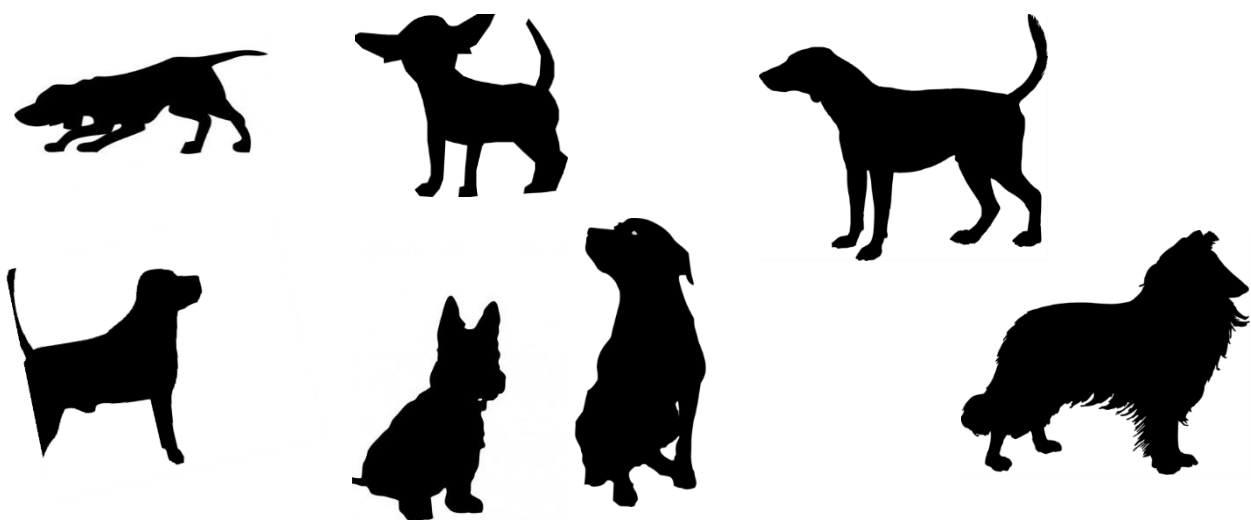




# **Rags to Riches Romanian Dog Rescue**

**Charity Registration 1171592**

## **Fifth Annual Report 2021 –2022**



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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

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 2022-2023 for Rags to Riches**

- **Continuing to support spay and neuter campaigns in Valcea .**
- **Continuing support for the new shelter in Valcea.**
- **Continuing support for the new shelter in Birda**
- **Continuing a variety of fundraising activities and look for new ideas**
- **Recruit more fosters to enable us to rescue more dogs**

## Chair and Trustee Report

2021-22 was a better year for Rags to Riches than last year due to covid restrictions being lifted in February 2022. Rags to Riches have continued to focus on the immediate needs and plight of those dogs in Romania living in terrible conditions. Towards the end of March 2022 a ban on the travel of European dogs was announced owing to the crisis in Ukraine and the travel of dogs without proper paperwork who had been rescued from Ukraine and travelled through Romania and Poland. The ban will have serious implications for rescuers in these countries trying to deal with the influx of dogs being rescued from Ukraine as well as rescues in the UK including Rags to Riches. Our focus may well have to change for a while until the ban is lifted. Rags to Riches has made donations to assist Romanian rescuers bring dogs out of Ukraine .

Our members and supporters have been hard working and generous with donations, online events and auctions allowing us to continue to support the hard-working rescuers in Romania.

We are delighted that the new shelter at Valcea now houses a large number of dogs although there is still a lot of work to do before it will be finished. The shelter means the ladies can help more dogs who otherwise may not have been rescued. We are also delighted to announce we are supporting a new shelter in Birda Romania (see article on page 10)

Abandoned dogs fed by volunteers in Valcea



# THANKYOU

As in every year there are many individuals, groups and organizations 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.

## **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 there for- ever 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 Clothes Show.

## Dawn Jacques

Who would have thought how much fun and satisfaction could be had from selling ladies unwanted clothes and accessories.

I can't take the credit for the idea, several years ago when Liz and I were chatting at one of our many car boot sales, Liz mentioned the idea of a secondhand ladies clothing sale but it was many months later that I decided to put the idea to the test and Preloved Ladies was born, our first sale in April 2018 at Welburn Village Hall, which is next door to where I live which made for easy transporting of the many boxes of clothes.

I had set up a what's app group titled Preloved Ladies with five friends which has now grown to eight with another four regular helpers at events plus Liz and Pauline.

Requests for donations had an amazing response which led to our tea, coffee and cake pricing afternoons and Prosecco and pricing evenings, the latter being the most fun but the less productive.as a result of this our group must be the best dressed 'Preloved Ladies' I know and most of us very rarely buy new from the shops .

Nothing is ever wasted ,we have an account at a local dress agency for the better quality items but the rest is recycled to our car boot sales( we have an amazing £1 rail which does really well) and local charity shops.

We have been lucky to have had some excellent quality donations, even new items with tags on. As long as these continue Preloved Ladies will carry on as it has proved to be a good fundraiser. The big downside to it is that my four bedroom house has shrunk to a two bedroom to facilitate storage.



## The often asked question ‘why adopt from Romania’

### Rags to Riches Fosterer and Trustee Jane Stacey

This is the question we have been asked many times, with many people citing the fact that our rescues in the UK are overflowing and shouldn't we be trying to re-home those?

The answer is actually multi-faceted and not as clear cut as everyone would think. There is the obvious answer in that surely every dog deserves a loving home regardless of where they come from, the answer to this is of course yes they do, love for animals should never be constrained by boundaries.

However UK charities also have a part to play in this. Some of these are large organisations that do not have the time or resources to properly assess the dogs in their care, how many times have we seen on the websites, must be an only dog, no children under 12 etc. etc. Dogs are pack animals and on the whole do happily coexist with other dogs but just like humans we have our preferences of people we like and dogs also have likes and dislikes of who they live with, it is our job when fostering to find out what that is and to get to really know the dog, so the home they are placed in is the final home.

There are also the issues of filling in a standard form for a UK charity, fences must be 6ft high, the dog must not be left for any longer than 4 hours, must have a garden, must live in a house the list goes on, if you do not fit the standard algorithm the application will not be successful and many of our adopters have tried numerous charities in the UK to be turned down every time, that alone is heart-breaking.

There have been dogs in our care that are large but far too lazy to even attempt to jump a 6ft fence, the smallest dogs of 4kgs that would give Harry Houdini a run for his money, dogs that will dig down and under a fence, so a 6ft fence becomes completely irrelevant in this situation.



There are the dogs that only prefer the opposite sex, others that will happily live with anybody and everybody, dogs that absolutely adore children and yes one or two that really don't want to share their human. We know this because we take the dogs into our home and get to know them warts and all, sometimes it takes longer than others to find the right home, but we do.

We take as much care as any charity when placing our dogs but we can apply the personal touch, there are dogs that I have personally adopted out that are living in flats because it is right for them and the adopter, there was the case of a very memorable dog that absolutely adored small children, all she wanted was a little human for a playmate and yes she went to a home with just that, they have since grown up together and are inseparable. The stories are endless and the happy endings numerous, there is great satisfaction to be gained, matching a dog with the perfect home for them but we have the time to do this.

Without exception in my case as a fosterer I have never taken a home away from a dog in a UK rescue, all I have done is take applications from people that have all been turned down to adopt from a UK charity for whatever that reason may be. It is our job to read applications, talk to the potential adopters and get to know them. There are cases of people applying for dogs that know are completely unsuitable for their lifestyle, so that is a conversation to be had and an explanation and very often, you may just know of a dog that would be perfect.

This has not been written to criticise anyone that works in a charity here, many of them do a fantastic job but rather an explanation of why people turn to Romanian Rescues, picking the right Rescue to adopt from overseas is important to but that is in itself another debate.

### [Dogs in a public shelter Romania](#)



## The new shelter at Birda

Our rescuers at Angels 4 Animals Dog Rescue have a dream, although the shelter they have is lovely, they want to help more dogs. Their dream is ambitious but they are very determined people, rescuing a dog from certain death on the streets is not the only way they want to help. Spay and neuter campaigns are important and are an activity they are proactive with and participate in, preventing the birth of so many unwanted pups is the only way to control the dog population in Romania.

However they have also recognised that more can be done, they are very keen on educating the young people of Romania, changing attitudes towards the care and responsibility of dog ownership is key to helping stop the problem of so many abandoned and unwanted dogs and pups. Carmen Borka - Stanescu already goes into schools and has appeared on Television several times highlighting the issues but they are also wanting to adopt a more personal approach, where they can have the schools come to visit the shelter and experience the world of rescue, they do this on a small scale at the moment but they are limited for space in their current shelter.

The nearest vet to them is over an hour away in the city of Timisoara, there is no one serving the surrounding areas and any dogs needing emergency care usually have to wait long periods of time to be treated. The wish is to build an onsite clinic with a vet that can be there on a regular basis that can spay and neuter dogs as well as treat all the ailments and injuries as soon as they happen.

There are also many dog lovers in Romania, however finding boarding kennels is extremely difficult and they have been asked many times if they can provide boarding facilities, they would love to as this would provide an income stream that could be used for the benefit of the shelter, so one of the projects is to eventually build one and advertise to the wider population.



Last but not least is building kennels for those dogs that find themselves dumped and abandoned, a safe haven until they can find their forever home. There are also those dogs who through no fault of their own are not adoptable and need a proper place to call home and spend their remaining years loved and cared for.



A very big dream but they have made a start, Birda's mayor is a dog lover, so he has allowed them to have a large piece of land approximately 3 hectares that they can use at a peppercorn rent with the option to purchase in 5 years. After some fundraising activities and help from ourselves they have managed to make a start, they have drilled for water and now have a working supply, fences have been erected all around the property and construction has started on the kennels, the hope is that the very first dogs can be homed there from April but it is going to take time and money to make their dreams come true and we are hoping to be with them every step of the way and look forward to showing you all the progress they are making.



## Rags to Riches is delighted to have a Jane Stacey (Trustee) as a permanent link to Angels 4 Animals. This is her story.

A very kind invitation I became aware of Angels 4 Animals as a rescue in 2020, when I was fostering for Rags 2 Riches, they always seemed to have some really lovely dogs and I had taken a couple to re-home. That year I also went with another friend from the rescue world on a transport run to Romania to fetch some dogs back from 2 other shelters that were in the same area, so I thought, why not go and visit them. The arrangements were duly made and one lovely summer day I went to Birda for the very first time.

I have visited several public shelters and rescues out there so I thought I knew what to expect, how wrong I was. This shelter is managed by a married couple, Aurel and Carmen, to call them dog lovers doesn't even begin to describe their dedication, love and passion for the rescue of the dogs that come into their care. They are supported by the founder of the charity Carmen Borka-Stanescu, who is a lady that has dedicated many many years to the rescue of dogs, spay and neuter campaigns and education of the wider public, she is actually a bit of a tv star out there with her frequent appearances on television in her quest to fight for better conditions for her beloved dogs.

The visit was a success, with Carmen and Aurel proudly showing me around their shelter, full of happy dogs. It was like night and day compared to what I had seen before. Their dogs are easy to re-home because they come from a background of being loved, any behaviour issues, health problems or difficulties are on the whole dealt with before they let them travel, resulting in happy, well balanced dogs when they come to me. That day I made a decision that I would like to help this small shelter in whatever way I could. The friendship between Carmen, Aurel and myself grew and invitations were extended to come and stay with them and really see what they do on a daily basis, the first time I went, I spent the whole week, dirty, covered in dog slobber and the usual unmentionables and loved every minute of it, I may have reserved one or two dog as well, it took a couple of days before I actually fessed up to my husband how many!!

My visits have continued and a visit is usually planned for every 3 months or so. I arrived in October this year and they formally asked me if I would consider being a trustee and represent them in the UK, a decision that took me all of a second to make. I was honoured to say yes.

December of this year found me boarding a plane for the final time of 2022 to go and sign the paperwork to make everything official, it is quite a solemn affair very unlike here. To make any changes to a charity out there everything has to be done officially via a notary (solicitor), I was ushered into his office in a beautiful building and signed several pieces of paperwork and the deed was done, the very nice man even allowed photographs to mark the occasion.

I look forward to continuing to work with them in 2023 and hopefully finding loving homes for more of their beautiful dogs.





## Rags to Riches Annual Dog Show

We held our Annual Fun Dog Show as usual on August Bank Holiday Monday at our super venue Shipton-by-Beningborough Village Hall just off the A19 near York. Following on from all the Covid-related cancellations of the recent past it was good to see our relaxed crowd of exhibitors and spectators enjoying a happy afternoon with their lovely dogs. We were fortunate with the weather, which was warm but not too hot, and we were delighted to welcome our friendly efficient judge Mrs Hilary Jellie

Most of the ten classes were quite well-filled enough to be competitive, and with prizes and rosettes down to fifth place we saw many proud owners going away with their goodies.

From our long-standing supporters we received encouraging sponsorship for toys and treats to be awarded to the winners in each class and we have to mention especially the beautiful sets of rosettes so generously donated by Dawn Cochrane of Myatoks Rosettes.



The team of volunteers were at the showground in good time to get the kettle on and organise the signs and decorations for the ring and car park. Various gazebos around the perimeter housed our stalls which included a magnificent prize tombola thanks to Jane Stacey, a new and pre-loved stall with doggy equipment, clothing etc. managed by Dawn Jacques, and the ever-busy information stand where members of the public could chat with our team about the work of Rags to Riches and take a look at the photographs and paperwork which help to explain the plight of the Romanian dogs and the small ways in which our Charity is able to help.

Importantly our kitchen team Andrew and Steve kept everyone supplied with delicious mostly homemade food and drinks so that nobody went home hungry or thirsty.



In the ring our capable stewards Laura and Vicki assisted our judge with her difficult though enjoyable task and made sure that the dogs and their humans were comfortable and happy at all times.

Best in Show was closely contested and we had excited winners for the main awards when the stunning rosettes were handed out. Some lovely happy pictures were taken by Laura and appeared in due course on our Facebook group page.

A big thank you to all who took part and did their bit whether helping or competing, we can't do it without your help and it is so much appreciated.

As a postscript to the main show we subsequently ran an online photographic show, also judged by our kind friend Hilary and with super rosettes from Myatoks, and happily this raised a further money for Rags to Riches funds.

The venue and date are booked again for 2023 and we look forward to welcoming friends old and new for another great fun show.



# Rags to Riches – Independent Examiner's report of 21/22 accounts

**1. Introduction** 1.1. I report to the Trustees on my examination of the accounts of Rags to Riches for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022.

**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** 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 5 out of 12 transactions checked did not have receipts on file. On further investigation, it was noted that 4 were for transport costs for which receipts are not provided.

4.3. 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.

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

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

Expenditure

Income

**5. Recommendations** 5.1. Receipts should be kept for all purchases made as evidence that the purchases are for legitimate charity business and these should be retained on file.

## 6. Independent Examiner Details

Signed:

L.Greenhow

Name:

Lauren Greenhow

Professional Qualification:

CIPFA

Date: 18 November 2022

This is the fifth annual report of Rags to Riches as a registered Charity and whilst initially covid restrictions continued to impact on our activities we are delighted to end the year with a balance of £13,969.

As you can see from the Independent examiners report that apart from the difficulty in obtaining receipts from Romania and transport are accounts are satisfactory. 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.

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. The trustee board had decided to change the charity bank account to allow us to do all transactions through the account but unfortunately no banks are taking on new charity customers at this time.

Transport is still a challenge, with continually rising costs, but we are happy with our current transport. The rise in adoption donations has proved to be a great help.

The subscriptions remain around the £250-£300 and can vary from month to month.

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. Therefore we urge our members and supporters to use our bank account where possible.

All our trustees and volunteers are unpaid.

Our supporters and members continue to be generous in supporting us especially in emergency situations.

We look forward to this next year with new members and supporters.

### **Income**

Adoptions Donations: £13,138

Subscriptions: £2420

Fundraisers & Donations: £13,974

### **Outgoings**

Transport £7585

Donations out (spay campaigns, Valcea shelter, food and preparation of dogs) £15779

Administration (website, postage, outlay for fundraising) £1389

**Pauline Carruthers (Treasurer)**

	April	May	June	July	August	September	October
Opening Balance	£5,611.99	£7,097.97	£7,126.08	£6,029.62	£6,832.23	£8,999.99	£7,127.43
Money coming in	£3,127.00	£905.41	£2,888.52	£2,492.00	£3,274.35	£1,420.00	£2,385.00
Monthly Deductions	£1,641.02	£877.30	£3,984.98	£1,689.39	£1,106.59	£3,292.56	£547.62
Total To Carry Forward	£7,097.97	£7,126.08	£6,029.62	£6,832.23	£8,999.99	£7,127.43	£8,964.81
BANK	£6,128.67	£6,221.68	£6,584.18	£8,189.18	£10,240.03	£8,005.03	£9,180.53
PAYPAL	£969.30	£904.40	£1,437.93	£635.00	£752.46	£1,114.89	£1,776.76
Cash in Hand							
TOTAL	£7,097.97	£7,126.08	£8,022.11	£8,824.18	£10,992.49	£9,119.92	£10,957.29
DIFFERENCE	£0.00						

November	December	January	February	March	
£8,964.81	£9,063.46	£11,545.88	£12,664.27	£11,028.44	
£1,692.00	£3,704.38	£3,533.69	£1,555.00	£2,555.50	<b>£29,532.85</b>
£1,593.35	£1,221.96	£2,415.30	£3,190.83	£3,193.03	<b>£24,753.93</b>
£9,063.46	£11,545.88	£12,664.27	£11,028.44	£10,390.91	
£9,855.63	£11,217.38	£13,101.87	£11,618.64	£11,717.14	
£1,200.32	£2,320.99	£54.89	£488.27	£2,252.24	
£11,055.95	£13,538.37	£13,156.76	£12,106.91	£13,969.38	
		£1,500.00	£2,500.00		



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### **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 5 out of 12 transactions checked did not have receipts on file. On further investigation, it was noted that 4 were for transport costs for which receipts are not provided.

#### Income

4.3.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.

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

4.5.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 and these should be retained on file.

## **6. Independent Examiner Details**

<b>Signed:</b>	L.Greenhow
<b>Name:</b>	Lauren Greenhow
<b>Professional Qualification:</b>	CIPFA
<b>Address:</b>	11 Oak Road, Market Weighton, YO43 3GW
<b>Date:</b>	18 November 2022