



**RSPCA Kent-North
West Branch**

Registered Charity No. 210633

Trustees' Report and Financial Statements for the year ending 31 December 2023



2023 – A tough year for animals

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Reference and administrative details of the charity, its trustees and advisers for the year ended 31 December 2023

Charity Registered Number; 210633

Names of charity trustees who manage the charity

Trustee name	Office (if any)	Dates acted if not for whole of year	Method of appointment
Mr B Charman	Chair		Elected
Mr E Grover	Treasurer		Elected
Ms H Taylor	Secretary		Elected
Mr J Bowley			Elected
Mr T Maddison			Elected
Ms K Maycock		Up to 5/5/23	Elected
Mr Tim Nicholls		From 28/6/23 to 28/9/23	Elected
Mr D Wordsworth			Elected
Rebecca Birs		From 29/11/23	Co opted

Independent Examiner; Jack Fryer, ACA, Hedley Dunk Ltd, Trinity House, 3 Bullace Lane, Dartford DA1 1BB

Bankers; Nat West Bank Plc, 12 High Street, Dartford DA1 1DD

HR and health and safety advisers; Acton Jennings

Charity's principal address; 37 Gordon Road, Dartford DA1 2LG

Correspondence can be addressed to the principal address or info@rspca-kentnorthwest.org.uk

Branch helpline; 01322 286720 Website; www.rspca-kentnorthwest.org.uk

Branch Shops	Unit 30, Orchard Shopping Centre, DARTFORD DA1 1DN	161 Windmill Street GRAVESEND DA12 1AH
Shop Managers	Mrs J Martin-Garcia	Mrs V Oakman

Chairman's Report

As I come to the end of my second year as Chairman of the RSPCA Kent North West branch, I am pleased to present our annual impact report, highlighting the progress we have made over the past year.

After what was already a highly productive year in 2022/2023, we have been able to build on our success and once again see an increase in our charitable activity. Specifically, we rescued 273 abandoned, neglected and unwanted animals, representing a 32% increase on 2022/23, in addition to neutering, microchipping, and funding the medical costs for many others. Particular highlights have been our leading role in the care of rabbits and our support for local food banks, as well as our responsive action on XL bully dogs. Overall, we have seen our rescue and re-homing work more than double in just a couple of years, which is a testament to the hard work and energy of our staff, volunteers and trustees.

We are continuing to grow in confidence and we are eager to sustain and build on this success. The past year has seen significant change, with the national RSPCA undergoing a rebrand and celebrating its 200th anniversary. We have also welcomed three new trustees, Rebecca, Androniki and Susanna, all with very strong professional backgrounds, while also sadly losing Thomas Madisson who passed away in March. The RSPCA will continue to play a key role but we are conscious that in order to remain relevant, we need to make sure that our work evolves to respond to changing needs and opportunities. At the same time, the volume and diversity of activity that we have been doing now puts us in a position where we will be seeking to organise our work better by developing more focused strategies, something that has begun and will continue over the coming months.

I am pleased to say that we are functioning well as a branch and that we remain united under our shared goals, while being mindful that we need to continue improving to deliver impactful services for the communities within our branch area. Thanks to the careful stewardship of our treasurer, Eric, and other trustees, we remain in a strong financial position and as a result there is scope for us to become more ambitious and expand – although this must be done in a way that is financially responsible and sustainable. The growth in our services and the effect of inflation over the past year mean that we need to continue to offset our spending with new fundraising ventures, something which presents a challenge for us and which will push us to further examine our role and the way we present ourselves to members of the public.

In presenting our annual report, I would like to personally applaud the efforts of Becky, our branch manager, Emma, our animal welfare (ACE) officer, and John, our animal welfare administrator, without whom we would have been unable to deliver our important animal welfare services. All of the work that we do depends on being able to raise the necessary funds, and for that we also owe a debt of gratitude to our charity shop staff and volunteers. Special thanks also to all of our trustees, including our branch secretary Harriet, and those who have recently joined, whose experience, skills and commitment to the cause are sincerely appreciated.



IN 2023 WE...

Spent
£230K
up **30%** on 2022



Worked in partnership with

**10 LOCAL
ANIMAL
CHARITIES**



Our Branch has **neutered over**

100 ANIMALS
INCLUDING LOTS OF XL BULLY DOGS

Spent
£30K
on **veterinary bills**
(the biggest of which was
£1,800 on Mark the ginger cat)



EMMA
OUR ANIMAL WELFARE OFFICER:

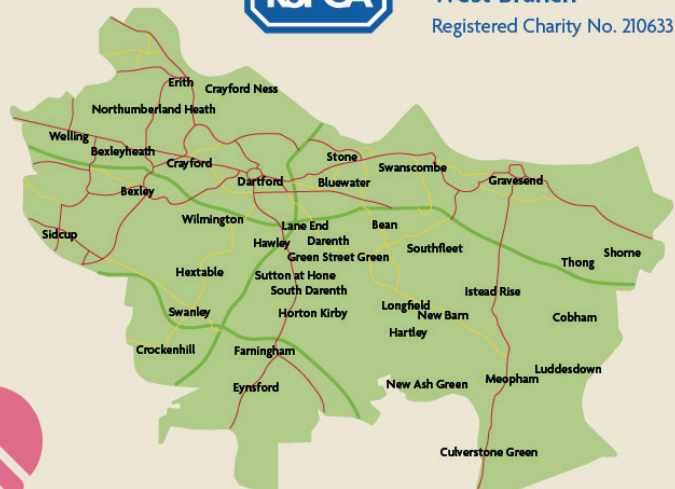
Drove her van **11,110 miles** and transported over **150** animals from danger to safety.

She also delivered over **£1,000** worth of pet food to our local food banks.

She spoke to over **2,000** children about compassion for animals.



**Kent-North
West Branch**
Registered Charity No. 210633



Rescued **273**
abandoned, neglected
and unwanted animals
(up **32%** on 2022)



These included

80 rabbits
plus cats, dogs, gerbils,
fish and many more



We improved our facilities for rabbits
and found amazing homes for

69
of them



Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals
RSPCA - Kent North West Branch is a separately registered Charity.
Charity number 210633. We are responsible for raising our own
funds from local donations.

Visit our website www.rspca-kentnorthwest.org.uk to find out
more about our work and how you can get involved.
Follow us on Facebook (RSPCA - Kent North West)

rspca-kentnorthwest.org.uk

Trustees' report for the year ending 31 December 2023

The Trustees present their annual report together with the financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2023

Structure, governance and management

The charity is constituted as an unincorporated association. The charity operates as an autonomous Branch of the National RSPCA subject to its rules for Branches (as updated in 2012). In the normal course of business, Committee members are elected at every Annual General Meeting from the members of the Branch, to carry on the work for the ensuing year. Candidates must receive 50% of the votes of the members present. The elected Branch Committee can co-opt not more than three members onto the committee until the next annual general meeting. All Committee members must be Society members for a minimum of three months on appointment.

The Committee members are Trustees of the Branch and are briefed on their responsibilities as trustees prior to their acceptance of the role. The trustees hold regular meetings at which decisions are made and conveyed to the Branch Manager and other staff for action. The day-to-day running of the shops is delegated to the Shop Managers.

Aims and objectives, public benefit statement and principle activities

The object of the charity is to promote kindness and good care and prevent or suppress cruelty to animals by all lawful means with particular reference to the area of the Branch, in accordance with the policies of the Society. Our area of benefit is all DA postcodes plus BR8 postcodes. Any animal that can have a quality of life and can be found a home will not be abandoned by our Branch. Our activities to achieve the objectives include the following activities which are always available:

- To provide veterinary welfare assistance for those on low incomes. This work benefits pet owners who cannot assist their pets themselves and are distressed to witness their pet suffering.
- To provide neutering and microchipping facilities for those on low incomes. This work benefits those members of the public on low income by giving them financial help and promoting responsible pet ownership. Neutering has both behavioural and health benefits for the animal which in turn benefits the owner.
- To support the Society's inspectorate in their work providing financial assistance and emergency accommodation for mistreated or abandoned animals, including pets whose owners suffer ill health or financial difficulties or pass away. The Society's Inspectorate, as well as providing education, information, and advice, rescues animals in distress and enforces laws against the cruel mistreatment of animals in England and Wales by bringing prosecutions. This work is key to 'the prevention or suppression of cruelty' part of the RSPCA objects and promotes humane sentiments

towards animals which involves moral benefit to humankind as a whole. The National Call Centre accepts complaints about animals in distress every day of the year and the public benefits by being able to call in for help when an animal is suffering, which can be very distressing for humans to witness and feel powerless to help.

- To accept stray and owned animals for rehoming or facilitate this by working in partnership with other RSPCA Branches. Animals in our care receive veterinary treatment, vaccination, neutering, microchipping and are assessed for rehoming. This work helps to control the incidence and spread of disease and suffering through vaccination and neutering. The work benefits our local community including local authorities as it reduces the incidence of abandonment and cruelty, and the public knows that we assist animals in need. Whilst we are primarily an animal charity, the service we offer pet owners who cannot assist their pets themselves in times of crisis can relieve much distress for the owner as well as the pet. We take steps to reunite stray animals with their owners which benefits our local community (including local authorities) by preventing animals straying and posing a risk to themselves and to people through road traffic accidents.

- The above activities are largely carried out by John Bowley our volunteer animal Welfare Officer and Emma Byrne a part time member of staff, working in partnership with RSPCA staff, local veterinary practices and other organisations working in the field of animal welfare. This includes providing pet food to our local food banks in response to the cost of living crisis. In addition, John Bowley runs our very busy Branch Helpline which is of great help to the public.

- We provide many volunteering opportunities for those who wish to support our work, including retail opportunities, fostering and fundraising. This benefits local people and companies by providing the possibility of doing work which is both compassionate and rewarding and offers experience which may assist participants in finding paid work. It is not possible to quantify the financial value of our volunteers but in 2023 we had the benefit of over 3,500 hours of volunteer work. Our two charity shops provide a valuable source of low cost, good quality recycled goods to the benefit of the public and the environment.

The Trustees have reviewed the outcomes and achievements for the year to ensure they remain focused on our charitable aims and continue to deliver benefits to the public. We have complied with this duty under the Charities Act 2006 to have due regard to public benefit guidance published by the Charity Commission.

Achievements and performance

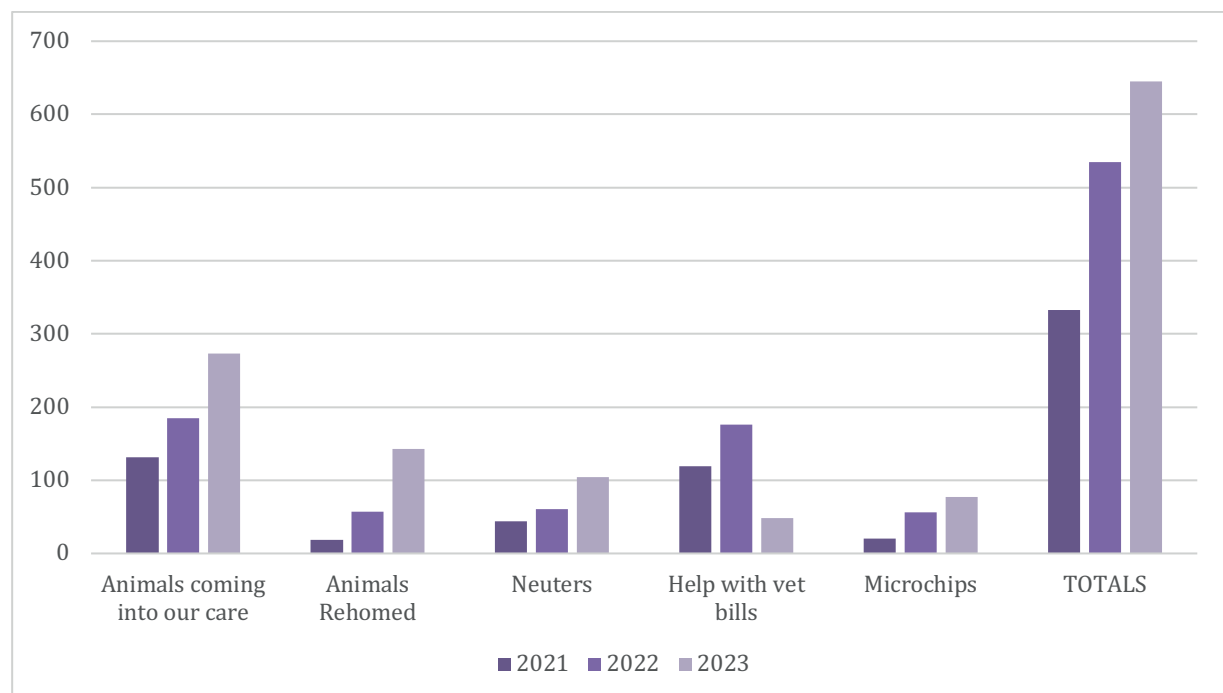
The Branch Trustees have much pleasure in presenting to the Branch Membership, the Annual Report together with the Annual Accounts, Financial Report and Balance Sheet of the Branch. 2023 was a challenging year but Members can be confident that the Branch remains in a very strong financial position. We increased the amount of animal welfare work which we carried out in 2023. This coupled with rising costs

across the board and falling shop profits did result in a deficit for the year of £40,829.07. In summary our income increased by £43,213.97 to £201,648.75. However, our expenditure increased by £67,775.11 to £241,364.11. The result was that the Branch assets decreased in value to £1,096,384.33 (down by £40,829.07). Whilst this situation would not be sustainable long term, we had enjoyed successive years of accruing surpluses which had left us in a very strong position. We do not face these challenges alone and most charities report 2023 having been a very tough year. At the end of 2023 we had implemented various measures to reduce non-charitable expenditure to ensure we didn't have to stop supporting all local animals that could have a good quality of life with our help.

Helping animals and owners in need of support

Our primary aim is continuing to increase, year on year, the amount of animal welfare work that we do and 2023 was another very successful year. We are a small organisation employing only two part time members of staff whose work includes animal welfare. We benefit from a massive contribution from a team of volunteers who enabled us to help over 600 animals in 2023.

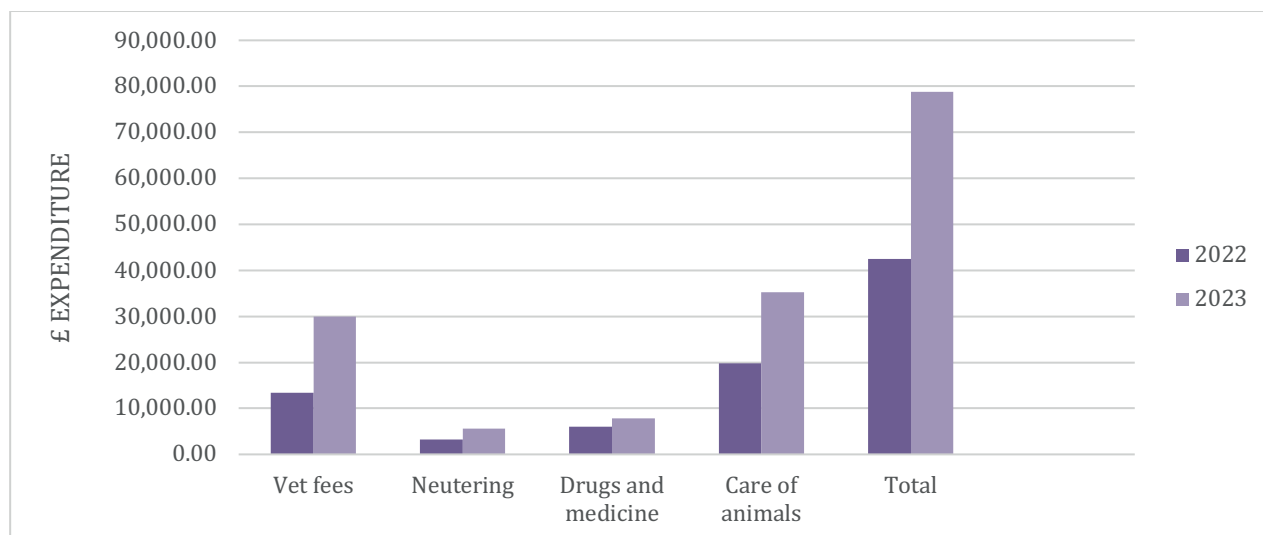
Number of Animals Helped



£807 spent proving pet food to our local Food banks in 2023. Thank you to our Charity Shop customers who donated lots more pet food which was desperately needed by local pet owners.

Animal Welfare Expenditure

The need for our services has never been greater and helping more animals inevitably cost the Branch more money. Our vet fees more than doubled (£13,439 in 2022 and £29,982 in 2023). Unfortunately, costs for all veterinary services increased much quicker than the rate of inflation. The demand for veterinary services still outstrips supply and so we anticipate this situation will continue for the foreseeable future. Nevertheless, our Trustees are committed to ensuring animals get the care that they need to have a happy and healthy future.



Branch Managers Report – Becky Blackmore

We took care of 273 unwanted animals in 2023 which is an increase of 32% on 2022. We actually rehomed 143 of these ourselves, rather than transferring them to other RSPCA Branch Centres, which is an increase of 150% on 2022. These animals included 69 rabbits as well as the survivors from a family of gerbils rescued from a house fire, abandoned guppies (tropical fish), plus the usual 100+ cats and 23 dogs. For a Branch which doesn't have its own animal rehoming centre this is impressive!



A charming group of baby rabbit sisters

The last few of the family of gerbils rescued by the Fire Brigade



Partnership Working - We have always had a superb relationship with our local vets. In recent years we have extended this to a number of local Charities which we assist including New Hope, South East Dog Rescue, Dartford Animal Rescue, and Spirits Rest Horse and Animal Sanctuary. We also worked with local Police, Dog Wardens, Bexley Cats Protection Groups, Lost and Found Group, SLAIN, Bluewater, Jollyes the Pet People Superstore, Asda Greenhithe and a number of Morrisons supermarkets in our area. In addition to our local RSPCA Inspectors, we pitched in and helped with animals from South London when that RSPCA Branch had to cease operations.

In 2023 we had stands at several events, the biggest being Dartford Big Day Out and Wilmington Fair.



Our website is a great place to keep up with news about everything we are doing
<https://www.rspca-kentnorthwest.org.uk/>

Finally, I would say that if you are reading this report then you are obviously interested in animal welfare in our area. We are always looking for people to join our committee and no previous experience is required, as training is provided. If you would like to know more about becoming a Trustee, then email becky@rspca-kentnorthwest.org.uk or call me on 07737 045522.

**COULD YOU BE OUR
NEXT TRUSTEE?**

Report From Emma Byrne Branch Animal Welfare, Community and Education Officer (ACE)

Commitment to Animal Welfare and Collaboration

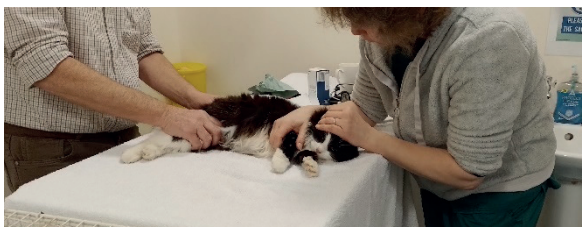
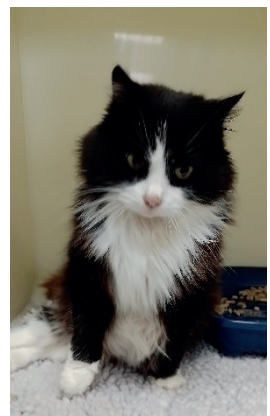
The biggest demand remained cat welfare, with 2023 seeing numerous successful rehabilitation and rehoming efforts. Our collaboration with various RSPCA Rehoming Centres including Canterbury and District Branch has been pivotal in achieving:

- Efficient Rehabilitation and Rehoming: Cats are rehabilitated and rehomed quickly, benefiting both organisations and reducing our costs.
- Cost-Effective Operations: Joint efforts with Canterbury and District Branch allow for efficient resource sharing, maintaining high-quality care for the cats while reducing operational costs.

Case Study: Talia the Cat - Resilience and Recovery

Background

Easipetcare referred “Talia”, a young cat found unable to walk in a garden. With no known owner and urgent care needed, immediate intervention was crucial.



Initial Assessment and Treatment

Instead of transferring Talia to another vets as we would have done previously, we transferred her directly to Canterbury and District for a comprehensive evaluation, minimising suffering and saving

both time and money. Initial exams and X-rays showed potential spinal or internal injuries affecting her mobility.

Treatment Plan

- Medical Investigations: Extensive tests were done to assess Talia's injuries and ensure she retained bowel and bladder control.
- Surgical Intervention: Surgery revealed Talia's spleen was in three pieces, a complex condition requiring immediate attention. The team successfully attempted the challenging repair.



Recovery and Rehabilitation

Despite facing a tough recovery, Talia remained resilient and cheerful. The team provided constant care, monitoring, medications, and emotional support, even monitoring remotely by camera.

Rehoming

After a full recovery, Talia found a loving home. Her new family adores her, sharing updates of her happy life.



Diverse Species



While we primarily focus on cat welfare, we've rehabilitated and rehomed various species this year, including rats, mice, gerbils, and rabbits. In a challenging case, a home with five rabbits led to unexpected litters and financial strain for the owner.

Intervention and Assistance

- Neutering and Vaccination: We arranged neutering and vaccination for all rabbits.
- Transport and Support: We provided transport to vet appointments and financial aid.
- Reintegration and Rehoming: All 5 rabbits signed over for rehoming with the original pair successfully reintroduced.



Assistance to Dogs



Despite not having our own kennels, we assist dogs in need. Cosmo was living in very poor conditions and was at risk of physical harm.

Intervention and Rescue

After some careful work he was surrendered into our care.

Rehabilitation

Cosmo, a vibrant and eager-to-please 2-year-old, lacked stimulation and attention.

Under the care of Thanet Animal Centre, he thrived and quickly learned new skills.



Rehoming

Cosmo found a loving home with a young couple who adore him. He has gained weight, continues to learn, and happily settles into his new life.



Community Outreach and Education

In addition to our hands on welfare work, we have been actively involved in community outreach. We provide pet

food to the following food banks; Hive Hope, Northfleet and Slade Green and Erith Swap shop and food bank. I run in store pet food collections at four supermarkets and collect a semi regular donation from Jollyes, The Pet People and Morrisons Sidcup. Both of our Shops have helped us by collecting donated pet food.



Along with cat and dog food we provide leaflets about our services such as neutering and assistance with vet bills. We will do whatever we can to help

struggling owners to be able to keep their pets happy and healthy through these tough times

Preventing Cruelty and Promoting Welfare:

Our commitment to preventing cruelty and promoting animal welfare has led us to spread our message to as many people in the community as possible. I get out to meet as many people as I can.



School Talks: Educating students about responsible pet ownership and animal welfare. Last year I spoke to 2,000 children.

Social Group Talks: Engaging with social groups to raise awareness and foster compassion towards animals. These have included Parkinsons Society, Gravesend, Swanley Police Cadets, Kent Fire and Rescue, Bluewater Community Forum, Bluewater police engagement day, Dartford Animal Community.

Event Attendance: Participating in community events to connect with the public, share information, and promote our cause, including Dartford's Big Day Out and a Kent fire and rescue initiative on Dartford Heath to highlight the risks to wildlife and pets of fire on the Heath.

Free Cat Microchipping Day at our Gravesend RSPCA Shop

This not only ensured 14 cats were microchipped but it also signposted our customers to other services such as neutering, of which 7 took us up on the opportunity.

In conclusion, 2023 has been a year of growth, collaboration, and impactful work. Our ongoing collaboration with the Canterbury and District Branch has been a key factor in our success, enabling us to rehabilitate and rehome cats efficiently and cost-effectively. Additionally, our community outreach and education initiatives have allowed us to make a positive difference in the lives of animals and the people who care for them.



I want to express my sincere gratitude to the charity trustees for their continued support and guidance. Together, we are making a difference and building a brighter future for animals in need.

Emma Byrne - Animal Welfare, Community and Education Officer (ACE)

Animal Welfare Administrator Report – John Bowley

Animal Welfare 2023

As in previous years 2023 has proven to be both very busy and rewarding where issues relating to animal welfare are concerned. The primary contacts dealt with on a daily basis are calls received from members of the public via the Gordon Road helpline, veterinary practices, Inspectorate and to a lesser degree, police, fire brigade, and social service departments.

Members of the public

Calls received from members of the public cover a wide range of requests for advice and assistance. These will include financial assistance for pet owners in receipt of benefits to help with vet bills. Occasionally assistance will be provided where owners are not in receipt of a benefit but are suffering hardship. The number of calls received during a seven day period varies from day to day with occasionally just a few up to maybe twenty.

Veterinary Practices

The Branch primarily has dealings with four practices, Mead Road, Shrubbery, Meopham and Swanscombe although as and when required the Branch does deal with other practices within the DA and BR8 postcode area. During 2023 the Branch has been dealing with veterinary practices located in Dover and Folkestone. These practices primarily care for all the rabbits which are cared for at Paws by the Coast. The Branch has built up a very good working relationship with all practices and Shrubbery offers cat neutering service at discounted rates for those pet owners in receipt of a benefit. It has always been the policy of the Branch to build and extend vet practice/Branch relationship as this has proven beneficial to the Inspectorate when animals from the Branch area are taken directly to the vet for treatment.

Inspectorate

As with the veterinary practices, the Branch has developed a very good working relationship with the Inspectorate and ARO's. The Branch will always be available to assist any officer whether it might be identifying the nearest veterinary practice, finding a suitable placement for an animal whether it be an RSPCA centre or if necessary, a private boarding establishment. The Branch will always strive to assist the Inspectorate in order to hopefully make their job a bit easier.

RSPCA Animal Centres and Paws by the Coast

The Branch has dealings with several RSPCA animal centres including Ashford Garden Cattery, Bluebell Ridge Cattery and Canterbury and Dover (CADAC). Paws by the Coast is a private boarding establishment that cares for our many rabbits that the Branch is responsible for. Once again the Branch has developed a very good relationship with all these centres and animals taken in are soon found their forever home.

Private Boarding Establishments

When spaces are not immediately available at an RSPCA centre then the Branch will arrange for a temporary placement at a Private Boarding Establishment. The two PBE's are The Lodge at Biggin Hill and The Gables located in Swanley. These have proven invaluable at busy times and the Branch is also offered a preferential daily rate.

Other Services

Whilst not as frequent as other calls, the Branch does receive calls from organisations including the police, fire brigade and social services. Often in these instances we can direct the caller to the appropriate department.

Reacting to changes

XL Bullies - This suddenly became an issue in the latter part of the year when the government made a surprise announcement about adding XL Bullies to the list of breeds banned under the Dangerous Dogs Act. We reacted and are giving financial assistance to qualifying owners to help them get their XL Bullies neutered in order to get them exempted.

Charity Shops Report

There are increasing challenges in running a profitable charity shop including rising wage costs, utility bills and rent. In addition, more people now sell their own second-hand clothes online. It is not an easy time for charities on the high street and we are feeling the pinch too. Our Gravesend Shop in Windmill Street had a steady year with a profit of £22,000.

In 2023 our Dartford Shop was facing a huge rise in rent and so we reduced the size of the shop by half. We were still struggling to make enough to cover the costs and so we are moving to a new location in Dartford in 2024. (You can now find us in Unit 30 of The Orchard Centre, Dartford). Despite a monumental effort by our Treasurer, Eric Grover, Shop Manager and team of volunteers, Dartford Shop made only £1,000 profit in 2023. We are looking forward to positive changes in 2024 in our new location.

The Trustees extend our sincere thanks to the shop staff, volunteers, customers and those who donate.

SHOP PROFITS

		Income	Expenditure	Profit
2023	Dartford	£44,969	£45,724	£1k
	Gravesend	£66,946	£44,894	£22k
2022	Dartford	51,332	33,955	17k

	Gravesend	67,828	40,748	27k
2021	Dartford	38k + COVID grant of 12k = total 50k	28,912	£21k
	Gravesend	46k + COVID grant of 16k = total 62k	31,197	£31k
2020	Dartford	26k + COVID Grant 27k = total 54k	51,718	£2k
	Gravesend	33k + COVID Grant 11k = total 44k	25,519	£20k
2019	Dartford	65,857	62,126	£4k
	Gravesend	71,398	31,504	£40k
2018	Dartford	66,481	65,827	£1k
	Gravesend	72,776	30,720	£42k
2017	Dartford	67,437	61,199	£6k
	Gravesend	73,174	31,699	£41k

Over the last seven years our Dartford Charity Shop has raised an average of £7,000 per annum. An upturn resulted when the current team of volunteers took over the running of the shop in 2020. However, we have since started paying a part time Manager and the rent also increased in 2023 so we actually made a loss. There will be major changes in 2024 and we are hoping to see a major improvement. Over the last seven years our Gravesend Shop has raised an average of £32,000 per annum (we own the freehold for this premises so that no rent is paid.)





Chief Inspector's Annual Report - 2023 London South Group

Chief Inspector Mark Miles 468

Personnel:

C/I Mark Miles
DCI Lynn Serrano
Inspector Harriet Dalliday
Inspector Emily Buckett
ARO Mat Hawkins
ARO Emma Haines
ARO Portia Mearns
ARO Sidonie Smith
ARO Latia Pennant
ARO Yalina Blumer

Branches covered :

London South East Branch
South London Branch
Bromley & District Branch
Purley, Caterham & District Branch
Kent North West Branch
Wimbledon, Wandsworth & Sutton District Branch

Welcome to the 2023 Chief Inspector's report for London South group

2023 was another busy year for the Group with yet more new recruits joining the Team. This proved challenging in terms of trying to train people whilst simultaneously continuing frontline services. I am pleased to say that the group rose to the challenge and I would like to thank the group for their motivation, positivity and resilience in difficult circumstances throughout the year.

In addition to the paid staff we have a number of Animal Rescue Volunteers (ARV) who are becoming more and more involved with collections and transfers in the Group. They are proving to be really worthwhile and are a valued part of the team. We have 4 who regularly give up their own time and are in the process of recruiting several more. As time goes on it is hoped we can upskill them to allow them to assist in a wider variety of tasks.

Finally, on behalf of everyone in the London South Group, a big thank you to all of the London and Kent Branches, members and volunteers for making us feel so welcome at your meetings and for all the difficult and invaluable work you have done throughout 2023 and into this year already. Without you dedicating your time and efforts we would not be able to achieve all that we do.

In terms of stats to give you an idea of the volume of work carried out by officers in London South during 2023, we:

Attended 2400 Incidents

Gave out 240 Welfare notices advising on improvements needed and 34 Warning notices which are recommendations of a more serious nature.

In our area in 2023

Mat Hawkins was called to a horse thoroughly tangled in barbed wired in Erith Marshes. Lucky for him the horse was well natured and extremely patient as it took Mat over an hour to cut away all the wired. Luckily there was no damage and the horse walked away unscathed.





Chief Inspector's Annual Report - 2023 KENT GROUP

Chief Inspector Nick Wheelhouse
ARO Lisa Miller 16142
ARO Brian Milligan 11516
ARO Lynn White 6833
ARO Emily Hoad 18091
Inspector Dave Grant 173
Inspector Grace Harris-Bridge 15085
Inspector Clive Hopwood 16768
Inspector Tina Nash 10608
Inspector Kirsten Ormerod 16741
Inspector Rosie Russon 723
Inspector Rosie Wren 14023
Inspector Deborah Rutherford 15892

Welcome to the 2023 Kent Group annual branch report. A few team changes in 2023 we said goodbye to two officers: Inspector Rosie Wren and ARO Lisa Miller who have both moved on from the Society. We thank them for their hard work in 2023 and wish them the best of luck in their new ventures. We also saw a transfer of ARO Emily Hoad to the group from London East, who was a welcome addition to the Kent Group. Emily settled in well with the team and took on board the training provided by the team. Emily put in a transfer request to move to Hertfordshire at the end of 2023 and was successful in her application. We will see Emily move on to the Herts/Beds Group in early January 2024. We thank Emily for her hard work during her time in the Kent Group and wish her the best for her move in January. We also saw the start of the recruitment of three new AROs to the Kent group, which we will be interviewing and welcoming to the group in 2024.

As always, the start of the year 2023 gave us the opportunity to catch up on essential Health & Safety and mandatory training to prepare us for the year ahead and officers setting their own priorities for the year, including equine training, small animal care and completing developmental courses.

The unexpected cost of living crisis which developed in 2022 and continued throughout 2023 impacted the community and we saw more genuine need in people who may have owned pets for a long time but found their circumstances had taken a downward turn. A number of branches were able to assist with veterinary care and supplying pet food to those in need, for which we are very grateful.

We saw a jump in case investigations completed by the Inspectors in the group to 35 submitted cases in 2023, with some cases coming from neighbouring groups, which we have continued to support. Dealing with case investigations is not an easy part of

the job faced by the Inspectorate and the decision to progress to a case investigation is not something that is taken lightly. Officers will always do what they can to keep an animal in situ and support the owners to make improvements, particularly with the cost of living crisis continuing, however the increase in cases has shown that there is still an increase in serious cases of neglect and cruelty.

Throughout the year avian influenza kept a tight hold on both wild and domestic bird populations and the group had many calls for ill and stricken birds, particularly swans, geese and seabirds which fall into the highest risk category. We were particularly saddened to see first hand the way the disease decimated the wild gannet population along the coast in Kent. Although the group is glad that they do carry the means to end suffering humanely - it still takes its toll when dealing with and seeing such vast numbers of suffering wildlife - and for their extra hard work and professionalism dealing with this disease, I am grateful. As we progressed towards the end of 2023 this eased, with Mallydams Wildlife centre continuing to increase their intake of wildlife.

Without the support of the Regional Board and Branch networks, we would simply not be as effective in rescuing animals in all sorts of predicaments. The field officers are under significant pressure and your continued patience and support is very much appreciated. Your work in supporting members of the public with funding, helping rehome unwanted animals, and caring for the sick and traumatised is to be commended. It can be a thankless task but I can assure you my team and I fully appreciate the hard work you and your teams put in.

In Kent we helped rescue, collect and rehabilitate thousands more animals from situations that would have resulted in severe injury and suffering. Within the Kent group you have officers who specialise in wildlife, specialist flood rescue, Inland boat rescue, and equine rescue to name but a few.

Our thanks goes out to our team of Animal Rescue Volunteers, who continue to provide support to the Inspectorate Group, Branch Network and Animal Centres. They completed a whopping 123 tasks in 2023. They will often travel huge distances to move animals to new homes or other centres. Their work is invaluable in supporting the Inspectorate group, allowing officers time to continue to work on incidents of cruelty and neglect and allowing us to respond quicker to these calls.

We wish to offer our thanks to Kent Police for their invaluable assistance in exercising their powers of entry, search, seizure and occasionally arrest of people who mistreat their animals. Our thanks also go to Kent Fire and Rescue Service for the many occasions that they have helped with rescues of animals that have got themselves trapped or in difficulty and we have needed their equipment and manpower to resolve the situation.

Of course we have not forgotten the RSPCA animal centres that take in our animals, care for them and eventually rehome them. Our sincere thanks to the Branch catteries and kennels that board, care for and rehome our animals, usually at very short notice and at the most inconvenient times, and to the experts who care for our sick and injured wildlife until they have been rehabilitated and are able to be released back into the wild.

We are also supported by Veterinary Practices from all across Kent. The support they provide helps us bring justice for animals, and support for the sick & injured. We work with other charities such as World Horse Welfare, The British Horse Society, Folly Wildlife Hospital and numerous more. We are most grateful to them all.

Finally, on behalf of everyone in the Kent group, a big thank you to all of the Branches, members and volunteers for making us feel so welcome at your meetings and for all the difficult and invaluable work you have done throughout 2023. Without you dedicating your time and efforts we would not be able to achieve all that we do.

Here are some of the many jobs we dealt with in 2023 in your branch areas...

Kent North West



In North West Kent we have rescued wildlife including swans, snakes, foxes and owls. Farm animals including lambs and chickens as well as rescuing horses, cats, ferrets and dogs with the support of Kent North West Branch as well as providing financial aid to a number of domestic animals and neutering

Inspector Kirsten Ormerod went to this poor fox in Swanley that got his head stuck in someone's fence! Kirsten carefully managed to lift the fox out of the fencing. After monitoring the fox was found to be unharmed and healthy so was released back in the area. Animal Rescue Officer Brian Milligan rescued this swan that had a hook in its beak in Swanley. Brian took the swan to RSPCA Mallydams and after a week of assessment and treatment Inspector Tina Nash released it back to the lake happily.

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

KENT NORTH - WEST BRANCH
(Registered Charity No. 210633)

ANNUAL ACCOUNTS

and

BALANCE SHEET

- for the year ended -

31st DECEMBER 2023

**ROYAL SOCIETY FOR THE PREVENTION OF CRUELTY TO ANIMALS.
KENT, NORTH-WEST BRANCH
(Registered Charity No: 210633)**

ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st DECEMBER 2023

The Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals is incorporated under an Act of Parliament and each Branch is governed by the rules of the Society. The Kent, North-West Branch is an incorporated and a registered Charity No. 210633. The Administrative Office of the Branch is at 37, Gordon Road Dartford Kent DA1 2LG.

The day to day affairs of the Branch are managed by a Branch Committee. During 2023 the members of the Branch Committee were:

Mr B. Charman	Branch Chairman
Mr E.J. Grover.	Branch Treasurer
Mr. J. A. Bowley.	Branch Animal Welfare Administrator.
Mr. T. Maddison	Branch Trustee
Mrs K. Maycock	Branch Trustee
Mrs H. Taylor	Branch Trustee
Mr D. Wordsworth	Branch Trustee

During the year, the Branch operated two Charity Shops. At Dartford the Charity Shop the management was undertaken by a volunteer Group until March 26th when the Branch appointed Mrs Jayne Garcia to a part time post as Joint manager A Full Time Manager and 2 Part Time casual Deputy Managers were employed at the Branch Charity Shop at 161, Windmill Street, Gravesend. Also, during the year, the Branch employed a part time Branch Manager. The role of Branch Treasurer was filled during the year and the role of Branch Secretary was filled in August 2023. The Branch also employs a part time Animal Welfare Officer who combines her role with education and fund raising. The average number of persons employed by the charity during the year was six.

The object of the Charity is to promote kindness and prevent or suppress cruelty to animals, and to do all such lawful acts as the Society may consider to be conducive or incidental to the attainment of those objectives.

The Charity is dependent on donations and fund raising to pay for its activities. The Branch also receives part of the subscriptions paid by members. The Branch constitution is approved by the National RSPCA umbrella body, Charity No.219099, which is considered a related party for accounting purposes. During the financial year, the Branch received a total of £23094.00p (Door to Door Campaign) grant funding from the National RSPCA for the Branch's purposes, and also received grants of £7100.00 in support of Rabbit care and a sum of £2,900.00 for the provision of additional Rabbit Accommodation. Additionally grants were received to support emergency veterinary support for veterinary care in the sum of £5326.22 plus a VAT grant of £1097.65. The Branch has agreed to fund a set of scales the Branch Equine Centre at Leybourne and a Regional Grant was received in the sum of £4100 to meet the cost of the scales and this is held in a holding account until such times as the Scales are purchased.

The Branch also receives a number of umbrella body services, including legacy administration under the Branch Legacy Scheme, membership administration and practical guidance and assistance from a Branch Partnership Manager (formerly Branch Support Specialist) employed by the National Society. The charity operates a defined contribution pension scheme. The assets of the scheme are held separately from those of the charity in an independently administered fund. The pension cost charge paid by the charity during the year was £2099.20

Details of the Charity's activities are disclosed in the accounts. There have been no significant activities during the year requiring a report to the Charity Commissioners. Legacies and In Memoriam donations to the value of £156.05p were received during the year. Details of assets held by the Branch are disclosed in the accounts. There have been no material post balance sheet events.

E.J. Grover,
Branch Treasurer
20th March 2024

ROYAL SOCIETY FOR THE PREVENTION OF CRUELTY TO ANIMALS

KENT NORTH-WEST BRANCH

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31st DECEMBER 2023

ACCUMULATED FUNDS

	<u>2023</u>		<u>2022</u>
Balance brought forward	1,137,213.40		1,121,487.22
Property Revaluations in Year	-		-
Surplus for the Year	(40,829.07)		15,726.18
	<u>1,096,384.33</u>		<u>1,137,213.40</u>
	=====		=====
BRANCH RESTRICTED FUNDS:			
L.C.Croucher Legacy for Equip	23,503.35		23,222.66
	23,503.35		23,222.66
BRANCH GENERAL FUNDS:			
Fixed Assets(Note1)			
Property 158,Parrock Street Gr	263,000.00		263,000.00
Property 37,Gordon Road,Dartf	205,000.00		205,000.00
Property 10 Miskin Road,Dartfc	196,870.33		196,870.33
Property 161,Windmill Street,G	168,749.50		168,749.50
Branch Vehicle	6,197.00		8,096.00
Dartford Shop Refurb	7,242.76		
Rabbit Accomodation	2,844.72		3,221.86
	<u>849,904.31</u>		<u>844,937.69</u>
Current Assets			
Nat West Capital Reserve Acco	206,350.82		203886.50
Debtors & Prepayments	6,086.07		4035.67
Branch Pay Pal Account	713.43		713.43
Cash at Bank & In Hand	31,545.21		72363.65
	<u>244,695.53</u>		<u>280999.25</u>
less Creditors	- 12,143.86		(6,471.20)
Balance Rabbit Awareness Prc	- 2,000.00		(2,000.00)
Balance Staffie Matched Fundii	- 1,575.00		(1,575.00)
Baalance Female Cat Spaying P	- 1,900.00		(1,900.00)
Horse Scales	- 4,100.00		
Net Current Assets	222,976.67		269,053.05
TOTAL BRANCH GENERAL FUNDS	1,072,880.98		1,113,990.74
TOTAL ACCUMULATED FUNDS	1,096,384.33		1,137,213.40
	=====		=====

E.J.Grover. **BRANCH TREASURER**

John A.Bowley **BRANCH TRUSTEE**

R.S.P.C.A. KENT NORTH WEST BRANCH.

ANNUAL ACCOUNTS 2023

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES (PAGE 1 of 2)

INCOMING RESOURCES:

Incoming resources from generated funds				
	<u>2023</u>		<u>2022</u>	
(i) Donations, legacies and other incoming resources:				
General Donations	1390.75		1,440.65	
Donations via ACE	779.16		50.00	
Collecting Boxes	1417.97		1,634.94	
Door to Door Campaign	23094.00		23,218.00	
Income from Legacies & In Memorium donations	156.05		407.50	
Rabbit Care Support Grants from RSPCA	7100.00		4,098.00	
Veterinary Support Grant from RSPCA	5326.22			
Veterinary Support Grant VAT from RSPCA	1097.65			
Food Banks Support from RSPCA	866.96		0.00	
Sundry Income	235.16	41463.92	32.21	30,881.30
(ii) Activities for generating funds.				
Sale of donated items Dartford Shop	41,880.96		48,703.70	
Sale of donated items Gravesend Shop	66,246.10		66,621.41	
Sale of donated items Ebay	534.45			
Sale of Rags Dartford Shop	662.29		976.57	
Sale of Rags Gravesend Shop	679.79		767.74	
Income from Recycling	0.00		0.00	
Sale of RSPCA Logoed Items	186.37		307.40	
Sale of non RSPCA Logoed Items	20.94		25.50	
Income from Rehoming Fees - Rabbits	4,735.00		2,947.50	
Income from Rehoming Fees - Cats	1,615.00			
Special Events	163.92	116,724.82	507.20	120,857.02
(iii) Investment Income				
Income from renting of Gravesend Property	15,210.00		14,880.00	
Income from renting of Dartford Properties	25,037.00		21,778.00	
Interest Bank A/cs	2745.01	42,992.01	493.26	37,151.26
(iv) Incoming resources from charitable activities				
Subscription Income	468.00		426.50	
		468.00		426.50
Total Incoming Resources:	201,648.75		158,434.78	

R.S.P.C.A. KENT NORTH WEST BRANCH.

ANNUAL ACCOUNTS 2023

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES (PAGE 2 of 2)

RESOURCES EXPENDED:

	<u>2023</u>		<u>2022</u>	
(i) Costs of generating Funds				
Staff Costs at Gravesend Shop	32,744.46		28,555.72	
Staff Costs at Dartford Shop	10,208.48		0.00	
Staff Costs Branch Manager	23,955.51		21,444.83	
Staff Costs ACE	13,873.67		6,117.27	
Branch EE Pension Costs	2,099.20			
Shop Equipment	1,606.46			
Rent Dartford Shop	19,250.00		23,500.00	
Rates Gravesend Shop	1,071.40		580.00	
Rates 37 Gordon Road	135.56		0.00	
Branch Events	205.32			
Branch Training	58.96			
Cost of Goods for Resale	484.06		160.80	
Shop Overheads	24337.83	130,030.91	22,628.37	102,986.99
(ii) Charitable activities				
(a) resources granted in furtherence of the Branch's objectives				
Care of Animals - RABBITS	7,238.09		19,801.89	
Care of Animals - CATS & OTHERS	28,848.62			
Care of Animals - FOOD BANK SUPPORT	805.28			
Regional Quota/Branch Contribution	515.00		551.00	
Microchipping	233.15		374.33	
Branch Neutering Scheme - RABBITS	3,271.44		3,214.89	23,942.11
Branch Neutering Scheme - CATS & OTHERS	2,376.35	43,287.93		
(b) costs of activities in furtherence of the Branch's objectives				
Veterinary Fees Dartford Clinic	0.00		Nil	
Veterinary Fees Gravesend Clinic	0.00		Nil	
Veterinary Fees Emergency and other cases	22,140.60		12,627.74	
Drugs and Medicines	7,840.92		4,369.79	
		29,981.52		16,997.53
(c) support costs for (a) and (b).				
Travelling Expenses	1702.70		70.20	
Branch Vehicle costs	3684.96			
Printing and Stationery	1288.77		904.17	
Postage and Telephone	2499.22		1595.02	
Electricity Gas and water	1579.47		382.55	
Insurance and Security Costs	2854.83		1996.51	
Maintenance & Repairs	5108.90		6181.12	
Waste Disposal Costs		Shop O/heads	-	Shop O/heads
Depreciation of Fixed Assets	5,544.73		-	
Professional fees (Properties/Bank)	8177.77		6873.79	
Sundry Expenditure	1591.20		175.00	
Irrecoverable VAT	4154.01	38,186.56	3661.05	21,839.41
(d) Governance costs.				
Meetings	340.90		290.83	
Professional fees (Audit)	650.00	990.90	650.00	940.83
Total Resources Expended:		242,477.82		166,706.87

ROYAL SOCIETY FOR THE PREVENTION OF CRUELTY TO ANIMALS
KENT NORTH-WEST BRANCH
(Registered Charity No: 210633)

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS.

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES.

The principal accounting policies of the Branch are set out below. The policies have remained unchanged from the previous year.

(a) Basis of Accounting.

The financial statements have been prepared under historical cost conventions and in accordance with applicable accounting standards.

(b) Income.

Income is accounted for when received.

(c) Depreciation of Tangible assets.

During 2005 the Branch Trustees conducted a review of the methods used to depreciate Capital Expenditure. It was concluded that the use of a 10% reducing balance gave an unrealistic value of the items over a long term. In future all tangible capital assets would be written off over a determined period with each case of expenditure to be determined at the time of purchase. Details of the period of write off would be recorded in the Branch Asset Register.

As a result of the trustees revised policies the following items were written off at the following rates:

Freehold Buildings.	Nil. During 2013 the Trustees arranged for the revaluation of some of the Branch Property. During 2018 a further revaluation of the property at 158, Parrock Street, Gravesend, was carried out. The results of that revaluations are shown in the Balance Sheet. The valuations were prepared on an open market basis by McConnells, Chartered Surveyors.
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Shop Fixtures and Fittings.

All of the original assets held at the Branch Shops have now been written off.
The conversion costs for the development of the Dartford Shop Premises are to be written off over

the ten year period of the lease, and were finally depreciated during 2020.

Furniture, Plant and Equipment. The use of a 10% reducing balance was reviewed during the year and it was agreed that the Branch Vehicle and Rabbit Accommodation, purchased during the year should be written off over a five year period. All previous items under this heading have now been written off.

(d) Irrecoverable VAT

It is the Branch's policy to write off irrecoverable VAT through the Income & Expenditure account when incurred.

2. FIXED ASSETS.

	Freehold Property.	Branch Shops Fix & Fitt.	Furniture Plant and Equipment.	TOTAL
Balance at 1 st Jan. 2023	833,619.83	Nil	10,961.86	844,581.69
Additions		9,877.28	3,757.67	13,634.95
RSPCA Grant Rab.Acc			(2,900.00)	(2,900.00)
Depreciate Branch Van			(1,899.00)	(1,899.00)
Depreciate Rab Acc.			(878.81)	(878.81)
Depreciate Shop Refurb		(2,634.52)		(2,634.52)
Balance at 31 st Dec 2023	833,619.83	7,242.76	9,041.72	849,904.31
Made up of:				
Original cost.	837,242.71	60,922.41	21,939.45	905,469.62
Less Accumulated Depreciation	(3,622.88)	(53,679.65)	(12,897.73)	(64,164.07)
	833,619.83	7,242.76	9,041.72	849,904.31

3. BRANCH (formerly the REGIONAL) NEUTERING SCHEME.

During 2023 the Branch continued to offer all of its established services including the well-established Branch Neutering Scheme. The expenditure on this service increased significantly as the Branch took on more cases of Rabbits. occasioned by the tremendous impact of the number of rabbits abandoned in the Branch area and because the Branch adapted to the needs of these and other rabbits in a similar plight, was able to establish a specialty in the system of acceptance, fostering and care, the Branch soon became adept in the acceptance fostering care and rehoming in the care of these most maligned animals. Since the inception

was made on the retained fund. The service will remain available during 2024. During the year, the Branch continued to offer to spay female cats from the age of four months and originally conducted jointly from 2015 with Cat Protection however from 2020 the Branch has continued to offer the service bearing the whole of the cost, as the funding from Cats Protection ceased in 2018. During 2023 only two cats were treated under this project. No application was made for support to this service from the Regional Joint Funding funds held for this purpose. The funds will be available in 2024 should the need arise.

A summary of the total expenditure in respect of the three services is as follows:

Branch Neutering Scheme:

Rabbits	(55)	£3,271.44p
Cats& other	(30Cats/8Dogs)	£2,174.66p
Total:		£5446.10p

Female Cat Spaying Project:

Expenditure in respect of Cat Spaying	£ 201.69p (3)
Total:	£ 201.69p

Total as per accounts: **£5647.79p**

4. DONATIONS/GRANTS.

Where appropriate included in the heading Donation/Grants for 2023 would be the contribution made to the Branch in the form of Regional Matched Funding Grants. No Matched funding Grants were applied in 2023 The figure in the Accounts is therefore summarised as follows:

General Donations.	£1390.75p
ACE Donations	£ 779.18p
TOTAL.£ 2169.93p	

5. SPECIAL EVENTS.

The Branch Trustees are conscious of the efforts need to undertake Special Events on behalf of the Branch. Sadly the after effects of Covid continued to restrict the activities required to undertake a special event.

A sum of £163 92P has been allocate to Special Events although many of the activities undertaken by our ACO attracted donations which have not been recorded as Special Events.

6. HEAT, LIGHT, WATER & RATES.

Payments made in respect of the items included within this heading are summarised as follows:

	<u>Electricity.</u>	<u>Gas.</u>	<u>Water.</u>	<u>Total</u>
Dartford Shop	£3991.71p		£ 217.18p	£4208.89p
Gravesend Shop	£2575.81p	£613.58p	£209.61p	£3399.00p
Branch.	£ 316.66p	£1047.49p	£452.30p	£1816.45p
		TOTAL		<u>£9424.34p</u>

7. PROFESSIONAL FEES

Professional fees include the following amounts for the Independent Examination of the Branch's Accounts:

<u>2023</u>	<u>2022</u>
£650.	£650.

8. CREDITORS.

	<u>2023</u>	<u>2022</u>
Trade.	£11,343.86p	£5,271.20p
Accruals	£ 800.00p	£1,200.00p p
	<u>£ 12,143.86</u>	<u>£ 6.471.20p</u>

9. TRUSTEES REMUNERATION & EXPENSES.

No Trustee or connected person received any remuneration during the year.

10. CAPITAL COMMITMENTS.

The Branch had no Capital Commitments at the end of the year.

RSPCA, KENT,NORTH WEST BRANCH

ANNUAL ACCOUNTS 2022

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS DURING THE YEAR

	<u>2023</u>	<u>2022</u>
TABLE ONE: STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS		
<i>Net Cash provided by (used in) operating activities</i>	(40,829)	14,150
<i>Cash Flows from investing activities</i>		
Purchase of property,plant and equipment		-
<i>Net Cash Provided by (used in) investing activities</i>	(40,829)	14,150
<i>Cash Flows from financing activities:</i>		
Repayments of borrowing		
<i>Net Cash Provided by (used in) financing activities</i>		
<i>Change in cash and cash equivalents in the reporting period</i>	(40,829)	14,150
<i>Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the reporting period</i>	292,737	292,497
<i>Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the reporting period</i>	261,399	292,737
TABLE TWO: RECONCILIATION ON NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE) TO NET CASH FLOW FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES		
<i>Net Income for the reporting period (as per the statement of financial activities)</i>	(40,829)	15,694
<i>Adjustments for :</i>		
Depreciation charges	5545	2,704
Transfer of Funds		
(Increase)/decrease in debtors	2050	7,172
Increase/(decrease) in creditors	5673	2,924
<i>Net cash provided by operating activities</i>	(27,561)	28,494
TABLE THREE : ANALYSIS OF CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS		
Cash in Hand	261,399	292,737

**MEMORANDUM TRADING ACCOUNT FOR THE BRANCH CHARITY SHOPS
FOR THE PERIOD 1st JANUARY 2021 TO 31st DECEMBER 2023**

<u>INCOME</u>	<u>DARTFORD</u>	<u>GRAVESEND</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>EXPENDITURE</u>	<u>DARTFORD</u>	<u>GRAVESEND</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
SALE OF DONATED ITEMS	42,322.61	66,246.10	108,568.71	<u>NON RECURRING COSTS</u>			
SALE OF RSPCA GOODS	186.37	0.00	186.37				0.00
SALE OF CARRIER BAGS	20.94	0.00	20.94				
DONATIONS VIA SHOP	533.74		533.74				
COLLECTING BOX(SHOP)	586.36	20.72	161.72	TOTAL N/R COSTS			
SALE OF RAGS	662.29	679.79	1,342.08				
COMPENSATION	4.71	0.00	4.71	<u>RECURRING COSTS</u>			
TOMBOLA	141.00	0.00	141.00	E BAY FEES	36.29	0.00	36.29
IN MEMORIAM DONS	156.05	0.00	156.05	BANK CHARGES (CREDIT CARDS)	1,000.00	851.89	1,851.89
E BAY SALES	578.41	0.00	578.41	ACT. RENT & RATES	19,250.00	1,071.40	20,321.40
E BAY POSTAGE INCOME	171.99	0.00	171.99	TRAVEL COSTS	140.59	172.80	313.39
				STAFFING COSTS	10,122.84	32,416.00	42,538.84
				MEETINGS	12.40		12.40
				SHOP EQUIPMENT	530.66	1,168.61	1,699.27
VAT	441.65			MAINT & REPAIRS	2,556.36	3,875.65	6,432.01
	41.35			WASTE DISPOSAL	2,155.65	669.50	2,825.15
				TELEPHONE/POSTAGE	1,568.70	524.94	2,093.64
				HEAT, LIGHT & WATER	4,433.25	3,698.93	8,132.18
				INSURANCE/SECURITY	2,054.76	250.00	2,304.76
				PRINT & STATIONERY	125.76	0.00	125.76
				GOODS FOR RESALE	484.06	0.00	484.06
				SUNDRY EXP.	297.76	194.62	492.38
				E BAY REFUND	46.98		46.98
				CARE OF ANIMALS	65.79		65.79
				VAT RECOVERABLE	44.00		44.00
TOTAL	45,847.47	66,946.61	112,794.08	TOTAL RECURRING COSTS	44,925.85	44,894.34	89,820.19

<u>TRADING PROFIT ON SHOPS :</u>	
DARTFORD	921.62
GRAVESEND	22,052.27
OVERALL	22,973.89

STATEMENT OF THE BRANCH COMMITTEE'S RESPONSIBILITIES.

Rule 3.3 of the R.S.P.C.A. Branch Rules (January 2003 edition) empowers the Branch, subject to certain conditions, to raise funds in the name of the Branch for the General or any special purposes of the Branch or for any purpose of the Society or another Branch but all fundraising must be authorised by and reported promptly to the Branch Committee.

Rule 7.1 provides that the Branch Committee as charity trustees have responsibility for the Branch and its property and funds.

Rule 11.1 requires that the Branch Committee must comply with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 as to the keeping of financial records, the audit or independent examination of accounts and the preparation and transmission to the Charities Commission of:

annual reports.
annual returns; and
annual statements of account.

STATEMENT OF BRANCH RISKS MANAGEMENT POLICY

The Branch has identified the major risks to which it is exposed and has put into place systems and procedures to minimise the risks, as follows:

- (i) **Misappropriation of funds.** To prevent peculation of the Branch's assets, it has set up an internal control system which requires authorisation of all transactions by a person independent of the Branch Treasurer. Income at the Branch's Shops is monitored by the recording of receipts by an electronic till and a check of receipts is made at the end of each working day by the Duty Manager. The Branch also maintains an asset register for all Capital assets.
- (ii) **Monitoring of income to ensure that there are sufficient resources to meet commitments.** The Branch Officers regularly monitor resources to ensure that there are funds available to meet its commitments.
- (iii) **Reliance on Sources of income.** The Branch has in recent years, opened two Charity Shops to improve the income that is required to meet the demands on it services. In 2012 The Branch purchased a property with the purpose of renting to a tenant and producing additional income. During 2013 the Branch Trustees agreed to lease the ground floor of 158, Parrock Street Gravesend on a commercial basis. The lease was completed in 2014. A new lease in respect of the property was granted in 2017 for a period of 10 years. Also, during the year 2013 the Branch purchased the property 161 Windmill Street, Gravesend and this will in the longer term eliminate the liability to pay rent on the property. The Branch now rents a total of four properties which continue to produce additional income for the Branch.
- (iv) **A Commitment to fund Capital Projects.** The Branch has adopted a number of objectives to meet its service provision in the medium and long term. It has agreed that no progress can be made on these projects until sufficient resources are in place to fund any project to arise from those objectives.
- (v) **Loss of Key Volunteers.** The Branch has adopted a policy of recruiting and training, where possible, additional volunteers to undertake various duties that participate in running a Branch of the size and character of the Kent, North

- (vi) **Security of Shops.** The Branch Trustees have improved the security of Shop Assets by the installation of CCTV units at each of the Branch Charity Shops. In addition, each Shop has arrangements with the Local Authority Shopping Security force and has radio contact with the Centre should the need arise. Branch

STATEMENT OF BRANCH RESERVES POLICY.

The Branch Committee has reviewed the Branch Reserves Policy during the year and has considered that the steps taken to ensure a source of regular income are now adequate to be confident that the resources within the Branch are sufficient to meet its current commitments throughout the coming year and beyond if commitments are continued at the current rate of expenditure. It further considers that a Current Account balance in the range of £10,000.00 to £20,000.00 would be sufficient to meet all arising commitments. It resolved that the Branch reconsider the need for a Branch Development Fund, to accrue a reserve to meet the policy objectives set by the Branch in December 2001. The Branch Committee agreed to review its long-term objectives in the light of estimated requirements of the Branch in respect of the Branch Clinics and animal home facilities. During 2016 the Trustees agreed that the target for the Development Fund should remain at the figure of £1,000, 000.00p. and this would be reviewed in the light of any changing circumstances. During 2017 the Branch Trustees re-considered the retention of a Development Fund in the light of current financial conditions. The Trustees concluded that the aspirations of the Branch developing an Animal Centre in the light of the numbers of animals that come into its care and considering the continuing escalating costs of such a venture, the objective would be unsustainable and therefore concluded that the Development Fund should be dissolved, and the Funds recorded in the General Funds of the Branch.

During 2006, the Branch received a legacy from the estate of the late L.C. Croucher. The legacy has a stipulation that the money should only be expended on equipment to be used in the treatment of animals. The Branch Trustees have therefore agreed that the legacy should be maintained in a separately identifiable account within the Branch Funds and recorded as a Restricted Fund and should be available, only for the purchase of equipment required in connection with the meeting of the Branch's revised objectives. During 2018 the Branch Trustees agreed that some of the equipment costs of the Kent North West Branch, Equine Rehoming Centre could properly be appropriated to this account. Consequently, a sum of £12,545.00 of this fund has been expended on the said Branch Equine Rehoming Centre

INDEPENDENT EXAMINERS' UNQUALIFIED REPORT.

Independent Examiners Report to the Trustees of **The Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, Kent, North - West Branch.**

I report on the accounts of the Trust for the year ended 31st December 2023 as set out on pages 23 to 31.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner.

As the charity's trustees you are responsible for the preparation of accounts in accordance with the Charities Act 2011 (the Act).

I report in respect of my examination of the Trust's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying my examination I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145 (5) (b) of the Act.

Independent examiners' statement.

I have completed my examination. 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:

1. Accounting records were not kept in respect of the Trust as required by section 130 of the Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records; or
3. the accounts do not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a true and fair view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.



Jack Fryer, ACA,
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May 2024