

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 as 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 our 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 31st March 2025

Profit and Loss account

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

Balance sheet

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

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

Mount Street

Manchester

M2 5NT

Email: samgrundy1964@hotmail.co.uk

Tel: 07867 523993