



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	273	44
Sub-total	117,937	112,122
Reserves Brought Forward	50,576	48,849
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>

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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	391,815	391,815
	& Building Improvements		
		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)
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Assets less Liabilities		<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

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