



# **Rags to Riches Romanian Dog Rescue**

**Charity Registration 1171592**

## **Fourth Annual Report 2020-2021**



# Trustees' Annual Report for the period 5<sup>th</sup> April 2020 - 4th April 2021

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## Volunteer, Equality and Diversity

Rags to Riches recognise the benefits of a diverse community of volunteers and are committed to being an inclusive organisation where everyone is treated with respect, dignity and where there is equal opportunity for all.

We are committed to eliminating discrimination from our recruitment and day to day volunteering practice. We will take steps to ensure that volunteers are recruited, trained and developed on the basis of ability, the requirement for the role and the need to maintain an effective and efficient service.

**All our policy and adoption and fostering documents are reviewed yearly.  
The following policies are available on request:**

Education & Awareness	Compliments & Complaints
Financial Management	Data Protection
Rehoming	Rescue & Care
Donations and Provision of food and items	Direct adoptions

## Administration and Legal

Charity Name: **Rags to Riches Romanian Dog Rescue**

Other names **Rags to Riches / R2R**

Charity is known  
by:

Registered Charity **1171592**  
number:

Charity's principal **1 Green View, Crambe York YO60 7JP**  
address:

**Rags to Riches Romanian Dog Rescue is a constituted  
Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO)**

### The Charity Trustees are:

Elisabeth Jay:	Chair	Re-appointed April 2020
Lisa Holmes	Vice Chair	Re-appointed April 2020
Lynsay Baker	Secretary	Re-appointed April 2020
Pauline Carruthers:	Treasurer	Re-appointed April 2020
Richard Leggott	Publicity	Re-appointed April 2020
Dawn Jacques	Fundraising	Re-appointed April 2020
Jane Stacey	Consultancy	Appointed June 2021
Julie Routledge	Patron	Appointed April 2019

All Trustees agreed and voted to be reappointed. Method of appointment in accordance with the constitution. Every Trustee must be appointed by a resolution passed at a meeting of the Trustees, with regard to the skills, knowledge and experience needed for the effective administration of the CIO.

No trustees resigned in the year.

## The objects of the CIO are :

For the benefit of the public to relieve the suffering of dogs in Romania in need of care, treatment and protection and in particular to provide rescue homes or other facilities for the reception, care and treatment of such animals.

To promote humane behaviour towards dogs in Romania by raising awareness, providing appropriate care, treatment and protection, for 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 animals.”

### Provisions of services: Policy

- ♦ Funding and oversight of appropriate care, treatment and protection of dogs whilst they are in Romania and being prepared to travel to the UK. This includes all veterinary treatment, microchipping, neutering, vaccinations and appropriate shelter.
- ♦ Funding and oversight of purchases made for the above including medications.
- ♦ Funding and oversight of transport to the UK
- ♦ Safe and experienced care in vetted foster homes to include veterinary treatment if required.
- ♦ Safe, pre-checked adoption homes in the UK - all dogs' microchip registrations remain in dual registration with the Charity for the life of the dog.
- ♦ Ongoing support for adopters and dogs
- ♦ Spay/neuter campaign funding in Romania
- ♦ Education and awareness raising
- ♦ Networking on behalf of the plight of dogs needing rescuing in Romania



**Future plans for year 2021-22 for Rags to Riches have not really changed from last as we were unable to carry out many plans due to covid 19 for the next year but include:**

- ♦ Continuing to support spay and neuter campaigns in Valcea .
- ♦ Continuing support fro the new shelter in Valcea.
- ♦ Continuing a variety of fundraising activities and look for new ideas
- ♦ Hosting various events for volunteers, fosterers and the general public to raise awareness and educate.....
- ♦ Recruit more fosters to enable us to rescue more dogs
- ♦ Campaign where possible to bring improvements to the treatment of dogs in Europe and especially in Romania.

## Chair and Trustee report

2020-21 was a difficult year for Rags to Riches as it was for most charities, due to the covid restrictions only 21 dogs were fostered and then adopted or assisted to be adopted in the UK. Rags to Riches focus is still on the immediate needs and plight of those dogs in Romania living in terrible conditions and to that end we have looked to alternative ways to fundraise during the pandemic.

Our wonderful members and supporters helped to keep funds topped with donations, online events and auctions therefore we were able to assist the rescuers in Romania with vets' bills, helping with food purchases for those dogs in the public shelters, and through spay and neuter campaigns. We have also made considerable contributions to the new shelter in Valcea which we are delighted to announce that is now able to begin to house dogs before winter 2021 sets in.

The rescuers in Romania remain dedicated to their work. They have had a difficult time feeding and supporting the poor dogs due to covid restrictions. Which has meant long tiring hours in awful conditions especially winter, enduring some demoralising and disheartening sights and outcomes. Their professionalism and total commitment never cease to amaze us. Whilst the volunteers in Romania report seeing less injured dogs due to fewer cars on the roads, they have seen an increase in abandoned dogs, mainly due to ignorance that the dogs can spread the virus. They volunteers also continue to report online the wonderful outcomes of dogs recovering from injuries and sickness but most of all to see pictures of a scared, often sick dog, (that has never known love, kindness and warmth) well and happy in a forever home.

We have had to think outside of the box in terms of fundraising during this last year and will continue to do so. To assist us with this we would like to increase our Trustee board to bring increased diversity and knowledge to the charity.





# THANK YOU

As in every year there are many individuals, groups and organisations who we would like to thank - including those who wish to remain anonymous! We truly are appreciative of all the help offered and if we fail to mention anyone, then apologies are extended now...

So a big thank you :

- \* To all the rescuers in Romania who continued to work tirelessly throughout the pandemic helping the dogs on the streets and in the public shelters in particular the volunteers Florentina Cioaca and Nicoleta Stefanescu in Valcea, Carmen Borka - Stanescu in Timisoara, Mirela Marcu in Calarasi and in Craiova Alina-Mihaela Danciulescu.
- \* To all our volunteers, who have helped with our fundraising events in the last year .
- \* To all our fantastic supporters who have donated prizes, taken up subscriptions, donated money, sold raffle tickets, and taken part in our fundraising activities on line.
- \* To the transport companies who deliver our dogs safely from Romania.
- \* To our fosterers who work tirelessly with the foster dogs, with love, care and patience to ensure they have a happy life ahead of them.
- \* To the adopters of our dogs who give them a loving life long homes.

Finally on a personal note thank you to all our families who quietly offer background support and are always there to lend a hand in times of crisis.



## WANTED

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### Foster carers

**Rags to Riches has only a few dedicated fosters and we are looking to increase our pool of fosterers We need dedicated, experienced volunteers who have the time and space to care for these dogs until we find their forever homes. If you are interested, please contact Liz or one of the other trustees or go to the website for more information and application forms.**

**[www.rags-2-riches.co.uk](http://www.rags-2-riches.co.uk)**



## The New Shelter Project

We are delighted that the new shelter is now in use and that Rags to Riches has had a major part in this. Many dogs will benefit from having safe, warm shelter for the coming winter in beautiful surroundings.

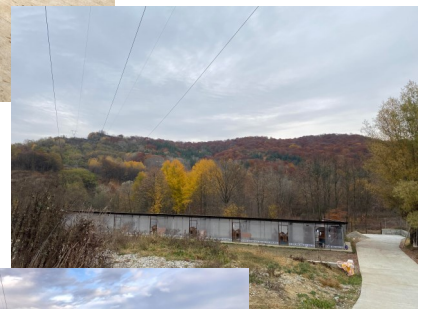
The new shelter is a far cry from the public shelters and is a vast improvement from the old shelter in Valcea , which currently still holds a number of dogs but hopefully will be vacated in the coming year.

Florentina and Nicoleta now have the safety that the shelter is owned so they are no longer in the precarious situation of losing the premises and the dogs being yet again homeless.

There is still a lot of work to do and many more kennels to be built but the work will continue.

The shelter includes a separate puppy/ isolation room to help stop the spread of disease and protect the many abandoned puppies they take in.

With well over 200 dogs in their care at any one time, plus caring and feeding those dogs on the streets and public shelters , rescuing dogs, taking part in spay neuter campaign and much much more. These ladies and others like them are true angels.





## Dog of the Year Lordy



Lordy was rescued by our Romanian friends from the Angels 4 Animals Rescue. The poor boy was found in a dreadful state after wandering the streets for who knows how long, his fur was matted and filthy and he needed some medical attention.

I was asked by Carmen if I would consider fostering him, you see he is the little terrier type that I really do love and it was thought he had sight in one of his eyes and his other did not work due to a birth defect, yes definitely one for me.

Transport day duly arrived and he was delivered to me along with two other fosters, I brought him into our house first and left him to get acquainted with my husband. On my next trip back into the house with foster number two my husband quite casually said "I think Lordy is blind Jane" So our journey with this feisty, stubborn, brave and lovable boy began.

My husband was correct, Lordy was blind, however he is so used to it that it means nothing to him, he navigates very successfully by smell and after bumping into a few things he had got the lay of the land and was away, actually that was where the trouble began.

Lordy likes people and is quite happy bumbling about outside with other dogs, the issues began when he came into the house and was asked to share his abode with my pack of 6 and two fosters, now that didn't suit his lordship at all, he wanted to live with people and certainly not share them, whatever next!

I was faced with this 9kg blind ninja warrior whose sole aim in life was to see off every dog that came within 10 feet of him and me. I can laugh now but I will never forget my Ziggy weighing in at 40kgs fleeing the kitchen and hiding in the lounge, in fact it is safe to say my lot spent the duration of his stay either residing in the lounge or upstairs and only frequenting the rest of the house when he was firmly shut away, thankfully they are a very patient bunch.

So the requirements for Lordy's new home, someone willing to take on a blind dog with attitude, most definitely no other dogs in the house, well let's be honest no visiting dogs either, someone in fact that would take him on every holiday with them, no boarding kennels for Lordy. I like a challenge.



I always say there is a home out there for every dog you just need to find it, Lordy's new home came about with one phone call from a couple called Saul and MJ, they were struggling to adopt from UK charities and all they wanted to do was give a dog a home that maybe no-one else would want. Saul and MJ were not deemed suitable by other rescues as they live in an apartment and had no garden, lovely balcony and views but none of the green stuff, this was the reason for the call, they didn't want to waste time applying if I was going to turn them down. Now this is the benefit of us being a small charity and fostering in our own home and really knowing our fosters. I knew Lordy wouldn't be bothered by lack of garden he just needed there to be a distinct lack of dogs, besides he is blind he has no idea what his home looks like, he just knows he has to go for a little walk to get to the toilet.



They had fallen in love with Lordy's picture and him being blind bothered them not one bit. They were perfect, no other dogs, visiting dogs or any furry of any description, he could have them all to himself.



The day of adoption arrived and usually a foster can be a little nervous about the change, not this boy, he soon realised he was on his own, he walked round the whole of the apartment, investigating every nook and cranny and once settled promptly fell asleep on the rug. When it came time for goodbye as always I had a lump in my throat but this time was different, Lordy had quite firmly attached himself to MJ and happily stood with her and saw me off the premises, yes he had decided he was home, thank you Jane, you can go now, I could read it all over his face, I was so happy for him I wanted to cry.



Lordy continues to do very well in his new home and we get regular updates, he has just recently had a little op (reason for the dun glasses) on one eye to close it up properly and whilst sadly there is nothing to be done for the other and he will always be blind, it bothers us humans far more than

**This brave boy, unwanted and unloved who travelled across Europe not knowing where he was going or what was happening and not even being able to see, has now found his forever, fantastic loving home and he is just one of the reasons why all of us here at R2R do what we do.**

**Jane Stacey: Rags to Riches fosterer and Trustee**



## Direct adoption ?

Many people decide to adopt a dog directly from Romania rather than go through an experienced reputable rescue service. There are many pitfalls with this, however. We at Rags to Riches prefer to place our dog into loving and experienced foster homes in the UK so that we can make the transition to a new life as safely as possible for all concerned. We also offer ongoing advice and lifetime rescue back up. Our fosterers give the dogs the time and space each individual needs to settle. All dogs are assessed, and adopters are matched only to suitable dogs.

Whereas it is uncommon to have previously fostered dogs returned, it is very common to hear of failed direct adoptions, escaping (already traumatised dogs) who can go missing for long periods, having to be trapped or ending up killed on roads. Some are euthanised because of their 'behaviour'. Many are advertised or sold on, some end up in rescues such as RSPCA who often do not understand them.

The following article is courtesy of The Red Dog Rescue.

"Those in rescue know the importance of decompression. We do our best to stress this concept to adopters and fosters.

Many people wanting to return their foster dogs or adopted dogs express behaviour concerns within the first 72 hours and are ready to give up.

By the time you take a new dog into your home as a foster or an adopter, it has gone through a world of change. Some of these dogs are owner surrenders to shelters. They were living a lovely life in a home; they went for a car ride with their family and suddenly they are trapped in a tiny cold kennel at a shelter. Others may have lived alone on a chain in a yard their whole life. Now they are surrounded by strange people, strange sounds, and strange smells.

Some of these dogs are strays that got lost and couldn't find their way home. Some of the dogs are street dogs, who have never had a home and have no idea they want one.

At some shelters these strange people are suddenly sticking them with needles and putting them through strange temperament tests. They are absolutely petrified. Then a rescue or foster comes in to save them, but the dog doesn't know that. They are loaded up in vans and cars and are driven across town to somewhere they can stay for the time being. After spending some time in a foster home or boarding, it then it's time to be put in strange van, with many other scared and confused dogs, for a 3-day trip into another country.

If this was a person, they would be broken down and seeking help. The dogs on the other hand are expected to know when and where to potty, what they can and can't chew on, to sleep quiet in a new kennel, and to be so excited to meet new friends.



**Recent pictures from Valcea public shelter**



For some dogs, they make the transition okay. Others make so many doggy mistakes and are given up on because they take longer to adjust and need more guidance.

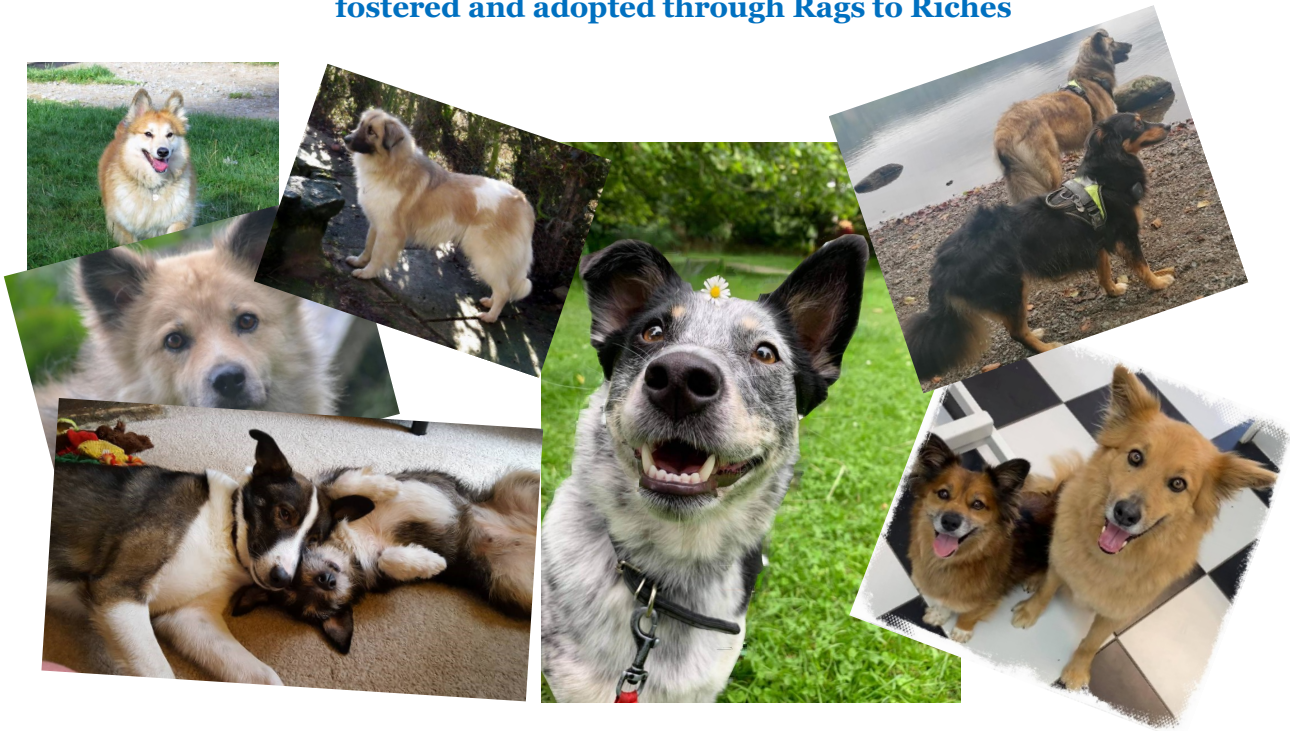
Unfortunately for the dog's people forget that they can't talk. They bark, they cry, they howl, the growl; they try to express their concerns in doggy language. They don't know what we want, they must be taught what we want. They aren't perfect dogs. Many are broken, some are just bruised, but they all need you.

Fostering and adopting isn't always pretty, it isn't always clean, but it is always worth it. It's our job to love them and train them. If you are not willing to commit to these animals, who have already been through so much, don't adopt one until you are.

Give them the decompression time that they deserve so they can do what they do best, love you. “

So! if you are deciding on having an animal from a shelter think first.

**Just a few happy, healthy dogs ,rescued,  
fostered and adopted through Rags to Riches**



**Dogs rescued, fostered and adopted in the last year**

Huey was Romeo  
Asher was Bambi  
Opal (cat)  
Otto  
Diana  
Daisy was Fleck  
Leo and Wilma  
Fely  
Sooty  
Duncan

Fleur (cat)  
Bobo  
Jimmy  
Blumi  
Kia  
Sweep  
Tucker  
Harry  
Josh

The following where direct adoption but with support from Rags to Riches

Fergus  
Bruce  
Bella

## Rags to Riches – Independent Examiner’s report of 20/21 accounts

**1. Introduction** 1.1. I report to the Trustees on my examination of the accounts of Rags to Riches for the year ended 31st March 2021.

**2. Responsibilities and Basis of the Report** 2.1. As the Charity Trustees of the Trust you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011.

2.2. I report in respect of my examination of the Trusts accounts carried out under Section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed applicable directions given out by the Charity Commission under Section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

**3. Independent Examiner’s Statement** 3.1. I have completed an examination of the records held and I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

- accounting records were not kept in respect of the Trust as required by Section 130 of the act; or
- the accounts do not accord with those records.

## 4. Noted Findings

### Expenditure

4.1. A random sample of 12 items of expenditure was chosen from the items recorded on the bank statement, one from each month of the financial year.

4.2. It was noted that 7 out of 12 transactions checked did not have receipts on file. It is acknowledged that some of these were for donations made however, it would be good practice to ask for a confirmation of the donation just to hold on record. (See **Appendix A** for details)

4.3. It was also noted that in some instances, personal bank accounts had been used to make payments as opposed to the business account as noted at the last audit. Discussions at the last audit identified that the Charities Commission is aware of this however, the auditor felt it important to note as it would be best practice to ensure that all transactions are paid directly from the business account.

### Income

4.4. A random sample of 12 donations was chosen and attempts were made to ensure that there was a corresponding entry on the bank statement or PayPal listing.

4.5. It is pleasing to note that no anomalies were identified with all donations checked being recorded on the bank statement

4.6. Receipt books and cash were not checked as part of this audit.

**5. Recommendations** 5.1. Receipts should be kept for all purchases made as evidence that the purchases are for legitimate charity business, this includes any donations made.

5.2. Where possible, purchases should be paid for directly from the business account as opposed to personal accounts being used.

## 6. Independent Examiner Details

<b>Signed:</b>	L.Greenhow
<b>Name:</b>	Lauren Greenhow
<b>Professional Qualification:</b>	CIPFA
<b>Address:</b>	
<b>Date:</b>	12th October 2021



## Treasurer's report

This is the fourth year of Rags to Riches as a registered Charity and it has been a difficult year financially due to our inability to fundraise as normal. Having said that we end the year with a balance £6,815.

We made a commitment in the last annual report to use the legacy money of £8154 to support the new shelter and assist with the spay neuter campaigns with the Finnish group we are delighted to announce we have been able to fulfil both commitments. We have also given a number of donations to help with food and vets bills during the covid crisis which was a difficult time for the rescuers in Romania.

As you can see from the Independent examiners report most of the problems with the collection of receipts from Romania have been resolved. When donating for various other items especially to other volunteers throughout Romania it can still be difficult in emergency situations. However we can always show where monies have gone and that they have been used for the purpose intended.

Many of our receipts are photographs as this is often the only way we can obtain them. This has all been approved by the charity commission as the future way of working.

We have continued to transfer money to a private account and then onto Romania as this saves costs of over £20 and takes only a few days as opposed to weeks through CAF Bank. Again the Charity Commission are aware of this way of working and though they would rather we had a better way of working are fully understanding of the problems. We as a trustee board have decided to change the charity bank account to allow us to do all transactions through the account.

Transport is still a challenge, with continually rising costs, but we are happy with our current transport. To combat costs we have had to raise the adoption fee to £350 and our wonderful adopters are happy to pay this amount.

The subscriptions have stalled and unfortunately went down to an average £290 a month. This money is ring fenced for vets bills for dogs in Valcea.

PayPal costs continue to impact on individual donations. Paypal also places a small charge on some subscriptions and we encourage supporters to use banking methods which are free.

All our trustees and volunteers are unpaid.

We have had a wonderful response to the pandemic and our supporters have joined in many online fundraisers as we have been unable to carry out many physical fundraisers.

We look forward to this next year to get back on the funding track.

### Income

Adoptions Donations: £5,405

Subscriptions : £3,286

Fundraisers: £6,058

Donations/General: £1007

### Outgoings

Transport: £5,560

Preparation of dogs: £2,500

Admin/running costs: £1,125

Subscription's bills): £2,550

Donations (including new shelter): £18,887

Spay/neuter campaigns:: £2,720

Paypal fees: £60.76

**Pauline Carruthers Treasurer**

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	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	January	February	March	
Opening Balance	£20,140.14	£18,997.23	£19,411.28	£19,305.96	£18,359.87	£13,525.11	£11,897.67	£8,131.01	£8,480.52	£6,472.11	£7,304.49	£6,912.54	
Money coming in	£699.25	£571.00	£1,317.72	£1,470.50	£1,525.00	£593.18	£5,457.00	£2,410.03	£2,237.16	£877.71	£1,303.00	£1,616.90	£20,078.45
Less Monthly Deductions	£1,842.16	£156.95	£1,423.04	£2,416.59	£6,359.76	£2,220.62	£9,223.66	£2,060.52	£4,245.57	£45.33	£1,694.95	£1,714.50	£33,403.65
Total To Carry Forward	£18,997.23	£19,411.28	£19,305.96	£18,359.87	£13,525.11	£11,897.67	£8,131.01	£8,480.52	£6,472.11	£7,304.49	£6,912.54	£6,814.94	
BANK	£17,642.01	£18,104.01	£18,015.33	£16,858.83	£11,768.83	£10,413.90	£5,742.70	£7,204.08	£5,220.77	£5,463.97	£6,334.77	£4,708.67	
PAYPAL	£1,035.99	£988.04	£476.98	£1,187.39	£1,442.63	£171.27	£2,075.81	£968.22	£997.50	£1,597.20	£334.45	£886.82	
Cash in Hand	£319.23	£319.23	£313.65	£313.65	£313.65	£312.50	£312.50	£308.22	£253.84	£243.32	£243.32	£1,219.45	
TOTAL	£18,997.23	£19,411.28	£18,805.96	£18,359.87	£13,525.11	£10,897.67	£8,131.01	£8,480.52	£6,472.11	£7,304.49	£6,912.54	£6,814.94	
DIFFERENCE			£500.00			£1,000.00							

# Breakdown

	April	May	June	July	August	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	March	
Adoption donations	£280.00	£0.00	£0.00	£290.00	£500.00	£100.00	£615.00	£600.00	£580.00	£520.00	£940.00	£980.00	£5,405.00
Subs	£328.00	£281.00	£227.00	£268.00	£295.00	£288.00	£308.00	£270.00	£286.00	£255.00	£255.00	£225.00	£3,286.00
Fundraisers	£40.00	£247.00	£965.72	£887.50	£610.00	£185.18	£0.00	£1,540.03	£1,084.00	£96.71	£0.00	£402.40	£6,058.54
Donations/General	£51.25	£43.00	£125.00	£25.00	£120.00	£20.00	£234.00	£0.00	£265.00	£6.00	£108.00	£9.50	£1,006.75
Transport	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£200.00	£600.00	£400.00	£1,400.08	£1,165.15	£0.00	£1,075.43	£720.00	£5,560.66
Prep	£167.52	£148.96	£179.26	£0.00	£526.57	£169.64	£190.36	£409.97	£207.83	£0.00	£0.00	£500.04	£2,500.15
Admin/running costs	£5.00	£5.00	£174.00	£8.29	£80.00	£6.15	£42.15	£239.38	£175.69	£35.32	£342.20	£11.87	£1,125.05
Subs	£250.00	£0.00	£331.72	£300.00	£250.00	£300.00	£300.00	£0.00	£543.30	£0.00	£274.91	£0.00	£2,549.93
Donations(out)	£1,416.65	£0.00	£94.78	£2,108.00	£4,197.00	£1,138.71	£7,785.56	£0.00	£2,146.10	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£18,886.80
Spay/ neuter campaign	£0.00	£0.00	£639.00	£0.00	£1,101.00	£0.00	£500.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£480.00	£2,720.00
Paypal fees	£2.99	£2.99	£4.28	£0.00	£5.19	£6.12	£5.59	£11.09	£7.50	£10.01	£2.41	£2.59	£60.76