

## **Sophies Dog Rescue**

Trustee Report for the financial year ended 31 March 2023

The Trustees submit their annual report and financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2023. We would like to thank our book-keeper Michelle Dines for her work all year in supporting this.

Welcome to Sophie's Dog Rescue Report.

This report contains details of the activities of the charity during the last year, as we continued to provide a haven and find suitable homes for dogs rescued from breeding establishments or lost and unclaimed/surrendered to dog pounds and assisted with rehoming of family pets which could no longer be cared for by their owners.

Sophie's Dog Rescue has rescued hundreds of dogs since its foundation in 2014. This financial year we were significantly impacted by the COVID pandemic. The lockdowns initially impacted our ability to fundraise and rehome dogs, we also experienced a significant drop in foster homes.

An output of lockdown was an increase in puppy farming with breeders expanding to meet demand. With people returning to the office, we have seen an increase in dogs being surrendered. Many who have not been well socialised. We are also seeing breeders being unable to sell dogs. Because of this demand for our support increased this year and we have had to stretch to meet this demand.

During the year the number of dogs that we have been able to help has dropped significantly due to lack of foster homes. With only 20 dogs being rehomed this year. We currently have just two in long term foster waiting for their forever homes. We have run several campaigns to recruit new fosters however we have been unsuccessful in recruiting new families with the time and space for foster pups.

The Trustees are all members of the operational committee and have final approval on all recommendations emanating from the operational committee. The operational committee is not a sub-committee of the Board of Trustees; however, the members of the committee are covered by all relevant insurance policies and are the members of Sophie's Dog Rescue. The focus of the operational committee is on relation to matters such as fostering, home checking, transportation and fundraising for the charity. This is a core function of the operational committee, which has generated several innovative fundraising ideas for the charity. The increase in the number of dogs being surrendered to the charity's care, and the extremely poor health of a number of these dogs, has resulted in significantly increased operating costs in terms of veterinary care, surgeries and investigative procedures and ongoing expenses. We continue to place a strong focus on cost management with our vets.

The Trustees would like to thank the members of the committee and the volunteer foster families and fundraisers who support as without all their efforts the charity would be unable to operate.

### **Organisational Structure**

Sophie's Dog Rescue is registered with the Charity Commission of Northern Ireland, it is governed by a constitution which was amended September 2020 to reflect the members of Sophie's Dog Rescue being the members of the operational committee.

### **Principal Activity**

The principal activity of the charity is to rescue, rehabilitate and re-home dogs, lowering return rates and increasing rehome success. To advance education in responsible dog ownership, highlighting the issues of animal welfare and the lack of regulation in the breeding industry.

The charity continues to work towards its stated purposes of:

1. To work with local pounds to place dogs and puppies into the care of foster families.
  2. To help families who can no longer home a dog due to bereavement, relationship break downs, loss of employment/home.
  3. To educate the public on responsible dog ownership, enrichment, and rehoming. To advise of current NI licencing laws and to remain up to date and impart further knowledge.
- which meet the public benefit requirement of the Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 2008, specifically, Section 2.2(f).

### **Risk Policy**

The Trustees who served during the year have undertaken an analysis of the work of the Charity, identified the major risks to which the charity is exposed and are satisfied that all appropriate policies, practices and procedures are in place to mitigate those risks. The Trustees have produced a register of major risks and mitigating actions which is reviewed regularly at meetings of the Trustees.

### **Financial Review**

During this reporting period, the charity has maintained a good financial position.

### **Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities**

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

The Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015 requires the Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year, which give a true and fair view of the situation of the charity and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure of the charity for that period. In preparing these financial statements the Trustees are required to:

- Select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently.
- Observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP
- Make judgements and accounting estimates that are reasonable and prudent.
- Prepare the financial statements on a going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operation.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

### **Statement of Disclosure of Information to Auditors**

We, the Trustees of the charity who held office at the date of approval of these financial statements, as set out above, each confirm that so far as we are aware that:

1. There is no relevant audit information of which the charity's auditors are unaware.
2. The Trustees have taken all the necessary steps that they ought to have taken as trustees to make themselves aware of all relevant audit information and to establish that the company's auditors are aware of that information.