



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
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
TOTAL INCOME INCLUDING RESERVES	160,971	256,338
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	110,395	207,489

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

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