

THE ANIMAL ADVOCACY PROJECT

**ANNUAL REPORT &
FINANCIAL ACCOUNTS**

2020/2021

**we may be small,
but we is mighty
(& stylish)**





THE ANIMAL ADVOCACY PROJECT

Report of the Trustees

The Trustees have pleasure in presenting their first annual report and unaudited financial statements for the year ended 31 January 2021. The financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011 and Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK FRS 102 (reporting period beginning on or after 1 January 2019)

1. Reference and Administrative details

Charity name: The Animal Advocacy Project
Charity Registration No: 1189603
Registered office: 18A Lower Road, Chinnor, OX39 4DT
Secretary: Michelle Strauss
Bankers: Triodos Bank UK Ltd
Deanery Road, Bristol, BS1 5AS

The current Trustees are:

David Cooke *Chair and Treasurer*

Michelle Strauss *Secretary*

Randi Milgram

Richard Pitschmann

Those who additionally served during the financial year with their dates of appointment, retirement or resignations were: Andrea Driver, resigned 4 September 2021, Caroline Storey, resigned 4 September 2021.

Randi Milgram, appointed 7 August 2020, and Richard Pitschmann, appointed 11 June 2020, have been co-opted as Trustees since the inception of the Charity and will seek election at the Annual General Meeting.

2. Overview of The Animal Advocacy Project

TAAP (“the Charity”) was established with the aim of using legal and advocacy experience to improve the lives of animals in the UK and Ireland. The charitable objectives are broadly to:

- Help humans treat animals better; we aim to prevent animal cruelty and stop animal suffering;
- To teach people how the law can help us to change the lives of animals, for the better; and
- To give the public access to our legal expertise and knowledge by disseminating information to enable the public to pursue our objectives of helping animals and preventing suffering.

3. Structure, governance and management information

Governing Document

The Charity is an Incorporated Charitable Organisation, incorporated on 21 May 2020. As at 31 January 2021 there were 6 members (who are also trustees) of the Charity. The Charity is governed by its Constitution dated 31 January 2020.

Recruitment and Appointment of Trustees

Trustees, who are also members of the Charity, are elected from a community of people who are interested in animal welfare/ rights matters. Presently the board is small and is generally made up of people known to the founders who have a demonstrated experience in animal welfare/ rights work or have particular skills that would be of use to the Charity. However, the Board is conscious that it needs to create a more diverse Trustee Board. As the Charity is still very young and its reach limited it is hoped that recruitment is an issue that can be addressed as the reputation of the Charity grows and as board members are able to dedicate more resources to this work. The Chair, Secretary and Treasurer are elected from amongst the Trustees.

Organisational Structure

During the financial year the Trustee Board met 4 times.

As the Charity is still new and establishing itself most of the work conducted by the Charity is carried out by Trustees and volunteers. There are no employees. At present the Charity is not big enough to enable dedicated committees to be established to deal with discrete issues – however it is envisioned that as the Charity grows this structure will be adopted. Presently a full report of the activities of all the Trustees is prepared and circulated to the Board before every meeting.

The objectives of the Charity are to advance animal welfare with a focus on animals in Ireland the UK. However, where charitable work in respect of animals in Ireland is being undertaken in the Irish Republic it is necessary to establish a separate presence there to comply with Irish Charity Law. Consequently, in September the Board decided to establish a Company Limited by Guarantee in Ireland called TAAP (Ireland) with a view to potentially registering as a charity. Two of the trustees who are based in Ireland have resigned from the Charity to become directors of TAAP (Ireland) CLG with a further new director recruit based in Dublin. Two of the present trustees of the Charity who are based in the UK will be members of TAAP (Ireland) CLG.

Whilst the two entities will have separate boards and finances will be separated – it is expected that there will be overlap between the work of the two organisations. Obviously, the extent to which the two organisations will collaborate will need to be determined by each board in accordance with the objectives of each organisation.

4. Objectives and activities

The object of the Charity is to advance animal welfare. The Trustees have complied with their duty to have due regard to the guidance on public benefit published by the Charity Commission in exercising their powers or duties. The following sections describe the activities of the Charity that have been carried out for the public benefit in the last year.

One of the concerns of the Charity is to address institutional failings and systemic problems that allow animal welfare issues to persist, despite there existing legislation to prevent such issues. To this extent the Charity has focussed on work that will introduce broad changes with a view to helping the greatest number of animals possible. The Charity is still new, and resources are limited. Consequently, the scope of the activities is limited to an extent by these factors and accordingly the type and volume of work that has been undertaken reflects this:

Planning objections

TAAP have objected to two planning applications for intensive animal agricultural facilities and are presently involved in preparing for two further objections. Planning applications have been objected to primarily on the basis of animal welfare. Our position is that upholding animal welfare extends to considerations relating to climate change given that climate change has been shown to have negative impacts on habitats and animal populations.

Some of the concerns that have been raised in the objections relate to a trend towards the “diversification” of traditional farms into intensive facilities; concerns around the failure to have regard to animal welfare matters at the planning stage and the legality of this; considerations around the impact of inadequately designed facilities as a disease risk and as an environmental hazard; and then broad concerns around the impact that “meat farming” is having on climate change and government objectives to work towards net zero.

We are conscious that animal welfare arguments are often raised when objecting to agricultural facilities, but sometimes these objections are not linked to relevant planning considerations. We are hoping to reframe these concerns within planning law in order to make animal welfare a material consideration when considering planning applications for agricultural facilities.

We have also been working in conjunction with likeminded organisations in order to increase the impact of our work and create a more efficient system of identifying and responding to applications.

Government consultations

TAAP made submissions in respect of three government consultations during the financial year: (1) the Scottish government's consultation on the Dangerous Dogs Act; (2) the proposal to introduce a ban on the import of dogs under the age of 6 months; and (3) the proposal to ban the sale of fur. Our responses to the consultations will be available on our website and can also be provided to any party who requests them.

In accordance with our charitable objectives, the responses to the consultation focussed primarily on how any proposed law change may improve animal welfare.

Veterinary Standards

The Charity is conscious of the important role that vets play in upholding animal welfare. Professional regulatory bodies are integral in ensuring that vets maintain these standards. TAAP is concerned to ensure that there is adequate transparency in order for the public to be able to assess whether standards are being upheld and animals are being protected in accordance with the law and vets' ethical obligations. In respect of this issue TAAP made a complaint about a vet to the Veterinary Council of Ireland. As a consequence of this complaint concerns have arisen regarding the VCIs approach to complaints and court proceedings have been initiated. Whilst further work relating to Ireland will be undertaken by TAAP (Ireland), the Charity will also concentrate on these same issues in the UK.

Transparency – Freedom of Information

The Charity is concerned to ensure that legislation is being enforced and accordingly have made numerous FOI requests. The purpose of these are to understand the degree to which authorities are discharging their duties and the adequacy of their performance. There has been resistance to the release of information in respect of some industries and consequently it has been necessary to appeal decisions.

Education and the dissemination of information

The Charity is concerned to ensure that the public are kept informed of our activities and that they have access to information we produce or obtain. During the financial year we have established a webpage, have a blog that is contributed to on a regular basis and publish information through social media. The Charity has worked together with a copywriter to hone the website and develop a social media and SEO strategy.

5. Achievements and performance

Many of the projects initiated by the Charity during the first year are still in progress so we are not in a position to report on whether or not the work has been successful or achieved the change being sought.

However, there is one project where we are pleased to report that our input has potentially yielded action being taken to improve conditions for dogs used in breeding in the UK. TAAP was made aware of loopholes relating to Lucy's Law that enabled breeders to breed dogs at premises outside of England and then import them into the country for sale. TAAP was aware of two English facilities licensed to breed dogs at a

facility in Northern Ireland. Our research revealed that the Northern Irish facility had licensing permission (including the English breeders) to breed 800 dogs, but did not have planning permission to keep this many dogs on site. We were concerned that this meant that the facilities would not be able safely and hygienically accommodate this many dogs. We alerted authorities in Northern Ireland to the issue and have been advised that planning enforcement is presently being undertaken.

6. Financial review

Financial position

Incoming resources in the year were £7,455.13.

Of this none was related to project restricted activities.

There was a surplus of £7,078.11

Funds held as custodian trustee on behalf of others

None.

Reserves

The Trustees elected to hold reserves to cover potential liabilities relating to litigation we believed may arise during the course of the year. At present the board has elected to hold the surplus as a reserve for this purpose.

Risk Management

In the next financial year, the Trustees will review the major risks to which the Charity is exposed and ensure that adequate systems exist to mitigate those risks. At present the monthly outgoings of the Charity are limited and in the event of a cash flow problem it would be relatively simple to reduce expenses immediately without a major impact on the functioning of the organisation. The Trustees are however conscious that as the Charity grows a more rigorous process will need to be implemented. Presently the greatest risk the Charity faces is an adverse costs award. The risk of this occurring can be mitigated by seeking legal advice and undertaking considered review of the strengths of any potential legal action.

7. Thanks

The Trustees wish to thank all those people who have supported the Charity throughout the year. The Trustees are particularly grateful to those who have donated to the Charity as it has enabled us to extend the reach of the organisation and undertake legal work. We could not have achieved what we have without them.

We would also like to thank the volunteers who have assisted us with research, legal work and the drafting of articles. Their generosity with their time and skills, as well as their professionalism, is appreciated and their work very gratefully received.

Approved by the Trustees by agreement on 17 November 2021 and signed on their behalf.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'MS' followed by a flourish.

Michelle Strauss

Secretary

The Animal Advocacy Project

17 November 2021

Statement of financial activities

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Endowment funds	Total funds	Further details
	£	£	£	£	
Income from:					
Donations and legacies	7,455.13	-	-	7,455.13	Donations through the website or directly from donor (there is only one donor making direct donations)
Charitable activities	-	-	-	-	Volunteer time is not included as an income
Other trading activities	-	-	-	-	
Investments	-	-	-	-	
Other	0.17	-	-	0.17	Interest
Total	7,455.30			7,455.30	
Expenditure on:					
Raising funds	-	-	-	-	
Charitable activities	(350.62)	-	-	(350.62)	Company search costs, hosting for website, domain and email
Other	(27.20)	-	-	(27.20)	Bank charges and transaction fees
Total	(337.82)			(377.82)	
Net gains losses on investments	-	-	-	-	
Net income/ expenditure	7,077.48	-	-	7,077.48	
Transfers between funds	n/a	-	-	n/a	
Other recognised gains/ losses	n/a	-		n/a	
Gains/losses on fixed assets	n/a	-	-	n/a	
Net movement in funds	n/a	-	-	n/a	
Reconciliation of funds	7,077.48	-	-	7,077.48	
Total funds brought forward	n/a	-	-	-	
Total funds carried forward	7,077.48	-	-	7077.48	

Balance Sheet

	Total funds (£)	Further details
Fixed Assets	Nil	
Current assets		
Cash at bank and in hand	£7,077.48	
Liabilities	Nil	
Total net assets	7,077.48	
Total Unrestricted funds	7,077.48	
Total Charity funds	7,077.48	

The Trustees are satisfied that the Charity is entitled to exemption from the requirement to obtain an audit/ independent examination as the charity income for the financial year was below £25,000.



David Cooke

Trustee/ Treasurer

17 November 2021