noise etc. in the locality, in preparation for the planned dualling of the A1 trunk road. We closely followed progress on the Development Consent Order (a form of planning application for public infrastructure), the determination of which has regrettably been delayed several times. The dualling, if it goes ahead, will have considerable benefits for us, by turning the current trunk road immediately in front of our kennels into a quiet cul-de-sac, and by creating a safe walking route in both directions.

6. Voluntary activity

On average we had 18 volunteers, including our 7 trustees.

i) **Fund-raising** We continued to be the chosen Charity of the Year by Kingston Park Pets at Home store. We undertook several fund-raising days in front of the store. The staff there voluntarily raised much needed funds, and we were in receipt of donated pallets of food for our dogs, and many of their customers also donated food, toys, treats etc.

We were also pleased to be supported by local computer hardware company AlnCom, which has included the provision of superfast broadband to the kennels.

Gift Aid and monthly donations have increased throughout the year, which was a welcome source of additional funding.

iii) **Charity shops** The operation of our charity shop on Wooler High Street was affected by the Covid lockdown. However, it had already proved to be highly popular both with residents and holidaymakers, as well as being a somewhat more comfortable means of fund-raising for our volunteers. We also continued, on a modest scale, some on-line selling of donated goods. During the year, we opened a second shop, on the main street in Amble which, as with Wooler, proved to be popular with residents and holiday makers.

iv) **Dog care and other help** To address Covid-security concerns, we continued to restrict the involvement of our dog walkers within the kennels themselves, and we carried out a certain amount of our rehoming activity

at arms' length, making use of video calls and other remote means. We continued to receive much-valued help with a variety of services, including dog-grooming, grounds maintenance, joinery, general repairs, transport, gardening, veterinary advice, and much more.

- v) **Trustees** In addition, our trustees have contributed not only in the formalities of governance, but also in supplying professional input, accountancy, publicity, website administration, public education, staff training etc

7. Quality control

Surprisingly, charitable animal rescue services are subject to very few external monitoring or validation requirements. Fortunately, pet boarding activities are subject to a strict regime of defined quality standards that are set by DEFRA (Department for Environment, Food and Rural affairs) and administered by the County Council through a licensing system. Towards the end of the year, we reviewed and, where appropriate, updated our systems, in preparation for a renewal of our licence. In common with 2018, we were very pleased to receive a continuation of our 5-star status, which will last until the end of 2024.

8. Name change

Shortly into the following year (2022) our founder Alexa Nisbet retired from the charity and, at her request and with the consent of the Charity Commission, we changed our formal title to Northumberland Dog Rescue.

9. Financial Review

We indicated in our annual report for the previous year (2020) that the impact of the Covid pandemic on our finances would be likely to continue during this year. This proved to be the case, but it is a relief that we made just a modest deficit of £1049 over the year.

- i) **Income:** During the year, there was a significant improvement in our income derived from boarding and daycare at the kennels, and from our retail sales. In contrast with the previous year, holidays in the Northumberland area increased significantly, resulting in a big demand for our daycare facilities. We were already operating a charity shop on Wooler High Street and, in June, we opened a second shop on Amble's

Queen Street. To a large extent, this retailing has taken over from our previous focus on street collections. Taken together, our income from these activities increased from £39k in 2020, to £75k in 2021.

- ii) **Operational costs:** inevitably, staffing costs (ie salaries) are the single largest item of our expenditure, and these remained relatively unchanged from the year before, at about £45k. With fewer rescue dogs in our care, veterinary fees were lower than they had ever been since we began to operate the kennels, in 2018.
- iii) **Premises:** we undertook no major improvement work on the kennels during the year. However, with kennels and associated buildings that are forty years old, and a cottage which dates from the early 19th century, there are always repairs and improvements to be made. The premises are on an exposed site in the open countryside, and so attention is required from time to time to damage caused by high winds and flooding. Remarkably, the premises were not adversely affected by Storm Arwen, which otherwise caused significant havoc across the wider area.
- iv) **Overall financial position** Despite the difficulties caused by the Covid pandemic, we closed the year with a bank balance of nearly £50k, which provided a three-month reserve of £30k, together with designated funds which we set aside for premises improvement works which are unlikely to attract grant aid, and for equipment replacement.

8. Thanks

We are extremely fortunate to benefit from an enormous number of friends and supporters, who have helped in so many ways: whether with caring for the dogs, financial help, practical work at the kennels, donations of dog food, co-operation with partner organisations, governance and management, technical expertise, and so much more. Our grateful thanks, to you all.

Northumberland Dog Rescue, Charity Registration Number 1170022

Financial Statement, Income and Expenditure, 1 January 2021 to 31 December 2021

Income

	<u>2021</u>	<u>2020</u>
Donations Unrestricted	17,641	22,516
Adoptions	845	7,721
Fundraising (events)	0	4,898
Grants	17,306	28,106
Boarding - Kennels	3,953	16,226
Rental Income	6,000	6,000
Shop Sales		22,928
Shop & Boarding	71,326	
Gift Aid	593	3,683
Other Incoming Resources	<u>273</u>	<u>44</u>
Sub-total	117,937	112,122
Reserves Brought Forward	<u>50,576</u>	<u>48,849</u>
Total	168,513	160,971

Expenditure

Kennels	Insurance	3,233	2,230
	Vet Fees	13,417	23,637
	Kennel Consumables	2,613	3,217
	Shop Expenditure	11,301	6,320
Marketing/PR	Fund Raising Expenses		168
	Marketing Costs	247	259
Admin	Bank Charges	457	500
	Card Charges	105	976
	Wages and Salaries	41,154	41,962
	Pension Costs	3,748	3,044
	Staff Training and Welfare	1,236	854
	Motor Expenses	4,282	521
	Office Supplies	166	87
	Licences		34
	Telephone and Internet	1,821	1,328
	Other	2,259	
Premises	Loan Repayments	16,675	13,340
	Repairs and Maintenance	4,673	5,263
	Electric Costs	10,486	5,029
	Water Rates	1,113	1,626
Sub-total		118,986	110,395
TOTAL INCOME INCLUDING RESERVES		168,513	160,971

TOTAL EXPENDITURE	118,986	110,395
END OF YEAR BALANCE	<u>49,527</u>	<u>50,576</u>

Northumberland Dog Rescue, Charity Registration Number 1170022

Financial Statement, Balance Sheet as at 31 December 2021

Balance Sheet

		<u>2021</u>	<u>2020</u>
Land and Buildings			
Cost Brought Forward	Pattersons Cottage & Building Improvements	391,815	391,815
		391,815	
Current Assets			
Bank	Current Account	57,275	55,112
Current Liabilities			
	Northumberland County Council (< 1 year)	(13,340)	(13,340)
Long Term Liabilities			
	Northumberland County Council (> 1 year)	(120,853)	(127,651)
		<u>314,897</u>	<u>305,936</u>
Reserves			
	Ending Balance	<u>49,527</u>	<u>50,576</u>

While a full audit has not been carried out, I certify that the financial statements represent a true and fair view of the financial position of Alexa's Animals Charity

Nigel Jack, ACMA, MBA
1 Pickard Bank
Meanwood
Leeds
LS6 2SJ

Northumberland Dog Rescue

England & Wales - Charity number 1170022

Accounts



Alexa's Animals

Dog Rescue

Registered Charity 1170022

Annual Report and Financial Statement

1st January 2020 – 31st December 2020

1. Administrative Details

Registered Charity Number	1170022
Working Name	Alexa's Animals Dog Rescue
Address for charity correspondence	Patterson's Cottage, Charlton Mires, Alnwick, NE66 2TJ
Trustees (at 31 Dec 2020)	David Francis Chairman Alexa Nisbet Treasurer Carole Green Secretary Samantha Gibson Bridget Kohler M David Young MRCVS
Financial Advisor	Russell Bambling, Lucid Accountants & Business Advisors Ltd
Bankers	Barclays Bank Alnwick
Independent Financial Examiner	Nigel Jack, ACMA, MBA (from 2021)

2. Structure, Governance and Management

Alexa's Animals has been operating since the early 1990s, but it only became a registered charity much more recently. The charity is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation, governed by a constitution which was formally registered with the Charity Commission on 3 November 2016.

The objects of the charity are to relieve the suffering of dogs in need of care, rescue and attention, and in particular to provide and maintain facilities and homes for the reception, care and treatment of such animals by such means that are exclusively charitable.

The trustees are also the sole members of the CIO, although it is possible that a broader membership structure might be established in the future. The charity's Annual General Meetings are open to all of our volunteers and supporters

The trustees normally meet at roughly five-weekly intervals, but this pattern was severely disrupted during 2020. There are no committees. It is likely that, in due course, it will be necessary to form a trading subsidiary company, which is wholly owned by the charity, in order to continue some of our income-generating activities, including our charity shops.

3. Recruitment and Appointment of Trustees

The constitution, as amended on 23 August 2017, provides for a board of trustees of between 3 and 9 people. Two of the original trustees, Alexa Nisbet and Carole Green, were re-appointed as trustees, following the end of their initial 3-year term of office. No further trustees were appointed during the year.

4. Review of Achievements and Performance

We began 2020 with tremendous optimism. We had started work on preparing a new strategic plan, we were looking to expand our staff and volunteers' team, and we were developing new marketing streams. Then, in February the Covid 19 worldwide pandemic struck. The Government's 'lockdown' restrictions, and associated precautionary measures, had a significant impact on our activities, which have lasted well into the subsequent year.

From the start, we have operated the kennels through two elements: our charitable dog-rescue activities, and a commercial dog boarding and day-care service. We also opened a charity shop during the previous year to provide a new income source to compensate for a general reduction in income from on-street collections. The commercial activities exist to support our charitable activities, which would not

otherwise be viable if based on fund-raising efforts alone. The Covid 19 pandemic caused the closure not only of our shop, but also of the domestic and international holiday industry on which so much of our boarding and daycare income had depended. Our kennels remained open throughout, but as a precaution we significantly curtailed visits by our volunteers and the wider community. Our staff team continued to operate our core charitable activity, the intake and rehoming of dogs, but with significantly greater Covid-security measures in place.

- i) **New homes and new lives for dogs.** Our main charitable purpose is to rescue dogs who are facing ill-treatment or uncertainty, and to find appropriate and loving new homes for them. Dogs come to us for a variety of reasons, for example: family breakdown, owners going into residential care, household poverty, a change of home circumstances, owners not being able to care responsibly, etc. We are also one of the few rehoming options that are open to the County Council's animal welfare and adult social care services.

Despite the pandemic, we continued our work throughout the year. We rehomed 52 dogs, with the busiest months being March and September, though most of the year was consistent. We took in a large number of Border Terriers and crosses from a joint raid between the police and the Northumberland County Council animal welfare team . This meant that in March 11 dogs found new loving homes.

Lockdown saw a great demand for dogs and we had to pay close attention to differentiate between those who had given adoption a lot of thought, and to those who just wanted a dog for the lockdown period. Lurchers seem now to be the dogs who 'stick' in kennels, as Staffies have gained in popularity and started to shake off the bad press they had previously received, Lurchers have taken their place as the dogs filling every rescue. They often come to us in poor body condition and often with a nervous disposition.

We have managed to rehome quite a few lurchers throughout 2020 including our longest resident Chance who had been at the kennels over a year. They are now the dogs we take in most often from the Animal Welfare Officers as strays and take the longest to rehome.

We wait with interest (and some nervousness) now to see the result that the end of lockdown will bring and whether we will see the influx of 'lockdown puppies' coming into the rescues.

- ii) **Dog boarding and day care service.** The year 2020 was difficult for everyone due to the Covid pandemic and has had a huge impact on the kennels with the boarding kennels taking a massive hit.

In 2019 our overnight stays had been nearly 2,500 whereas 2020 we only achieved 758 overnight stays ,with this made up of 553 single dogs, 164 two dog families and 41 three dog families . Our day care only reached 68 whereas the previous years had been 131. Due to the lockdowns our busiest months were January, February and September.

It did mean that we could use this time to do some kennel and site maintenance and spend more time with our rescue dogs.

5. Premises

We own and operate the premises which are known as Patterson's Cottage Boarding Kennels, which are located beside the A1 road, some 5 miles North of Alnwick. They include 25 kennel units, each with its own 'run', an enclosed exercise paddock, various office and storage buildings, and the cottage itself which is let on an assured shorthold tenancy to our Kennels Manager. During the year, we undertook a range of maintenance tasks, as well as installing a sand pit, sensory garden and a presentation area using artificial turf. We also began to plan for the installation of a summer-house type of building, which could give some shelter to our volunteers and staff, as well as providing overnight accommodation when a relief manager is needed on-site. However, this project was deferred, pending the ending of the Covid lockdown, and possibly attracting some grant aid.

During the year, we continued to assist Highways England and their consultants with a range of investigative surveys on various aspects of the biodiversity, ambient noise etc in the locality, in preparation for the planned dualling of the A1 trunk road. HE subsequently submitted to the Government an application for a Development Consent Order (a form of planning application for public infrastructure). We await news of the likely timetable for building the section of dual carriageway in our area, between Denwick and North Charlton.

6. Voluntary activity

i) Fund-raising With the exception of a pop-up café held in Bamburgh on New Year's Day, the ensuing Covid pandemic led to a complete cessation of such events and of street collections.

We continued to be the chosen Charity of the year by Kingston Park Pets at Home store.. The staff there voluntarily raised much needed funds, and we were in receipt of pallets of food for our dogs, and many of their customers donated food, toys, treats etc.

We were also pleased to be chosen by local computer hardware company AlnCom, to be their selected charity, and we benefitted from several fund-raising events. They have also offered us free access to their wireless broadband system, the installation of which was delayed as a result of the Covid pandemic.

Gift Aid and monthly donations have increased throughout the year, which was a welcome source of additional funding.

ii) Charity shop The operation of our charity shop on Wooler High Street was hit hard by the Covid lockdown which required us to remain shut for lengthy periods. However, it had already proved to be highly popular both with local residents and also holidaymakers, as well as being a somewhat more comfortable means of fund-raising for our volunteers. We also introduced on a modest scale some on-line selling of donated goods. Towards the end of the year, we began to explore the possibility of opening a second shop, in Amble.

iii) Dog care and other help To address Covid-security concerns, we reluctantly reduced the involvement of our dog walkers within the kennels themselves, and we carried out a certain amount of our rehoming activity at arms' length, making use of video calls and other remote means. We continued to receive help with dog-grooming, grounds maintenance, joinery, general repairs, transport, gardening, veterinary advice, and much more.

iii) Overall On average we have approx. 25-30 volunteers covering dog walking and fundraising. We estimate that our charity shop volunteers contributed about 4000 hours during the year. In addition, our trustees have contributed about 1000 hours, during the year: not only in the formalities of governance, but also in supplying professional input, accountancy, publicity, website administration, public education, staff training etc

7. Financial Review

The Covid pandemic made a significant impact on our activities, which in turn impacted on our finances. The following is a commentary of the key aspects of our new financial position

- i) **Income:** the near-cessation of the international and domestic holiday market for much of the year unsurprisingly caused a massive decrease in the income received from boarding and daycare, while the closure of our charity shop had a similar impact. However, we received a number of gifts from our supporters and trusts, many of them quite spontaneous and unsolicited. We also received several grants from the Government, via the County Council, linked to the Covid situation. We were also able to operate a staff furlough arrangement for about 5 months, under the Government's Job Retention Scheme, which brought us a little extra income.

- ii) **Staff** We continue to be primarily a volunteer-led organisation, but the Covid situation led us to reduce this activity significantly, and to operate the kennels using a small staff contingent. Our part-time staff were on a 'rolling furlough' system from March to July. Our staff team consists of a full-time Manager (Sue Hamblett) who lives on the premises, and 3-4 part-time assistants on variable hours. We have introduced a range of good-practice policies and procedures. We participate in the NEST pension scheme. During the year, our staff were able to make use of the quietness of the Covid lockdown to spend some time on working towards accredited relevant qualifications.

- iii) **Premises:** in contrast with the previous year, our expenditure on maintenance and improvements to our kennels was quite modest. We made various upgrades to the kennel runs, and we established a sensory garden and also a mud-free enclosed display area for the dogs. We also reconfigured and improved some of our 'front-of house' area, including the reception office and front garden. We began to develop a project to install a multi-purpose building in the exercise paddock, to give a covered space for volunteers and staff, as well as accommodating a relief manager to stay overnight, if and when our manager is away. In addition to our kennels and cottage, we also have a charity shop on the main street in Wooler, and storage facilities just outside the town.

- iv) **Overall financial position** despite the very abnormal conditions, we ended the year with a modest surplus of about £1.7k, due in no small part to the exceptional income which we received as gifts (including from Support Adoption for Pets, and Alncom) and from the government's various Covid assistance measures. We know that these would not be sustained into 2021, and the shorter-term prospect for a revival in our kennels income would be in doubt. Also, with a very unlikely return to traditional street collections and charitable events, our attention has turned to establishing a second charity shop, to support our dog rescue activities.

8. Thanks

We are extremely fortunate to benefit from an enormous number of friends and supporters, who have helped in so many ways: whether with caring for the dogs, financial help, practical work at the kennels, donations of dog food, co-operation with partner organisations, governance and management, technical expertise, and so much more. Our grateful thanks, to you all.

ALEXA'S ANIMALS, Charity Registration Number 1170022**Financial Statement 1 January 2020 to 31 December 2020****Income**

	2020	2019
Donations Unrestricted	22,516	35,009
Adoptions	7,721	6,080
Fundraising (events)	4,898	8,249
Grants (Restricted)		63,063
Grants (Unrestricted)	28,106	
Boarding - Kennels	16,226	38,920
Rental Income	6,000	6,000
Shop Sales	22,928	13,040
Gift Aid	3,683	16,305
Other – Interest	44	
	112,122	186,666
Sub-total		
Reserves Brought Forward	48,849	69,672
Total	160,971	256,338

Expenditure

Kennels

Kennels (rent)		
Insurance	2,230	2,906
Vet Fees	23,637	30,048
Dog Training		136
Kennel Consumables	3,217	5,715

Shop

Shop Expenditure	6,320	2,621
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Marketing/PR

Advertising		1,499
Fund Raising Expenses	168	
Marketing Costs	259	

Administration Costs

Bank Charges	500	552
Card Charges	976	799
Wages and Salaries	41,962	40,006
Pension Costs	3,044	2,346
Staff Training and Welfare (and PPE)	854	752
Motor Expenses	521	985
Office Supplies	87	283
Licences	34	34
Telephone and Internet	1,328	1,742

Premises Costs

Loan Repayments	13,340	13,340
Kennel Purchases/Improvements		93,394
Repairs and Maintenance	5,263	
Electric Costs	5,029	9,026
Water Rates	1,626	1,305

Sub-total	110,395	207,489
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TOTAL INCOME INCLUDING RESERVES	160,971	256,338
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TOTAL EXPENDITURE	110,395	207,489
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END OF YEAR BALANCE	50,576	48,849
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ALEXA'S ANIMALS, Charity Registration Number 1170022

Financial Statement 1 January 2020 to 31 December 2020, continued

		2020	2019
Composed of:			
	Contingency Fund	35,000	35,000
	Premises Maintenance/Improvements	12,076	10,349
	Vehicle and Equipment Replacement	3,500	3,500
		50,576	48,849
Balance Sheet			
	Fixed Assets		
	Patterson's Cottage	391,815	391,815
	Current Assets:		
	Bank – Current Account	55,112	66,725
	Current Liabilities		
	Northumberland County Council Mortgage - One Year	(13,340)	(13,340)
	Net Assets	41,772	53,385
		433,587	445,200
	Long Term Liabilities		
	Northumberland County Mortgage – Greater than One	(127,651)	(137,407)
	NB: Loan outstanding (140,991)		
		(127,651)	(137,407)
		305,936	307,793

While a full audit has not been carried out, I certify that the financial statements represent a true and fair view of the financial position of Alexa's Animals Charity

Nigel Jack, ACMA, MBA
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