

# Saving Saints and Big Paws Rescue UK

England & Wales · Charity number 1171050

## Details

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Other names	SAVING SAINTS RESCUE UK, SAVING SAINT BERNARDS AND BIG PAWS RESCUE UK, SAVING SAINTS / ST BERNARD AND BIG PAWS RESCUE UK
Status	Registered
Legal form	CIO
Registered	2017-01-10
Register	<a href="#">View on the Charity Commission register</a>

## Contact

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Website	<a href="http://www.savingsaintsrescue.co.uk">www.savingsaintsrescue.co.uk</a>

## Activities

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**Objects:** THE OBJECTS OF THE CIO ARE: (A) TO PROMOTE HUMANE BEHAVIOUR TOWARDS ANIMALS BY PROVIDING APPROPRIATE CARE, PROTECTION, TREATMENT AND SECURITY FOR ST BERNARD BREED DOGS AND OTHER LARGE BREED MIXED DOGS WHICH ARE IN NEED OF CARE AND ATTENTION BY REASON OF SICKNESS, MALTREATMENT, POOR CIRCUMSTANCES OR ILL USAGE AND TO EDUCATE THE PUBLIC IN MATTERS PERTAINING TO ANIMAL WELFARE IN GENERAL AND THE PREVENTION OF CRUELTY AND SUFFERING AMONG SUCH DOGS.(B) TO RELIEVE SICKNESS, SUFFERING AND DISTRESS AND TO PROMOTE GOOD HEALTH, ESPECIALLY BUT NOT EXCLUSIVELY AMONGST CHILDREN AND VULNERABLE ADULTS, THROUGH OFFERING A PAT/COMPANION DOG SCHEME IN CONJUNCTION WITH MERSEY-CARE NHS TRUST AND OTHER CARE SETTINGS.

**Activities:** To promote humane behaviour towards animals by providing appropriate care, protection, treatment and security for St Bernard breed dogs and other large breed mixed dogs which are in need of care and attention by reason of sickness, maltreatment, poor circumstances or ill usage and to educate the public in matters pertaining to animal welfare in general and the prevention of cruelty and suffering.

## Classification

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- **How:** Provides Services, Provides Advocacy/advice/information
- **What:** Education/training, The Advancement Of Health Or Saving Of Lives, Animals
- **Who:** Elderly/old People, People With Disabilities, Other Charities Or Voluntary Bodies, The General Public/mankind

## Geography

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- Ireland
- Scotland
- Throughout England

## Finances

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Period end	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Employees
2025-03-31	£33,708	£21,640	-	-
2024-03-31	£23,943	£30,450	-	-
2023-03-31	£22,651	£21,594	-	-
2022-03-31	£24,712	£28,800	-	-
2021-03-31	£24,825	£12,567	-	-

## Trustees

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Name	Role	Appointed
<b>RACHEL LEAH WESLEY</b>	Chair	2018-08-12
Amanda Rees		2023-05-10
Grace Williams		2025-12-11
Hannah Franklin		2025-12-11
Helen Mcguirl		2019-12-01

**Saving Saints and Big Paws Rescue UK**

England & Wales - Charity number 1171050

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# Accounts

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# **Saving Saints Rescue UK**

## **Annual General Meeting held on 10 August and 17 August 2025**

### **Minutes**

Present: Rachel Wesley (RW) – Chair/Secretary/Acting Treasurer  
Amanda Rees (AR)  
Tracey Turnbull (TT)  
Helen McGuirl (HMcG)  
Julian Wilson (as person interested in becoming a Trustee)

#### **1. Agenda**

- Apologies
- Update on actions from AGM held on 10 and 17 August 2024
- Resignations and election of Trustees
- Financial update, profit and loss account 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025
- Summary of activities over the last 12 months
- Feedback from users of the service over the last 12 months
- Non-UK dog health and other foreign dog related issues
- St Bernard health issues
- Media platform feedback/website
- Income generation/fundraising in light of current fundraising culture
- Training needs and safeguarding audit of trustees
- Future strategy and priorities for the forthcoming year

RW welcomed everyone to the 10th formal AGM of the group.

#### **2. Apologies**

None.

#### **3. Update on actions from AGM held on 4 August 2024**

Actions from the previous AGM have been completed apart from merchandise/online shop development and the appointment of a President.

Further ideas to approach a President were explored and will be taken forward at the next strategy meeting in 2026.

#### **4. Changes to Trustees as per Constitution**

Tracey Turnbull's intention to resign was formally acknowledged however she confirmed her willingness to wait until two new Trustees had been successfully appointed. It was agreed that she would cease to become actively involved in rescue activities (apart from support with Greek rescue) and her contact details would be removed from the website. AR agreed to be the other point of contact with RW for the general public.

Trustees are now as follows for the next 12 months as per the Constitution:

Chair/Secretary/Acting Treasurer – Rachel Wesley

Rescue/Adoption/Fundraising Co-ordinators – Rachel Wesley/Amanda Rees

Fundraising – Amanda Rees / Rachel Wesley

General advisory/behavioural – Helen McGuirl

Media – Amanda Rees

RW had developed a trustee job description and discussions were ongoing with Julian Wilson who had indicated his willingness to become a Trustee and involvement in behavioural advice to support HMcG. Other potential Trustees were being actively approached. TT confirmed her willingness to discuss the role with potential applicants. AR indicated that she currently felt she was working up to 20 hours per week for the charity with current development role. It was acknowledged that this was not sustainable.

#### **5. Financial update**

RW had provided each member with a copy of the Annual Statement of Accounts from 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025 showing a balance of £15,624 for the period ending 31 March 2025. This showed an increase in income however this was due to an extraordinary gift aid claim of £23,370.25.

Most of the expenditure for 2024 to 2025 continued to be kennelling (partnership with Elm Loge kennels), transport and vet costs. Direct adoptions have dropped significantly as part of our strategy to reduce our activity to a more sustainable level in view of the current economic culture and ongoing financial challenges. We have supported 4 dogs to remain in their homes by providing dog food, flea/wormer and temporary care.

Additional rescue back up and support has been given to 58 dogs to those directly adopted through the charity. Transport and vet costs have substantially

risen once again in line with the state of the economy, rising costs of food products and fuel. The daily cost of kennels has remained static and we have reduced number of dogs in kennels over the last 12 months by only offer from home adoptions except in the cases of owner's death or where we have offered kennels as part of our rescue back up.

RW confirmed that she was satisfied with the level of financial controls in place and no breaches of policies had been identified. An accountant would be recruited by 1 April 2026.

AR requested that going forward quarterly cashflow projections were made available to Trustees.

## **6. Summary of activities over the last 12 months**

RW provided data relating to the following measurable activities in the last 12 months:

Adoptions – 40 (plus 64 RBU for other charities)

Dogs in long term foster – 6 (Sissi, Amelia, Reggie, Faith, Mollie and Sirius)

Dogs in kennels – 4 (Storm, Conan, Maribel and Ozzie/Des )

Euthanasia – 2.

Behavioural update – ongoing challenges with Storm (St Bernard's behaviour), Maribel and Ozzie's second failed adoption. Exploration around reasons for Conan's struggle to adapt and failed adoption. HMcG and Julian Wilson were asked to work together to look at how behavioural requests for help would be managed going forward. It was agreed that we would develop a working document to identify what breeds/types of dogs we were not able to support with adoption/foster.

Failed adoptions – 6. The number of adoption enquiries has continued to fall and this is a trend being experienced across the sector. The impact of the current economic situation in the UK was a significant factor along with the XL bully crisis. A continued theme with failed adoptions is some adopters having too high expectations of their rescue dog and not allowing a reasonable transition time to adapt. This continues to be taken forward as part of our homecheck process, preparation of adopters (revised paperwork developed) and education role about large breed/working guardian dogs.

Fosters - The number of active fosters is currently 4 with no fosters available for emergencies. Recruitment of fosters and advertising remains ongoing and agreement for AR to do interviews with long term fosters to develop positive case studies to further promote fostering. The ongoing challenge is finding

experienced fosters of large breed dogs who do not have children under 16 and who are able to safely separate existing pets for an integration period.

Home checks conducted (including for other rescuers) – 63, 4 failed (for SS). The majority of homechecks have been conducted online over the last year and the revised paperwork seems to be working well. Referral to Battersea training modules and ongoing check-ins with new adopters in the first 3 months. Videos had been uploaded onto the website.

Fundraising and raising awareness days – 6 local fundraisers; monthly dog walks in Lancashire; New Year's Day in Lakes and summer Morecambe Bay sponsored walks; attendance at Crufts, West End Woofs at Covent Garden; 4 car boots and fairs; sale of Christmas dog gifts; 100 Club; sale of Big Paws Welfare and Saving Saints calendars

Media presence –West End Woofs, BBC Lancashire, S4C

Pat/companion dog sessions (in last 12 months) – 6 sessions conducted – RW and Dotty attended Bolton Hospice and an autism centre for adults. Dotty is now retired from pat therapy sessions but will do general meet and greets.

Ebay activity – no profit as not currently promoted. Website shop – remains closed and this will be reviewed when we recruit a new trustee who can take responsibility for merchandising.

## **7. Media strategy**

Media activity – an increased presence and use of Twitter and Instagram was now in place and analytics showed our following on Facebook had grown to over 20,000 members along with Instagram. The recruitment of digital media journalist, Grace Williams was starting to see a positive shift in our social media with a new Instagram and TikTok account now launched. We were focused on developing a consistent brand across our social media presence.

Website –This continues to be updated and developed each month and further work is ongoing. The new menu is far clearer with the focus on dogs in need, education, maximising successful adoption and foster case studies to be developed.

YouTube channel has now been developed by AR and thanks was expressed to AR by all trustees for her work on the creating reels and short films for uploading onto our social media and YouTube channel.

## **8. Merchandising /e-commerce**

Old stock continues to be sold including gym bags, t-shirts, bibs, slobber cloths, dog toys and other donated items online and at events. The development of the web shop will commence when a new Trustee is appointed.

**9. Feedback from users of the service in the last 12 months**

Positive feedback has been received from people surrendering dogs, adopters and fosters in the last year and also from our rescue partners in our responsiveness to surrenders, provision of timely advice and guidance. A number of positive comments have been received about our back up support and 4 adopters have chosen to adopt another dog with us.

No formal complaints received.

**10. Non-UK dog health issues / campaigns**

Brucella canis continues to be a concern for non-UK dogs, particularly from Romania. We have 11 dogs still waiting for new homes in Romania following our campaign in September 2024. RW is working with Ioannia to look at long term options for these dogs as we are no longer able to keep funding their kennel costs of 100 euros per month each. The Greek campaign was ongoing and dogs suitable for adoption had been identified.

**11. St Bernard health concerns**

No progress had been made with the St Bernard Welfare Committee and research highlighted the increasing number of early deaths in the breed. RW stated that she remained concerned about the lack of adequate health testing in UK bred St Bernards and she had attended a KC webinar on dilated cardiomyopathy in the breed.

**12. Training needs and safeguarding audit for 2025**

RW had passed Trustees information about free resources and training available with the Charity Commission on responsibilities and ADCH.

RW asked all Trustees to confirm that they had Enhanced DBS certificates and those who did not have a current certificate were asked to complete the necessary paperwork and submit to RW in the next 2 months.

**13. Future strategy, income generation ideas and priorities for the forthcoming year**

It was agreed that non-UK rescue work would continue to be highly restricted to dogs who we had previously committed to unless adopters wished to privately sponsor a foreign dog in which case we would provide our advice and guidance. It was agreed that separate fundraisers would be launched for specific non-UK dogs with donators being asked to specify where they wish their donations to be used.

RW continues to work with Bruce Williamson on sourcing a CRM/shelter database to contain 'live' dog data and link to donators which will be accessible to all Trustees.

Concern was expressed about the future of the charity in view of the demands and high workload across a trustee group of only 4. It was agreed that the future would be reviewed again in October 2025 to consider our sustainability. Considerations if we cease to operate were rescue back up for our dogs currently in the UK and we would need to identify a suitable stakeholder.

**14. Date of next AGM**

Agreed for August 2026 – date TBC.

**Saving Saints Rescue & Big Paws**

**Registered charity no. 1171050**

**Accounts for period ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025**

**Profit and Loss account**

Balance b/fwd from previous year	3556
Receipts, donations, and gift aid	33708
Deduct expenses	21640
<b><u>Balance</u></b>	<b>15624</b>

**Balance sheet**

Coop Charity bank account	14598
PayPal balance	976
Stock at cost	50
<b><u>Balance</u></b>	<b>15624</b>

**Notes to the accounts**

The stated income includes an extraordinary claim and receipt of Gift Aid monies totalling £23,370.25 covering a 4-year period which is an extraordinary event.

**Simon Richard Grundy, Independent Review of Saving Saints Rescue UK (1171050)**

**Accounts 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025**

I confirm that no concerns were raised about the accounting and financial procedures in the profit and loss account for Saving Saints Rescue UK from 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025.

***Simon Richard Grundy, Financial Underwriter on 25 July 2025***

*Simon Richard Grundy*

*Reward Finance Group*

*The Lexicon*

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**Saving Saints and Big Paws Rescue UK**

England & Wales - Charity number 1171050

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# Accounts

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**Saving Saints Rescue UK**  
**Annual General Meeting on 4 August 2024**  
**Minutes**

Present: Rachel Wesley (RW) – Chair/Secretary/Acting Treasurer  
Amanda Rees (AR)  
Tracey Turnbull (TT)  
Helen McGuirl (HMcG)

**1. Agenda**

- Apologies
- Update on actions from AGM held on 11 August 2023
- Resignations and election of Trustees
- Financial update
- Summary of activities over the last 12 months
- Feedback from users of the service over the last 12 months
- Non-UK dog health and other foreign dog related issues
- St Bernard health liaison with Kennel Club
- Media platform feedback/website
- Income generation/fundraising ideas
- Feedback from users of the charity's services in the last 12 months
- Training needs of trustees
- Future strategy and priorities for the forthcoming year

RW welcomed everyone to the 9th formal AGM of the group.

**2. Apologies**

None.

**3. Update on actions from AGM held on 11 August 2023**

Actions from the previous AGM have been completed apart from merchandise/online shop development and the appointment of a President.

Additional ideas to approach a President were explored and will be taken forward at the next strategy meeting.

#### **4. Changes to Trustees as per Constitution**

Resignation of Simon Grundy (Treasurer) was accepted in October 2023.

Tracey Turnbull has given 12 months notice of her intention to retire as a Trustee at the next AGM in 2025 for personal reasons. TT was thanked by all Trustees for her unwavering support.

Trustees are now as follows for the next 12 months as per the Constitution:

Chair/Secretary/Acting Treasurer – Rachel Wesley

Rescue/Adoption/Fundraising Co-ordinators – Rachel Wesley, Tracey Turnbull

Merchandising/Online shop/Fundraising – Amanda Rees

General advisory/behavioural – Helen McGuirl

Media – Amanda Rees

Discussion centred around the need to recruit at least 2 additional trustees by summer 2025 and who could be approached. It was recognised that TT's health and foreign dog expertise would be a loss to the charity. RW agreed to develop a job description for circulation to interested parties.

#### **5. Financial update**

RW had provided each member with a copy of the Annual Statement of Accounts from 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024. This showed a significant decrease in reserves from £10,073 to £3,566 representing 65% less than the previous financial year. This is due to the reduction in adoptions and donations combined with an increase in operating costs. Most of the expenditure for 2023 to 2024 continues to be kennelling (partnership with Marsh Lea kennels), transport and vet costs. Direct adoptions have dropped significantly as part of our strategy to reduce our activity to a more sustainable level in view of the financial challenges from 63 in 2023 to 48 in 2024. Additional rescue back up and support has been given to 58 dogs to those directly adopted through the charity. Transport and vet costs have substantially risen once again in line with the state of the economy and rising costs of food products and fuel. The daily cost of kennels had remained static however the length of time that dogs were remaining in kennels before finding a suitable adoption has remained static at x3 times the level in 2022 increasing our monthly kennel costs substantially.

RW confirmed that she was satisfied with the level of financial controls in place and no breaches of policies had been identified. However it was agreed that

a bookkeeper with charity expertise would be recruited on a voluntary basis in the next 6 months.

## **6. Summary of activities over the last 12 months**

RW provided data relating to the following measurable activities in the last 12 months:

Adoptions – 48 (plus 58 RBU for other charities)

Dogs in long term foster – 3 (Shadow, Sissi, Bobo)

Dogs in kennels – 7 (Lennox, Bear, Swan, Bella, Sophie, George, Amelia)

Euthanasia – 0.

Behavioural update – Continued theme of some working/guardian breed dogs struggling to adjust to urban home environments. It was agreed that genetic traits of certain dogs need to be carefully considered eg how to redirect/refocus guardian breeds instincts to a suitable 'job' and how to further educate people on their needs. Shadow (shepherd) has undergone residential rehab at Pupcakes funded by the charity.

Failed adoptions – 6. The number of adoption enquiries has fallen significantly and this is a trend being experienced across the sector. The impact of the current economic situation in the UK was a significant factor along with the XL bully crisis and the previous flooding of the pet sector during Covid-19. A continued theme with failed adoptions is some adopters having too high expectations of their rescue dog and not allowing a reasonable transition time to adapt. This will be taken forward in our education role. There remains a core group of adopters interested in adopting non-UK dogs and special needs dogs.

Fosters - The number of active fosters is currently 6 with no fosters available for emergencies. Recruitment of fosters and advertising remains ongoing and agreement for AR to do interviews with long term fosters to aid promotion of the role. The ongoing challenge is finding experienced fosters of large breed dogs who do not have children under 16 or who are able to safely separate existing pets for an integration period.

Home checks conducted (including for other rescuers) – over 72, 5 failed (for SS). The majority of homechecks have been conducted online over the last year and it was agreed that more time needed to be spent in drilling down on what adopters' expectations were of a new pet within the first 3-6 months. Consideration to be given to a stand-alone training module that would be mandatory. In the interim period, a video about rescue dog needs would be shared along with the general guidance which has been amended.

Fundraising and raising awareness days – 6 local fundraisers; Derwentwater sponsored walk; attendance at Kennel Club Breed Rescue conference, Peterborough Cathedral event for mental health day in May; West End Woofs at Covent Garden; 4 car boots and fairs; monthly dog walks in Lancashire; sale of Christmas dog gifts; 100 Club; sale of Big Paws Welfare and Saving Saints calendars

Media presence –BBC Cambridge, S4C, West End Woofs

Pat/companion dog sessions (in last 12 months) – 10 sessions conducted – RW and Dotty attended Bolton Hospice and Isla in Yorkshire has attended a local care home

Ebay activity – remained low with a profit of £54. This will remain open until our website shop becomes fully operational. Most popular items continued to be dog bibs and personalised cards.

Website shop – remains closed

## **7. Media strategy**

Media activity – an increased presence and use of Twitter and Instagram was now in place and analytics showed our following our Facebook had grown to over 20,000 members along with Instagram.

Website – The new website has been successfully launched on 14 February 2024 with significant work from AR and Bruce Williams has developed with Rhys Welsh. This continues to be updated and developed each month and further work is ongoing. The new menu is far clearer with the focus on dogs in need, education and maximising success stories.

A new YouTube channel has now been developed by AS and all were asked to consider suitable content.

## **8. Merchandising**

Old stock continues to be sold including gym bags, t-shirts, bibs, slobber cloths, dog toys and other donated items online and at events. AR is continuing to source eco/ethical items for an online dog product shop. This online shop development will be linked to the new website.

## **9. Feedback from users of the service in the last 12 months**

Positive feedback has been received from people surrendering dogs, adopters and fosters in the last year and also from our rescue partners in our responsiveness to surrenders, provision of timely advice and guidance. A number of positive comments have been received about our back up support and 7 adopters have chosen to adopt another dog with us.

We have received one formal complaint in the year and this has been satisfactorily resolved.

#### **10. Non-UK dog health issues**

TT has spoken on a podcast for the veterinary profession on the very low risk of Brucellosis to the human population. This has been shared on our website and TT has continued to liaise with other charities on zoonotic diseases and testing. The Brucellosis issue has now become less problematic however there remains variance across UK vet practices whether they request second blood tests before treating non-UK dogs.

#### **11. Liaison with Kennel Club re: St Bernard health concerns**

RW and TT had spoken to the Kennel Club re: health concerns related to the St Bernard breed and the lack of health testing, clear health strategy for the breed. A decrease in life expectancy in the breed was noted along with concerns about an increase in early deaths due to cardio-myopathy, bone cancer and aggression. Concern was also expressed at how many UK breeders were failing to honour their return to breeder contracts and how rescue was having to step in more frequently. The trends were being looked at by the Kennel Club as part of the breed health watch survey.

#### **12. Training needs 2024**

RW had passed Trustees information about free resources and training available with the Charity Commission on responsibilities and ADCH. AR has now completed the online dog behaviour programme with Battersea.

AR has successfully completed her Canine Diploma level 4.

#### **13. Future strategy, income generation ideas and priorities for the forthcoming year**

The strategy weekend was held on 2-3 September 2023 and all trustees attended. The meeting reviewed current resources (people, financial, physical); review of media strategy – use of website/social media platforms; how the charity can streamline operations further; focus and priorities for the coming year, income generation and fundraising ideas.

Due to the high increase in surrender activity within the UK within the St Bernard breed particularly, it was agreed that this would remain our focus of activity for the next 6 months. All trustees also expressed their commitment to support other large, working guardian breeds and RW confirmed this was in line with our constitution. It was agreed that non-UK rescue work would be highly restricted to dogs who we had previously committed to unless adopters wished to privately sponsor a foreign dog in which case we would provide our advice

and guidance. It was agreed that separate fundraisers would be launched for specific non-UK dogs with donators being asked to specify where they wish their donations to be used.

The review of trading names on Facebook resulted in the successful launch of a new Big Paws Welfare Facebook page, with the Saving Saints Rescue UK Facebook page continuing to be focused purely on St Bernards/crosses. This has received positive feedback from users.

Further work is due to be undertaken in 2024/25 on our foster and adoption guidance and training package. Further work has been undertaken by Peta Brandwood who was thanked by the Trustees for supporting adopters and supporters in HMcG's absence and an ongoing review of all advice and documentation given to adopters will result in further website updates.

RW is currently working with Bruce Williamson on sourcing a CRM/shelter database to contain 'live' dog data and link to donators which will be accessible to all Trustees. Further work will be undertaken to increase the charity's role as an educator to improve the responsible ownership of giant breeds.

It was agreed that an annual report would be developed and shared publicly to maximise the good news stories within the charity to generate further media content and link to fundraising campaigns which would enable us to link up with large dog merchandisers to generate income.

Due to the crisis in the Raduati shelter in Romania it was agreed that a short term campaign to support 5 St Bernards and 22 other dogs held by this shelter (who we have worked with for many years) would be undertaken with the support of subsidised kennels at Marsh Lea.

#### **14. Date of next AGM**

Agreed for August 2025 – date TBC.

**Saving Saints Rescue UK**  
**Charity Register no 1171050**

**Accounts for the period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024**

**Profit and loss account**

Receipts and donations	23943
Less expenses	30450
Add balance from previous yr	10073
<b>Total</b>	<b>3566</b>

**Balance sheet**

Co-op bank balance	1737
PayPal balance	1779
Stock in hand	50
<b>Total</b>	<b>3566</b>

**Saving Saints and Big Paws Rescue UK**

England & Wales - Charity number 1171050

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# Accounts

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**Saving Saints Rescue UK**  
**Annual General Meeting on 11 August 2023**  
**Minutes**

Present: Rachel Wesley (RW) – Chair/Secretary  
Simon Grundy (SG) – Treasurer  
Amanda Rees (AR)  
Tracey Turnbull (TT)  
Helen McGuirl (HMcG)

**1. Agenda**

- Apologies
- Update on actions from AGM held on 11 August 2022
- Resignations and election of Trustees
- Financial return
- Summary of activities over the last 12 months
- Feedback from users of the service over the last 12 months
- Priorities and challenges for the coming year including review of charity name
- ADCH audit process feedback and outcome
- Training needs

RW welcomed everyone to the 8th formal AGM of the group.

**2. Apologies**

Helen McGuirl (HMcG). All trustees expressed disappointment that HMcG was unable to attend the meeting.

**3. Update on actions from AGM held on 11 August 2022**

Actions from the previous AGM have been completed apart from training, merchandise/online shop development and the appointment of a President. Ideas to approach a President were explored and will be taken forward at the strategy meeting ie Tom Hanks, Bradley Wiggins, other celebrities who had St Bernards.

#### **4. Changes to Trustees as per Constitution**

Amanda Rees had joined us as a trustee in May 2023 and she was formally welcomed to her first AGM.

Trustees are now as follows for the next 2 years as per the Constitution:

Chair/Secretary – Rachel Wesley

Treasurer – Simon Grundy

Rescue/Adoption/Fundraising Co-ordinators – Rachel Wesley, Tracey Turnbull

Merchandising/Online shop/Fundraising – Amanda Rees

General advisory/behavioural – Helen McGuirl

Media – Amanda Rees

#### **5. Financial update**

The Treasurer had provided each member with a copy of the Annual Statement of Accounts from 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023. This showed a slight increase in reserves to £10,073 from last year. Most of the expenditure for 2022 to 2023 continued to be transport, kennelling (partnership with Marsh Lea kennels) and vet costs. Direct adoptions have dropped significantly as part of our strategy to reduce our activity to a more sustainable level in view of the financial challenges from 147 in 2022 to 63. However, transport and vet costs have substantially risen. The daily cost of kennels had remained static however the length of time that dogs were remaining in kennels before finding a suitable adoption has increased by x3 times increasing our monthly kennel costs substantially.

SG expressed his opinion that the increase in interest rates may rise again to around 6% so it was vital that we contained costs.

An application to HMRC for last year's gift aid was made earlier in 2023 and this amount was reflected in the current balance.

The Treasurer confirmed that he was satisfied with the level of financial controls in place and no breaches of policies had been identified.

#### **6. Summary of activities over the last 12 months**

RW provided data relating to the following measurable activities in the last 12 months:

Adoptions – 63 (plus 11 RBU for other charities)

Dogs in long term foster – 7 (Simba, Chessie, Bailey, Rollo, Sissi, Shadow, Millie)

Dogs in kennels – 7 (Lennox, Lenny, Rikki, Otto, George, Luna, Annie)

Euthanasia – 3 (due to severe aggression). RW proposed a new euthanasia policy and this was ratified by all trustees and will be added into the charity's handbook.

Behavioural update – In HMcG's absence, RW provided an update on behavioural guidance and our new relationship with Briony Lazardies, canine behaviourist. Briony has given comprehensive feedback to 3 members of the general public on non-saints, 5 on dogs adopted from us, and 2 dogs in our foster care since she began working with us 3 months ago.

Failed adoptions – 10. A review undertaken highlighted that lack of adopter understanding of the needs of large breeds was a factor in most adoptions failing. Briony Lazardies has offered to have a pre-adoption discussion with all adopters in addition to the documentation/advice we already provide.

The number of active fosters is currently 5 with no fosters available for emergencies. Recruitment advertising for new fosters is ongoing. The challenge is finding experienced fosters of large breed dogs who do not have children under 16 or who are able to safely separate existing pets.

Home checks conducted (including for other rescuers) – over 96, 3 failed (for SS). The majority of homechecks have been conducted online over the last year.

Fundraising and raising awareness days – 6 – Helvellyn walk, local fundraisers, Peterborough dog show, 4 car boots, monthly dog walks in Chorley; 100 Club continues to operate

Media presence – Cumberland Building Society, BBC Cambridge, Peterborough Herald, Radio 2, Dogs Today

Pat/companion dog sessions (in last 12 months) – 5 sessions conducted – RW and Dotty are attending Bolton Hospice now every month

Ebay activity – remained low with a profit of £39. This will remain open until our website shop becomes fully operational. Most popular items continued to be dog bibs and personalised cards.

Website shop – remains closed

## **7. Media strategy**

Media activity – an increased presence and use of Twitter and Instagram was now in place and analytics showed our following on Facebook had increased by more than a third in the last year along with Instagram.

Website – AS has taken this forward with an IT specialist, Rhys Welsh who is providing services currently on an ad hoc voluntary basis. Basic changes have now been made on the site and all dogs in need of foster/adoption are now updated on a regular basis. AS requested SG as treasurer to consider what investment the charity could make in a review of our website.

We have also been trialling the TikTok platform and AS/Grace Williams are creating content to generate more interest in dogs available for adoption.

## **8. Merchandising**

Old stock continues to be sold including gym bags, t-shirts, bibs, slobber cloths, dog toys and other donated items online and at events. AS is continuing to source eco/ethical items for an online dog product shop. This online shop development will be linked into the review of the website.

## **9. Feedback from users of the service in the last 12 months**

Positive feedback has been received from many adopters in the last year and also from our rescue partners. A number of positive comments have been received about our back up support and 5 adopters have chosen to adopt another dog with us.

We have received one formal complaint in the year and this has been satisfactorily resolved.

## **10. Training needs 2023**

RW had passed Trustees information about free resources and training available with the Charity Commission on responsibilities and ADCH. TT and AR are due to attend the intensive dog behaviour programme with Battersea in November 2023 as part of our successful grant application last year.

RW continues to progress with Canine Diploma level 4. AS is finalising which canine behaviour programme she will enrol in.

## **11. Future strategy, income generation ideas and priorities for the forthcoming year**

A weekend strategy meeting is scheduled for 2/3 September 2023 of all trustees. The agenda for this meeting is – review of current resources (people, financial, physical); review of media strategy – use of website/social media

platforms; how the charity can streamline operations further; focus and priorities for the coming year, income generation and fundraising ideas.

SG has approved a £500 investment of our website and AS is approaching potential IT specialists to explore how this can be best utilised including a review of our analytics.

A strategy review meeting is scheduled for 2/3 September. Due to the high increase in surrender activity within the UK within the St Bernard breed particularly, it was agreed that this would remain our focus of activity for the next 6 months. All trustees also expressed their commitment to support other large, working guardian breeds and RW confirmed this was in line with our constitution. It was agreed that non-UK rescue work would be highly restricted to dogs who we had previously committed to unless adopters wished to privately sponsor a foreign dog in which case we would provide our advice and guidance.

A review of our 'trading' names on Facebook Saving Saints/St Bernard and Big Paws UK was undertaken to reduce any confusion about us operating on 2 different sites. It was decided that our charity name will change to Saving Saints and Big Paws Rescue UK which represents our focus on both St Bernards and other larger breeds. **HMcG confirmed her agreement on 3/9/2023 to this.**

RW will arrange for everyone involved in the assessment, training, advice and behavioural support of our dogs to meet at the kennels before the end of the year. A review of all documentation and guidance will be undertaken by this working party with RW's admin help. A review of the foster training packages and modules from MARS/Pedigree and those utilised by other ADCH members will also be undertaken to look at how we can improve our foster training package.

## **12. ADCH audit and feedback**

RW shared the ADCH feedback from our audit of our processes and kennels. ADCH's assessor noted a number of positives about our handbook, policies and procedures. However feedback regarding certain aspects related to the kennels housekeeping and kennel sizes was noted. It was agreed that this would be discussed with the kennels with a variety of options being considered by the Trustees. The ADCH audit had also raised a concern about how to ensure our larger dogs were provided with adequate enrichment in the kennel environment and how this was evidenced. The kennels had already created a document to evidence this. A review of our behavioural assessment processes was already underway in light of Briony joining the team to reinforce our force-free approaches.

**13. Non-UK dog issues**

TT is due to appear on a programme for the veterinary profession on the risk of Brucellosis to the human population. This will be shared on our website and TT has been asked to write a new section in our handbook to outline in detail the charity's position on zoonotic diseases and testing and TT is part of a cross charities working party on these issues.

**14. Date of next AGM**

Agreed for August 2024 – date TBC.

**Saving Saints Rescue UK**  
**Charity Register no 1171050**

**Accounts for the period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023**

**Profit and loss account**

Receipts and donations	22651
(Grant from Battersea 12/22	10000)
Expenses	(21594)
Balance b/forward	9016
Total	10073

**Balance sheet**

Co-Op bank balance	4609
PayPal balance	5414
Stock in hand	50

**Total** **10073**

**Saving Saints and Big Paws Rescue UK**

England & Wales - Charity number 1171050

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# Accounts

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**Saving Saints Rescue UK**  
**Annual General Meeting on 11 August 2022**  
**Minutes**

Present: Rachel Wesley (RW) – Chair/Secretary  
Marina Parha (MP)  
Simon Grundy (SG) – Treasurer  
Tracey Turnbull (TT)  
Jo Johnston (JJ)

**1. Agenda**

- Apologies
- Update on actions from AGM held on 11 August 2021
- Resignations and election of Trustees
- Financial return
- Summary of activities over the last 12 months
- Feedback from users of the service over the last 12 months
- Priorities and challenges for the coming year

RW welcomed everyone to the 7th formal AGM of the group.

**2. Apologies**

Chantelle Jago (CJ) and Helen McGuirl (HMcG).

**3. Update on actions from AGM held on 11 August 2021**

Actions from the previous AGM have been completed apart from training, merchandise/online shop development and the appointment of a President. Planned Trustee training at Marsh Lea kennels had been put on hold and the online training programme had not been progressed due to lack of resources. TT agreed to make contact with a media figure to enquire if they would be interested in the role of President.

#### **4. Changes to Trustees as per Constitution**

Chantelle Jago (CJ) previously submitted her resignation to RW in May 2022 and this was formally accepted at the meeting. All Trustees thanked CJ for her contribution and wished her well.

Jo Johnston (JJ) was proposed as a Trustee by Rachel Wesley, seconded by Marina Parha. JJ has worked alongside us over the last 3 years giving behavioural advice to fosters and adopters in addition to HMcG.

Trustees are now as follows for the next year as per the Constitution:

Chair/Secretary – Rachel Wesley

Treasurer – Simon Grundy

Rescue/Adoption/Fundraising Co-ordinators – Marina Parha, Rachel Wesley, Tracey Turnbull

Merchandising/Online shop/Fundraising – vacant position

General advisory/behavioural – Helen McGuirl/Jo Johnston

Media - voluntary support from Paul Bibby who is working on our social media presence ie Instagram and the development of a YouTube channel.

#### **5. Financial update**

The Treasurer had provided each member with a copy of the Annual Statement of Accounts from 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022. This showed a decrease in reserves to £9,016. The majority of expenditure for 2021 to 2022 continued to be transport, kennel costs (due to partnership with Marsh Lea kennels) and vet costs. Whilst adoptions have remained constant, transport and vet costs had substantially risen. An application to HMRC for last year's gift aid was made earlier in 2022 and this amount was reflect in the current balance.

The Treasurer confirmed that he was satisfied with the level of financial controls in place however expressed concern about the sustainability of activities at this level in 2022/2023. It was agreed that a review of strategy was required and a 3 month hold on all adoption activity effective immediately was in place.

#### **6. Summary of activities over the last 12 months**

RW provided data relating to the following measurable activities in the last 12 months:

Adoptions – 147 (for both SS and as RBU for other charities)

Dogs in long term foster – 7 (4 x Simba, Angel, Solomon, Jammie at Marsh Lea kennels), (Charlie, Opal and Sissi in long term home fosters).

Euthanasia – 1 (male St Bernard due to severe aggression)

The number of active fosters is currently 5 with no fosters available for emergencies. Recruitment advertising for new fosters was being undertaken.

Home checks conducted (including for other rescuers) – over 200, 5 failed (for SS). The majority of homechecks have been conducted online over the last year.

Fundraising and raising awareness days – 5 – Snowdon walk, local fundraisers, 3 car boots, monthly dog walks in Chorley; 100 Club has been launched

Media presence – Cumberland Building Society, Dogs Today

Pat/companion dog sessions (in last 12 months) – 3 sessions conducted

Ebay activity – remained low with a profit of £42. This will remain open until our website shop becomes fully operational. Most popular items continued to be dog bibs and personalised cards.

Website shop – closed

## **7. Use of media / website / Facebook / Twitter / Instagram / YouTube**

Media activity – an increased presence and use of Twitter and Instagram was now in place. PB's work on the YouTube channel remained outstanding and the interviews with adopters to appear on the channel.

Website – updates remained slow due to lack of volunteer support. RW to provide an update on progress when the current volunteer responded (currently unavailable due to personal difficulties). Dogs remained out of date on the website and documentation; TT/RW ensure that Facebook remained up to date. JJ offered to speak to a contact about website support.

## **8. Merchandising**

Old stock continued to be sold including gym bags, t-shirts, bibs, slobber cloths, dog toys and other donated items. A number of items had been sold at 2 car boot sales. Leather collars were sourced and ready for advertising but it was agreed that development of the online shop would remain on hold until an experienced volunteer could be found and the charity's future explored further.

## **9. Feedback from users of the service in the last 12 months**

Positive feedback has been received from many adopters in the last year and also from our rescue partners with lovely comments received about our back up, ongoing support and adoption processes.

We have also received 3 formal complaints in the year and 1 remained active. Two had been resolved and were related to a lack of understanding about what to expect in the early weeks of adoption and behavioural support had resolved those issues. A review of the reasons for the complaints had been undertaken and the pre-existing complaint would be analysed once external processes were complete. Discussion centred around communication between adopters and rescuers where we were providing RBU only and how to reinforce expectations. RW had communicated once again to all rescuers what our RBU now consisted of up to £50 (2 nights emergency kennel fees) and ongoing free behavioural support for all adopters.

#### **10. Training needs 2022**

RW had passed Trustees information about free resources and training available with the Charity Commission on responsibilities and ADCH. A review of trustees' training needs would be undertaken as part of the working party.

#### **11. Future strategy and priorities for the forthcoming year**

A working party of all trustees would have a first meeting on Saturday 17/9/2022 from 2 to 4 pm. This would explore the group's TOR and sub-groups set up to look at policies, operating procedures, advice and guidance and costings.

A SWOT analysis of the charity would be undertaken at the next meeting in October 2022.

In view of the current difficulties with finances, current poor adoption climate and increase in surrenders of UK dogs, it was agreed that the charity's focus would shift back to UK based dogs for the foreseeable future. A 3 month suspension of all activity apart from dogs already pre-adopted is effective immediately and non-UK dogs would not be advertised on our sites unless rescuers were willing to take complete responsibility for adoption, transport and rescue back up. Due to the current crisis in the UK and additional problems with foreign rescue it was agreed that all non-UK adoption would be put on hold and reviewed at the AGM in 2023. We have 2 dogs due to travel from Egypt and India who have adopters and these will be our last foreign imports.

The DEFRA ban on importing non-UK dogs from Eastern Europe remained in place and due for review on 3/9. Three adopted dogs remained in Romania who we are committed to. Difficulties with importing dogs from Greece remained due to problems with Greek vets not issuing health certificates. TT and MP were progressing this with Greek rescuers for the future. TT raised concerns about testing for blood borne diseases and it was agreed that brucellosis should now be routinely tested for.

**12. Any Other Business**

Due to the lack of resources within the group, negative stress was being experienced by some Trustees. Boundaries were explored and the general public's expectations, how adoption co-ordinators and those involved in daily admin could minimise negative impact of the charity's work. This would be further reviewed as part of the working group.

**13. Date of next AGM**

Agreed for August 2023 – date TBC.

**Saving Saints Rescue UK**  
**Charity register no 1171050**

**Accounts for the period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022**

**Profit and loss account**

<b>Receipts and donations</b>	<b>24712</b>
<b>Expenses</b>	<b>(28800)</b>
<b>Balance b/forward</b>	<b>13104</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>9016</b>

**Balance sheet**

<b>Co-Op bank balance</b>	<b>6019</b>
<b>PayPal balance</b>	<b>3094</b>
<b>Stock in hand</b>	<b>50</b>

**Total** **9016**

**Saving Saints and Big Paws Rescue UK**

England & Wales - Charity number 1171050

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# Accounts

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**Saving Saints Rescue UK**  
**Annual General Meeting on 8 August 2021**  
**Minutes**

Present: Rachel Wesley (RW) – Chair/Secretary  
Marina Papas (MP)  
Helen McGuirl (HG)  
Chantelle Jago (CJ)  
Marina Parha (MP)  
Simon Grundy (SG) – Treasurer  
Tracey Turnbull (TT)  
Part attendance – Paul Bibby (PB)

**1. Agenda**

- Apologies
- Update on actions from AGM held on 16 August 2020
- Resignations and election of Trustees
- Financial return
- Summary of activities over the last 12 months
- Feedback from users of the service over the last 12 months
- Priorities and challenges for the coming year

RW welcomed everyone to the 6th formal AGM of the group.

**2. Apologies**

Abigail Bomford was unable to attend.

**3. Update on actions from AGM held on 16 August 2020**

All actions from the previous AGM had been completed apart from launching an online training programme which would be considered in the next 12 months.

#### **4. Changes to Trustees as per Constitution**

Tracey Turnbull was proposed as a Trustee by Rachel Wesley, seconded by Marina Parha. Tracey has worked alongside us over the last 12 months with our dogs from Greece, and advice re our dogs with special needs.

Trustees are now as follows for the next year as per the Constitution:

Chair/Secretary – Rachel Wesley

Treasurer – Simon Grundy

Rescue/Adoption/Fundraising Co-ordinators – Marina Papas, Rachel Wesley, Tracey Turnbull

Merchandising/Media/Fundraising – Abigail Bomford and Chantelle Jargo

General advisory/behavioural – Helen McGuirl

We also have voluntary support from Paul Bibby who has offered to work on our social media presence ie Instagram and the development of a YouTube channel.

#### **5. Financial update**

The Treasurer had provided each member with a copy of the Annual Statement of Accounts from 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021. This showed an increase in reserves by £12,800. The majority of expenditure for 2020 to 2021 continued to be transport, kennel costs (due to partnership with Marsh Lea kennels) and vet costs. Whilst adoptions had increased, transport and vet costs had substantially risen. The grant received from ADCH had been utilised as per the grant rules on kennel costs to supplement fosters and difficulties due to Covid-19. An application to HMRC for last year's gift aid would be made in the next month.

The Treasurer confirmed that he was satisfied with the level of financial controls in place however expressed concern about the sustainability of activities at this level in 2021/2022. It was agreed that a review of strategy was required.

#### **6. Summary of activities over the last 12 months**

RW provided data relating to the following measureable activities in the last 12 months:

Adoptions – 143 (for both SS and as RBU for other charities)

Dogs in long term foster – 1 (Solo at Marsh Lea kennels)

Intensive behavioural intervention – 3 (Solo, Bertie and Goldie). HG provided an update on the work undertaken with 3 kill shelter dogs. Both Bertie and

Goldie have now been adopted and thanks was expressed to Helen along with Jo and Dave at Marsh Lea kennels. Solo remains at the kennels however is making excellent progress and is now learning to be a multi-handler dog.

Euthanasia – 0

The number of active fosters is currently 5 with no fosters available for emergencies.

Home checks conducted (including for other rescuers) – over 200, 5 failed (for SS). Due to Covid-19 restrictions, the majority of homechecks have been conducted online over the last year. However national groups are now restarting face to face checks from outside prospective adopters' homes.

Fundraising and raising awareness days – 0 due to Covid-19 restrictions. Plan to request fundraising day at Chill Factore again pre Christmas and to review restrictions to reconsider street fundraisers.

Media presence – appearance in Big Dog Britain, Channel 4 programme and article in The Sun newspaper.

Pat/companion dog sessions (in last 12 months) – 0 due to Covid-19.

Ebay activity – remained low with a profit of £31. This will remain open until our website shop becomes fully operational. Most popular items continued to be dog bibs and personalised cards.

Website shop – awaiting an update from AB re: dog box sales and progress with online shop which had a range of items now available including leather dog collars, dog beds and dog boxes.

## **6. Use of media / website / Facebook / Twitter / Instagram / YouTube**

Media activity – PB explored the option of more targeted media on Instagram. Twitter and Instagram accounts were now being updated regularly. PB also outlined the potential for YouTube channel to generate income.

Website – updates remained slow due to lack of volunteer support at times. AB to provide an update on progress. Dogs remained out of date on the website with RW ensuring that Facebook remained up to date.

## **7. Merchandising**

AB to provide an update after the meeting re: progress and the number of dog boxes sold last year and current stock. HG agreed to provide handmade dog biscuits for the Christmas stockings.

Discussion around campaigns and annual activity calendar drafted by RW previously. Christmas products and Remembrance Day campaign to be launched in October. Calendar support for 2022 offered again by Sonia Plevin.

We are again receiving support from Nicola-Jayne King to help personalise products such as dog bibs, bandanas. Personalised dog blankets were also an option for Christmas.

#### **8. Feedback from users of the service in the last 12 months**

Positive feedback has been received from adopters in the last year and also from our rescue partners. We have had difficulties with 3 fosters over the last 12 months due to lack of preparedness and lack of patience to integrating a rescue dog into UK life.

Discussion centred around how to tighten up on foster/adoption checks including reviewing the type of questions asked including specific focus on behavioural questions. HG to provide input on this. Focus on areas such as how to recognise distress in a dog, how to integrate a new dog into an existing pack etc.

#### **9. Training needs /use of YouTube as training platform**

Agreement that training would be undertaken by Trustees/Marsh Lea kennel staff on handling reactive dogs. HG will lead this and deliver before the end of October 2021.

RW/PB have discussed holding a series of online video interviews with fosters and adopters about learnings on their experiences of rescue. 9 adopters/fosters have come forward to be interviewed. These will be launched on YouTube platform. A section called 'So you think you want a St Bernard' will also be developed. It was felt important that behavioural videos were added covering areas

#### **10. Future strategy and priorities for the forthcoming year**

Fundraising for the 3 Chinese meat trade St Bernards (Amari, Kiaria and Fergus) was a priority. SJ was undertaking a sponsored walk up Mount Snowdon on 4 September and priority is being given to the promotion and fundraising of this event. Potential for Welsh TV channel coverage to be followed up. Current donations for the Saints is just over £2,000 and around £9,000 was required.

In view of the difficulties with fundraising, MP asked if the group could consider trying to attract the support of a TV personality/influencer. TT is to take this forward.

DEFRA guidance on importing non-UK dogs and documentation was being tightened up following confusion since Brexit. Difficulties with importing dogs from Greece remained due to problems with Greek vets issuing health certificates. TT and MP were progressing this with Greek rescuers.

Further UK legislation is proposed re: tail docking, ear cropping and changing the age of puppies entering the UK to >6 months. In addition there are ongoing changes re dogs entering the UK with a number of blood borne diseases eg leishmaniasis, heartworm, Lyme disease, Ehrlichia. We have reiterated to all rescuers that any dog over 6 months old is required to have a 4Dx test. RW had provided a detailed response to ADCH consultation in December 2020 concerning these proposals and the negative impact on rescue dogs. Due to difficulties with the availability of vets currently and those who are pro-rescue, it was important that consideration was given to bringing in dogs in a maintenance phase of disease to ensure a positive vet response. We have also received a query re testing for canine brucellosis and our policy on this due to concerns in the UK dog population due to infection from Romanian rescue dogs.

Scottish rescue work – due to changes in legislation in Scotland it will be necessary for us to have a registered base in Scotland if you wish to adopt more than 5 dogs from September 2021. RW to progress this.

SWoT analysis – Agreement to undertake a SWoT analysis for the charity prior to the end of 2021.

#### **11. Any Other Business**

MP requested that a specific focus was given to dogs from the Amyntaio pound in Greece. It was agreed that a post requesting donations for the dogs in need would be placed on Facebook would be written along with photos.

#### **12. Date of next AGM**

Agreed for August 2022 – date TBC. To be held at Helen's new centre in Darlington.