



Wiltshire Mid Branch Registered Charity 205295

# RSPCA WILTSHIRE MID BRANCH

## TRUSTEE'S ANNUAL REPORT

### FOR THE YEAR ENDED

31 DECEMBER 2020



# Contents

## **REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS**

Trustees

Committee

Contact Information

## **STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT**

Branch Management

## **OBJECTS, OBJECTIVES AND PRINCIPAL ACTIVITIES**

Alleviating suffering

Promoting kindness and preventing cruelty

Volunteering support

## **ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE**

Joint Report of the Chairman, Treasurer and Secretary

Collaboration with the National Society

Collaboration with the community

Collaboration with other Branches

Collaboration with the local Inspectors

## **FINANCIAL REVIEW**

## **FUTURE PLANS**

## **STATEMENT OF TRUSTEE'S RESPONSIBILITIES**

## **BALANCE SHEET / ACCOUNTS**

As at 31<sup>st</sup> December 2020

## **CHIEF INSPECTOR'S REPORT 2020**

## **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2020**

## REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

The RSPCA Wiltshire Mid Branch operates in central Wiltshire, covering the four towns of Devizes, Melksham, Warminster and Westbury and the Surrounding villages. It is a registered charity and its charity number is **205295**.

### Trustees

The committee comprises ten volunteers with a broad range of life experiences and careers, all sharing a common passion for animal welfare – specifically preventing cruelty, alleviating suffering and promoting kindness.

### Committee

Mr. Andrew Sheppard (Chairman)

Mr. Richard Pearce (Treasurer)

Miss Jane Barton (Secretary)

Mrs. Sheila Colcomb

Mrs. Elizabeth Davies (Regional Representative)

Mrs. Claire Maggs (Auxiliary Secretary Warminster / Westbury)

Mrs. Lesley Pawlak

Mrs. Jo Sheppard

Miss Sarah Welch

Mrs. Lorna Gough

### Contact Information

For communication purposes the principal address is C/o Rangebourne Pet Care, New Park Street, Devizes, the business address of the Chairman Mr. Sheppard.

The web site is <https://www.rspca.org.uk/local/wiltshire-mid-branch/> This site shows details of how to get in touch for animal welfare purposes alongside current news and national and local campaigns/events.

The financial accounts are independently examined by Alanbrookes Group Ltd., t/a J S Weeks & Co., 10 Market Place, Devizes, SN10 1HT. Branch funds are held by Lloyds Bank PLC, Devizes.

# STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

The Branch is constituted as an unincorporated association. The Branch operates as an autonomous Branch of the National RSPCA subject to its rules for Branches. A committee of Trustees, elected at the Annual General Meeting governs the Branch. All Trustees are briefed on their responsibilities as Trustees prior to their acceptance of the role.

The Branch operates within a national network of organisations that pursue the same objectives, known collectively as the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. The network comprises independent Branches operating within a defined geographical area for the purposes of fundraising and the provision of animal care facilities and treatments.

A regional structure which is overseen on a national basis, brings several Branch colleagues together with Inspectors, regional and national representatives. The purpose is to discuss regional funding, co-ordinate policies and objectives as well as provide opportunities for colleagues to share knowledge and experiences. The regional representative for the Wiltshire Mid Branch in 2020 was Mrs. Liz Davies.

Representatives of the Branches, regional and national organisations meet at this forum on a regular (at least bi-annual) basis.

The Branch also has links with other Branches and organisations committed to the same objectives including among others, Cats Protection, Wiltshire Wildlife Hospital and RSPCA Bath Cats and Dogs Home.

## **Branch Management**

The Trustees meet every eight weeks to discuss progress on the year's activities and to agree any required actions. The Branch finances are reviewed at each meeting to ensure donated funds are used appropriately and to mitigate any risks.

The Trustees also examine other operational and business risks and confirm that they have established systems to mitigate any significant risks, such as:-

1. Loss of reputation through error or fraud
2. Loss of income through error or fraud
3. Insufficient funds to cover the costs of animal welfare activities

These meetings are also used to ensure that the Branch operates in accordance with any relevant National Society rules, processes and initiatives – guided by the Branch Partnership Manager.

## OBJECTS, OBJECTIVES AND PRINCIPAL ACTIVITIES

The objects of the Branch are to promote the work and objectives of the National Society of the RSPCA – to prevent animal cruelty, to promote kindness to animals and to alleviate the suffering of animals through all lawful means – with particular reference to the Branch area and in accordance with the policies of the Society.

The Trustees have reviewed the outcomes and achievements of the Branch's objectives and activities for the year to ensure they remain focused on the charity's aims and continue to deliver benefits to the public. The Trustees have complied with the duty under the Charities Act 1993 to have due regard to public benefit guidance published by the Charity Commission which can be illustrated as follows: -

### **Alleviating Suffering**

A priority for the Branch is to ensure appropriate veterinary care is available for animals whose owners are on benefits or a low income and may be reluctant or anxious about the costs of seeing a vet. The Branch provides donations towards veterinary treatment for sick or injured animals owned by local people on low incomes through a voucher scheme.

During 2020 vouchers to the total value of £35,898.75 were issued in the Branch area this was a colossal increase almost doubling from that issued the previous year (£16,738.53). The neutering campaign amounted to a further £19,009.35 a separate issue from the voucher system. For a greater understanding of this issue please find detailed below an analysis of veterinary charges incurred in 2020:-

Cats	Female Spay	12390		22.56%	
Cats	Male neuter	7634		13.90%	
Cats	Medical/Surgical	15935		29.02%	
Cats	Microchipping	2824		5.14%	
<b>Cats Total</b>			38782		71%
Dogs	Female Spay	3081		5.61%	
Dogs	Male Neuter	1441		2.62%	
Dogs	Medical/Surgical	10899		19.85%	
<b>Dogs Total</b>			15421		28%
Others	Neutering	397		0.72%	
Others	Medical/Surgical	308		0.56%	
<b>Others Total</b>			705		1%
<b>Grand Total</b>			<b>54908</b>		<b>100%</b>

## Promoting kindness and preventing cruelty

We use our Community Action Days to encourage owners to take responsibility for routine care such as flea treatments and worming to avoid issues developing into acute or chronic situations, causing the animal greater distress. We provide free treatments, which are administered on the spot by the Wiltshire Council Dog Wardens and local vets, who kindly support us at these events.

The Branch also offers subsidised neutering of companion animals for owners on low incomes, this helps to control dog and cat populations and promotes responsible pet ownership.

### **Volunteering Support**

RSPCA Wiltshire Mid Branch provide volunteering opportunities for those who wish to support our work including Trusteeship, fundraising and event participation.

The Branch continues to make efforts to attract new Trustees.

# ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

## **Joint Report of Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer for 2020**

Another year has passed us by since our last report and as usual before we begin a record of our endeavours for 2020, our thanks must in the first instance be directed to the continued support and dedication provided by the members of the committee and to our helpers and supporters who continue to assist when needed.

As will be recollected from previous reports, following a financial crisis which occurred at the Wiltshire Wildlife Hospital at Newton Tony, Salisbury, the Committee were unanimous in their desire to assist them and provide some financial support. To this end a proposal was presented to the Regional Board for consideration.

The proposal took the form of a suggestion which would enable the Branch to provide long term financial assistance; 'the Hospital would provide the Branch with an invoice based on the number of wildlife casualties treated, which originated from the Mid Wilts area, this would be broken down into a percentage of the running costs of the Hospital, all payments would be open to debate and approval by the committee'. The Regional Board placed their seal of approval on the proposal and the hospital was informed of the decision.

In line with that agreement, in February 2020 an invoice was duly received and based upon the figures provided, it was agreed that the sum of £11,174. 50 should be donated to the Hospital; this figure would represent our total financial support for 2019 up to and including the 1<sup>st</sup> January 2020. Details of our contribution to cover 2020 was not available at close of play of this year and will be included in our report to cover 2021.

The Committee are very happy to continue supporting the Hospital which provide dedicated care of injured and rehabilitating wildlife originating from our community area, this in turn has the knock-on effect of helping to reduce the workload of our Inspectors, who, without the Hospital's intervention would be required to attend and deal with many of these casualties.

World Spay Day was nominated for the 25<sup>th</sup> February 2020 and Mr. Pearce our Treasurer and in conjunction with Cats Protection (Frome and District Branch) expressed a desire to carry out a neutering campaign in support of this event. The Committee members were supportive of this suggestion and it was agreed that the campaign should take the form previously used, by utilising computer based application forms which proved very successful in the past. Mr. Pearce was ably assisted by members of the committee in monitoring and processing the applications.

In February 2020 we had great plans to hold further Community Action Events; the first was planned and booked for Devizes, Mrs. Pawlak (committee member) was also keen to continue our support of the Keep Britain Tidy Day (Great British Spring Clean) and had made tentative steps to organise this. Unfortunately, due to the COVID pandemic everything was put on hold,

we had hoped that we could perhaps go ahead with some of our plans later in the year, but as we all know that did not happen.

During the course of the year, we had to concentrate on what we could do, within the confines of lockdowns and restricted access. This really centred around the neutering campaign which was extended for a further three months until the end of July 2020 and to providing much needed veterinary financial assistance and welfare advice, due to an increase in the number of people suffering financial distress.

In the early part of the year, we were contacted by the National Society requesting assistance with a view to providing a monetary contribution to a newly created Branch Emergency Fund. Due to the current restrictions, animal centres were closed to the public and Branch clinics and shops were also closed resulting in a devastating effect on many Branches finances. The fund would be set up to provide much needed financial assistance to those Branches most in need, in order to enable them to continue serving their communities and animals.

The suggestion was that Branches might consider donating the residue of the Door-to-Door Fundraising money after the National Societies allocation had been deducted. The committee were all provided with the relevant information and asked if they would be agreeable to the donation of the Door-to-Door fundraising money to the Emergency Fund a figure of £23,795.00. All the committee were unanimous in their wish to assist, and the National Society were informed accordingly.

As with all things at this time, we were unable to hold our Annual General Meeting in June 2020, the National Society had given Branches dispensation to defer AGMs until the end of the year, in the hope that restrictions might ease and meetings could take place, as the situation did not improve, we had the option of holding a 'virtual' meeting or deferring to 2021, when, if meetings were permitted, we could hold a joint 2019/2020 AGM.

The Committee discussed the options and due to the logistics needed to hold a 'virtual' meeting it was decided to defer until June 2021. A letter was sent to all members informing them of this decision and directed them to the Branch website where the Annual Report for 2019 could be viewed.

The extended neutering campaign concluded at the end of July 2020 overall 474 applications had been received providing neutering vouchers for 744 cats, the value of the vouchers being in the region of £28,000, this figure included the trapping, neutering and returning to site of approximately 30-40 cats from established feral colonies.

Last year it may be recalled that Mrs. Jo Sheppard (committee member) had established two cat pens within her garden for the purposes of fostering / rehoming cats which had come to the Branch's attention. The question of registration with the RSPCA had been in abeyance for some time, but the crux of the decision amounted to whether we wished to re-home to the general public or to an RSPCA facility i.e. Bath Cats and Dogs Home, if the latter then the pens could only be used as a holding facility until they could be matched to a prospective owner through BCDH.



Mrs. Sheppard wished to have a 'hands on' approach with regard to re-homing and following an approach by a local Cat Rescue charity it was decided to sell the pens, and the total cost of purchase and erection of the pens was reimbursed to the Branch.

Mrs. Sheppard retains control of the pens on her property and will still be taking cats which originate from the Branch area, nothing in essence will change in that respect, the only difference being that she will be working with Cat Rescue instead of the RSPCA with regard to their care and re-homing.

Earlier in the year, Mr. Pearce (Treasurer) had received notification from a Trust based in Florida (America) that a bequest had been made to the Branch alongside some other animal related charities in the UK. From the limited information available, it would appear that the lady to whom the Trust applies had some interest in the Melksham area of Wiltshire. The process of transferring monies from abroad has been laborious, and at the close of this financial year, the amount to be allotted to the Branch from the Trust Fund had not been received, the amount is believed to be in the region of £62,000, full details and confirmation of amount received will be included in our report for 2021.

At close of play for 2020, no plans for events to be held in 2021 have been able to be made due to the current governmental restrictions imposed during lockdown, however all things being equal we will be aiming for at least one Community Action Event later in the year, possibly in Devizes as previously agreed. The same applies to holding our Annual General Meeting, when and if we are able to go ahead with an AGM which is open to the public, a letter will be forwarded to members and notification will be made on the Branch website along with the 2020 Annual Report which can be viewed there.

As an aside, if there are any members or supporters who could assist with any of our events (as and when / if they happen!) in the future, it would be greatly appreciated, the committee are small in number, many with a number of additional responsibilities and limited free time and any offers of assistance would be greatly appreciated.

That brings us to the end of another year; an eventful one in ways which none of us expected, we were unfortunately unable to carry out many of the things we had planned, but together with the extended neutering campaign and the extensive financial veterinary assistance we have provided, we have we hope, helped to make peoples lives and financial situations more bearable.

In conclusion, as always, our grateful thanks are extended to everyone who has supported us in whatever way during the past year either financially or by the generous gift of their time. Our thanks go to our Branch Partnership Manager, Mrs. Robson, local authorities and Veterinary Practices and our dedicated Inspectors and their colleagues.

**Detailed below are bullet points in support of the following topics: -**

### **Collaboration with the National Society**

It is a given that we always support the National Society objectives, where appropriate, and within our capability. Guided by our Branch Partnership Manager we use the regular Branch Communications to identify opportunities to get involved.

As part of our commitment to running a properly regulated charity we have established several Branch policies and have adopted the principle of a Branch Annual Review through which we may reflect on past work and to plan future activities.

### **Collaboration with the Community**

This is a core objective for the Branch, however due to the Governmental restrictions imposed during 2020 we have been unable to hold any community-based events, however with the lifting of restrictions, this will we hope, be addressed during the course of 2021.

### **Collaboration with other Branches and Charities**

As will have been seen from previous reports the Branch agreed to North Wilts Branch siting an RSPCA shop in Warminster, under the terms of the arrangement the Branch receives a percentage of the profits which this year amounted to £2,290.00 and £813.00 being donations made at the shop to benefit the Mid Wilts Branch.

Wiltshire Wildlife Hospital continues to receive monetary support from the Branch resulting in a payment of £11,201.63 being awarded to them in January 2020 covering the period up until the close of 2019.

### **Collaboration with the Local Inspectors**

The RSPCA Inspectors provide knowledge and experience to the Branch which is invaluable, the wide range of issues and problems they face can be seen from the Chief Inspector's Report included within this Report.

### **Fundraising**

Over the years we have been fortunate to receive several legacies which have enabled us to fund our current range of activities. During the course of this year, we received notification of a legacy from a Trust based in Florida, USA, at the time of writing this report the monies were still unavailable (please see Joint Report for further information).

## FINANCIAL REVIEW

The total incoming resources for the year amounted to £38,090.34 (2019 : £84,255.94 – in 2019 we received a legacy amounting to £51,533.78 to clarify the difference in totals). Expenditure in the year amounted to £92,417.02 (2019 : £58,026.32) a considerable increase compared to the previous year as a result of the high volume of veterinary welfare assistance provided (see accounts). The surplus at the end of the year 2020 is £130,157.61 (2019 : £184,484.29).

It is the policy of the Branch to maintain free reserves for the Branch at a level equal to approximately five years' unrestricted expenditure, to allow for fluctuations in donations and legacies on which the Branch relies. Our Trustees are keen that money should not be retained unnecessarily simply to ensure sustainability.

Free reserves are defined as unrestricted reserves (funds donated for a specific purpose which cannot be used for anything other than the purpose for which they were donated).

In line with the Branch Rules, an annual donation is made to the National Society, this amount is calculated as a percentage of our free reserves. This donation is deducted at source from our share of the Door-to-Door collection that we receive annually from the National Society.

As will be seen from the Joint Report the remainder of the Door-to-Door funding which we would have received was donated back to the National Society this year as the Branch's contribution to the Branch Emergency Fund which was set up in April 2020 to provide financial support to the Branch network, due to the closure of Animal Homes and Clinics during the lockdown period (please see the Joint Report for further information).

The investment policy, taken on advice following receipt of legacies, takes into account our cautious attitude to risk, with investment funds stored in National Savings Income Bonds.

The Trustees have no designated funds for expenditure in the next twelve months, apart from an amount in the region of £11,000 which will be donated to the Wiltshire Wildlife Hospital during 2021.

## FUTURE PLANS

Together with our regular and continuing support provided to those in need of financial veterinary assistance, our plans include a neutering campaign in support of World Spay Day 2021 and hopefully some Community Action Events the latter being dependant on an easing of governmental restrictions during the COVID pandemic.

We continue to look to increase our Volunteer / Trustee base with a view to bringing fresh ideas into the group.

We will continue to work with our local Inspectors, supporting them on specific animal welfare projects as identified by them.

# STATEMENT OF TRUSTEES' RESPONSIBILITIES

The Trustees are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Annual Report and their financial statements in accordance with applicable laws and regulations.

Law applicable to charities in England and Wales require the Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year. The financial statements are required by law to give a true and fair view of the state of affairs and the net incoming and outgoing resources of the Charity for that period. In preparing the financial statements, Trustees are required to: -

1. Select suitable policies and then apply them consistently;
2. Make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent; and
3. Prepare financial statements on a going-concern basis, unless it is inappropriate to presume that the Branch will continue in operation.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the Charity and to enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charities Act 1993. They have general responsibility for taking such steps as are reasonably open, to safeguard the assets of the Charity and to prevent and detect fraud and other irregularities.

So far as the Trustees are aware, there is no relevant audit information of which the Charity's auditors are unaware. Additionally, the Trustees have taken all the steps needed in order to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the Charity's auditors are aware of that information.

# **BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2020**

**ROYAL SOCIETY FOR THE PREVENTION OF  
CRUELTY TO ANIMALS**

**WILTSHIRE MID BRANCH**

**CHARITY REGISTRATION NUMBER 205295**

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**REPORT AND ACCOUNTS**

**YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2020**

**ROYAL SOCIETY FOR THE PREVENTION OF CRUELTY TO ANIMALS –  
WILTSHIRE MID BRANCH  
Report of the Independent Examiner  
To The Officers and Committee of Royal Society for the Prevention of  
Cruelty to Animals – Wiltshire Mid Branch**

I report on the accounts of the Charity for the year ended 31 December 2020, which are set out on pages 3 to 5.

**Respective Responsibilities of Trustees and Examiner**

The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The charity's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year (under section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act)) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to:-

- examine the accounts (under section 145 of the 2011 Act);
- to follow the procedures laid down in the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners (under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act); and
- to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

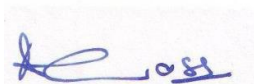
**Basis of Independent Examiner's Report**

My examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently I do not express an audit opinion on the view given by the accounts.

**Independent Examiner's Statement**

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

1. which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements:
  - to keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the 2011 Act, and
  - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the 2011 Act,have not been met; or
2. to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.



.....  
Mrs A M Cross FCCA  
Alanbrookes Group Ltd t/a J S Weeks & Co  
10 Market Place  
Devizes  
Wiltshire  
SN10 1HT

30 April 2021

**ROYAL SOCIETY FOR THE PREVENTION OF CRUELTY TO ANIMALS -  
WILTSHIRE MID BRANCH**

**BALANCE SHEET  
AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2020**

<b>2019</b>		<b>2020</b>
<b>£</b>		<b>£</b>
	<b>Accumulated Fund</b>	
158,254.67	Balance Brought Forward	184,484.29
	Add Surplus of Income	
26,229.62	Over Expenditure	-
	Deduct Excess of Expenditure	
-	Over Income	(54,326.68)
-----		-----
184,484.29		130,157.61
=====		=====
	<b>Represented By:</b>	
	<b>Investments</b>	
180,000.00	National Savings Income Bonds	130,000.00
15,006.20	Bank Deposit Account	13,002.68
	<b>Current Assets</b>	
2,850.00	Bank Current Account	1,663.83
-----		-----
197,856.20		144,666.51
(13,371.91)	Less:- Creditors	(14508.90)
-----		-----
184,484.29		130,157.61
=====		=====



**ROYAL SOCIETY FOR THE PREVENTION OF CRUELTY TO ANIMALS -  
WILTSHIRE MID BRANCH**

**INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT  
YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2020**

<b>2019</b>	<b>INCOME</b>	<b>2020</b>
<b>£</b>		<b>£</b>
411.85	Subscriptions and Donations	580.80
3,055.49	Warminster Shop – Share of Profit	2,290.00
-	Warminster Shop – Donations	813.00
53.78	Collecting Boxes	-
-	Cat Cage Costs Refunded	7,377.58
-	VAT Refund	79.42
813.54	Devizes Dog Show	-
51,533.78	Legacy	-
26,739.00	Door to Door Collection	25,173.00
-----		-----
82,607.44		36,313.80
	<b>Investment Income</b>	
1,648.50	Interest Received	1,776.54
-----		-----
84,255.94		38,090.34
=====		=====

**ROYAL SOCIETY FOR THE PREVENTION OF CRUELTY TO ANIMALS -  
WILTSHIRE MID BRANCH**

**INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT  
YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2020**

<b>2019</b>		<b>EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>2020</b>	
<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>		<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
6,064.00		Branch Contribution to RSPCA	1,378.00	
16,738.53		Veterinary Fees – General	35,898.75	
14,700.99		Neutering Campaigns	19,009.35	
478.41		Veterinary Fees - Rehoming	-	
45.00		Goods Purchased	15.00	
15.00		Bank Charges	-	
360.00		Independent Examiner's Fees	360.00	
33.00		Telephone	200.18	
11,174.50		Wildlife Hospital	11,201.63	
-		Donation to RSPCA Emergency Fund	23,795.00	
7,377.58		Rehoming Service Setup – Cat Pens	-	
515.20		Dog Show Devizes	-	
-		Action Day Devizes	-	
-		ICO Fees	35.00	
524.11		Insurance	524.11	
-----	58,026.32		-----	92,417.02
		Surplus of Income over Expenditure		
	26,229.62	Carried to Accumulated Fund		-
		Excess of Expenditure over Income		
	(-)	Carried to Accumulated Fund		(54,326.68)
-----			-----	
	84,255.94			38,090.34
=====			=====	



# Dorset & Wilts 2020 Annual Branch Report

2020



## Dorset & Wilts news...

So where do we start with Dorset & Wiltshire news for the year? A lot has changed since January 2020!

At the beginning of the year, I managed the Inspectors, Animal Welfare officers (AWOs) and Animal Collection officers (ACOs) of the previously known SSW6 group and I recall the first couple months were very busy. The group found themselves dealing with many welfare concerns presented by the ceaseless wet weather. Much time and effort was spent working with owners of equines and livestock who faced the greatest challenges with their animals. Due to proactive working the group managed to facilitate positive resolutions throughout this period without the need for a single prosecution which was fantastic.

In the first couple months the group rescued and found homes for a variety of animals including dogs, cats, pigs, ponies, snakes & lizards!



In February I visited our National Control Centre along with Deputy Chief Inspector Sandy Barlow to spend some time with our local schedulers and scheduling manager who work so hard assessing and tasking out welfare concerns to the field officers received from members of the public.

It is strange now thinking back to that time, enjoying a visit to our NCC friends in the bubbling busy call centre..... for nearly a year now they have been carrying on their vital role working individually from home. The NCC had to adapt very quickly to the changing world around us as we all have done.

In March and April with the onset of the Coronavirus pandemic, the group faced the challenges of adapting to new ways of working with the added pressures this presented. 2 officers from the group were furloughed to help support the RSPCA financially as predictions for a difficult year were being realised. The SSW6 team dedicated themselves to doing all that they could to reach and help the animals most in need during this time. Throughout the following 6 months the group attended emergency collections / rescues and complaints as well as giving advice on the phone and constantly assessing all other jobs which came in to ensure animals in need were not let down. We assisted people in the community who had been affected by the pandemic including rescuing animals left home alone because their owners had been taken seriously ill, people struggling to make ends meet due to financial pressures of the crisis and assistance to vulnerable people who need to get their animals to a vet or need help with provisions for their animals.

With animal centres closed to the public we assisted our branch and animal centre partners with new fostering and adopting of animals by helping to transport animals to their new homes.

The team became even more accomplished at solving problems and worked together supportively, resolving jobs in the height of the initial lockdown period and it was good to see the easing of pressures as we came out the summer.



However, although the lockdown restrictions had eased and there was some relief to be had, at the same time the financial pressures on the society as a result of the pandemic were extreme and sadly we saw some redundancies at this time. We lost Animal Collection officers Darren Woodroof, Sue Brooks and Rebecca Ladd as part of the nationwide restructure and disestablishment of the ACO role. With the restructure came the formation of new group areas and the field officers had a difficult time adjusting to the loss of some of their colleagues, changes to their group and line manager whilst still being on the front line for animal welfare during the pandemic. The officers remained dedicated to doing all they could do for animal welfare and any extra help provided to them at this time from our fantastic branches was very much appreciated, especially as our branches would have been struggling under their own pressures too due to the 'coronavirus effect'.

In October I became Chief Inspector for the newly structured Dorset & Wiltshire group, which is where we are today. It was a big change for us as the officers in our Dorset & Wiltshire group have come together from 4 surrounding groups. The group are amazing and work well to support each other which has been excellent to see.



The introduction of new voucher books to the group and the ability to provide animal welfare assistance more efficiently has been a great help. These are the voucher books which provide aid from the regional branch fund. Here are some of the issues that the vouchers have helped resolve this year:

[Cat with sores on face](#)

Dog with life threatening complications during pregnancy - emergency C-section  
Dogs with overgrown claws  
Dogs with mammary tumour  
Flea allergies and associated skin problems for both dogs and cats  
Consultations and initial meds for arthritic animals  
Assistance with PTS for an elderly dog  
Dog with painful swollen abdomen - foreign body blockage  
Assistance with wound management after accident  
Operation on dog to remove tumour  
Self mutilation wounds from stress caused by phantom pregnancy for a dog  
Assistance with flea treating and worming, various animals  
Assistance towards dental costs, various animals  
Initial consultation appointment with vet for various animals

Many Thanks for this assistance, it has helped make a difference to so many animals! ❁



Between Autumn and Christmas we saw the gradual creep towards a fuller lockdown again as we are all aware. However, one of the positive things we saw during this time is many of our delayed court cases coming through the system. Many prosecution cases that had been dealt with by the officers had been 'on hold' due to a backlog of cases in the courts due to the pandemic - seeing them come

through enables us to progress positive outcomes for animal welfare offences and rehome some animals which previously had not been signed over and were ‘stuck’ in our animal centres or in private boarding. We had some very good results in court which is testament to the quality and integrity of the officers’ investigations.

2020 saw: (Data taken from stats available from Oct -Dec after new group restructure then estimated for previous group structures)

Incidents Attended	New Prosecution Cases
2164	15

Here are some links to a few successful prosecution cases from the year:

[Press Release](#) (Rottie, Lulu)

[Press Release](#) (Cat, Maisie & Jack Russel, Lola)

[Press Release](#) (Kitten, Betty Boo)

[Press Release](#) (Birds)

[Press release](#) (Dog, Bella)

The group still have 14 open prosecution cases currently proceeding through the courts at this time.

# Here's a review of the year in pictures including some of our favourite rescues!



## Poodle Pandemonium.....

Inspector Harriet Maund & DCI Sandy Barlow worked together to help some poodles which were in a house of 25 where the owner had let things get out of hand. By working hard to build a relationship of trust with the owner the majority of the poodles have now been removed for rehoming. The job is ongoing, and the aim is to leave the owner with a few manageable and neutered dogs where they will have a good quality of life together. Animal Collection Officer Becky Ladd with Chief Inspector Lewis Taylor (who had a much-needed day out of the office!) also assisted Harriet & Sandy with transporting some of the dogs.



# For Falcons Saker!



Inspector Jan Edwards was called to a stray falcon found near Basingstoke. Jan identified the beautiful bird as a Gyr Saker Falcon. It was tired and hungry but otherwise not hurt. Jan was initially thankful that the Saker was chipped but on making enquiries found that he had been sold to a new owner but the new owner had not updated their details. Jan took him to West Hatch for some much-needed TLC and rehoming.

# Most Improved Pooch.....



Animal Welfare Officer Laura Wheeler was able to secure the sign over of this bedraggled and matted Shitzhu in Thatcham.

Look what a difference a simple bath and trim makes!

# Bordon badger is the friendliest kind.....





Inspector Jan Edwards made several visits to some horses in Bordon regarding concerns for their welfare. Jan was able to deal with the various issues at the location including a particular issue involving the abandonment of a beautiful young horse, a Cob aged about 1 ½ years who Jan described as very cute ..... A member of the public named the little colt 'Badger'.

Badger has gone on to find a new loving forever home!

## Masked Intruders ....

After a call from social Services, Inspector Sharon Chrisp and Chief Inspector Lewis Taylor attended an address in the Newbury area after 2 pet birds had been left unattended at a flat. The owners had been admitted to hospital due to Coronavirus and their beloved pets, a budgie and a cockatiel had been left at home free flying around the living room.

It certainly wasn't a fashion show after Sharon and Lewis donned full PPE to enter the property. The birds gave the perceived masked intruders the run around for a short while before they were expertly



caught and transported to a boarding establishment where they will be cared for until the owners have returned home.

## A Mothers Love.....

Animal Welfare Officer Justine Hermon had a very sad call late one Sunday night when a deer had been badly hit by a car on one of the main roads in Basingstoke. On arrival Justine saw a female Roe Deer which had been hit by the car and had suffered a badly broken leg. Despite the horrendous injury the mother deer had dragged herself across the road to a field in order to feed her 2 fawns

which were waiting for her hunkered down in the grass. After the fawns had been fed and Justine was able to make a closer assessment, sadly the mother's injuries were extensive, and she needed to be euthanized to stop her suffering.

On a more happier note Justine was able to swiftly take the orphaned fawns to oak & furrows wildlife Hospital and on a recent update they are thriving and have also been joined by a third fawn - all will be released together as soon as they are old enough. If the caller hadn't seen the mother deer hit by the car we never would have known about the 2 fawns that would need rescuing when the mother died.



## One team!

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic and the current restrictions in place surrounding animal rehoming, our animal centres have been closed to the public. This has made it more difficult for centres to rehome animals and the team have been helping the centres with taking animals to their new fur-ever home.

Animal Welfare Officer Justine Hermon helped out RSPCA Southall by chauffeuring Elsa, who had fallen from a high balcony whilst pregnant and broken all her toes! After 3 months of cage rest, she is now relaxing with loving owners in her new home in Newbury. Elsa had kittens whilst in our care and happily these also have loving new homes.





Animal Collection Officer Becky Ladd also helped out South Cotswold Animal Home by transporting Pippy and Pebbles. Becky took Pippy to her lovely new home in Marlborough, and then met with Inspector Harriet Maund who took Pebbles down to her new home in Southampton.

I feel it's a lovely change for our front-line officers who deal with so many distressing incidents to experience this brighter side of the RSPCA's work rehabilitating and rehoming.

Safely transported to a new forever home!



## Toe-loose and Fancy Free!



Inspector Charlotte Coggins was called to rescue a Bearded Dragon which had been callously dumped in a cardboard box behind some bins in Dorchester. Affectionately names Toe-less Trevor by Charlotte as he had a toe missing on one foot - he was taken to the vets for a check over and treatment for dehydration. Despite following every line of enquiry, Charlotte was unable to locate Trevor's owner and he was transported to RSPCA Brighton for rehoming.

# Skua...aaawwk!!



Inspector Patrick Bailey was called to Chesil Beach after a call was received about a distressed bird. Patrick found a large bird which had been washed up and battered by the waves and took the poor bird home for the immediate relief of warmth / food / water.

Patrick was delighted when he realised, he had rescued a Great Skua, not commonly seen and known as 'Pirates of the Sea'. Well, this pirate was much brighter after a night of warmth and nourishment but looked to have lost its waterproofing. Patrick transported the Skua to West hatch for further rehab and release.

# True love after a stormy start



Animal Rescue Officer Jo Blackburn (aka. Cupid) was called to rescue a crash-landed swan after a storm in Poole. It started to head for a busy dual carriageway middle of rush hour but luckily the police were contacted and very bravely herded it into a small children's play park.

When Jo arrived she expertly caught up the poor swan after a good check over decided it was OK to be released.

Jo guessed it may have come from the River Stour but rather than risk accidentally releasing the swan into another's territory which could result in aggressive fighting - Jo thought it would be safer to release the swan straight into a flock situation in Holes Bay, Poole harbour.

Well, that was certainly a sliding doors moment  
.....as this was the result....



# Happy homecoming

Inspector Charlotte Coggins dealt with a job in Dorchester where a poor cat Called Jordan was found caught in an illegal gin trap. Jordan had been missing from his home for at least a month before he was found and thankfully was rushed to the vets for treatment and was able to to go home and make a full recovery. Jordan's owners were overjoyed when the news came that he had been found and would be OK.

Inspector Charlotte Coggins investigated and despite a press release for information Charlotte was unable to find who had set the deadly trap.





# Joint effort at Portland Bill



Before Christmas Animal Rescue officer Jo Blackburn had a call about a possibly injured seal pup around Chesil beach - but despite attending and searching for some time for the pup Jo was unable to locate as the pup must have been washed back out to sea. Then a few days later Jo was called out to an injured seal pup on a small rocky cove near the lighthouse at Portland Bill. It was likely the same seal Jo had previously looked for on Chesil beach.

The pup had various old looking wounds on it, but was extremely feisty still and difficult to confine. Due to the inaccessibility of the location, Jo contacted the coastguard for assistance. About 15 Coast Guard crew turned up very quickly and helped Jo get her kennel down to the cove. Jo was able to successfully confine the seal inside the kennel and with the assistance of the crew carried the poor pup back to her van.

The seal was taken straight to West Hatch for assessment.





Although we were all glad to see the back of 2020, with all the challenges faced with the coronavirus pandemic I am proud of the officers of both teams I have managed in this time, of what they have achieved alone, working in a very difficult climate, what they achieved working together with their colleagues and what we have all achieved working alongside each other.

It is easy to forget all the positive outcomes we achieve in a world where often only the negative news endures - but there have been many!



As well as looking forward to having a bit of respite from this pandemic, we look forward to being able to do even more Together for Animal Welfare in 2021!

Thank you to our branches for your help throughout all of 2020 🌸

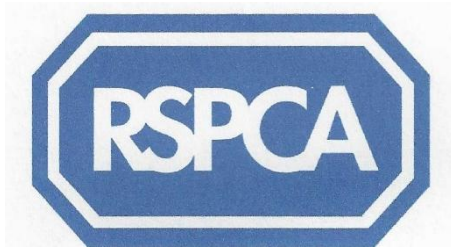
- **We are Compassionate**
- **We are Inspirational**
- **We are Committed**
- **We are Expert**
- **We act with Integrity**



# **MINUTES OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING FOR YEAR ENDING 2020**

Due to the COVID pandemic the Branch was unable to hold an Annual General Meeting in 2020, dispensation has been granted by the National Society to hold a joint 2019 / 2020 AGM in 2021, when restrictions will hopefully be relaxed.





Please help us to continue our work by becoming a member. Details on how to join the different options provided are shown on the main RSPCA website:

<https://www.rspca.org.uk/getinvolved/becomeamember>

You can find out about and donate to your local Branch (RSPCA Wiltshire Mid Branch) through our web pages: -

<https://www.rspca.org.uk/local/wiltsire-mid-branch>

If you live in our Branch area and need support with your companion pets please email us on:-

[rspcawiltsmid@gmail.com](mailto:rspcawiltsmid@gmail.com)

For local welfare / financial assistance please call us on: -

**07395 560639 or  
07748 468355**

To report incidents of cruelty or an animal in distress call the National Society 24 hour cruelty line:-

**0300 1234 999**

You can also use the secure online reporting facility on the National Society's web page: -

<https://rspca.org.uk/utilities/contactus/reportcruelty>