

RSPCA WEST DORSET BRANCH ANNUAL REPORT 2023



2023 ANNUAL REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES OF RSPCA WEST DORSET BRANCH Charity number 248616

REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

Current Trustees (March 2024)

Darron Cox - Chairman
Catherine Moore – Treasurer
Fiona Renouf – Secretary
Christine Elgar
Sarah Fisher
Nicola Pengelly

Key management personnel

Tessa Every – Taylor's Centre Manager
Cara Watts – Taylor's Deputy Centre Manager (resigned 31.08.23)
Catherine Moore – Branch Treasurer

Principal Address and Registered Office

RSPCA Taylors Rehoming Centre
Higher Dairy
Kingston Maurward College
Dorchester
Dorset
DT2 8PY

Website: www.westdorsetrspca.org

Email: mail@westdorsetrspca.org

Branch (runs and owns)

Taylor's Re-homing Centre, Higher Dairy, Kingston Maurward College, Dorchester, Dorset, DT2 8PY

Email: taylors@westdorsetrspca.org

Independent Examiner

Michelle Ferris, Albert Goodman LLP, Mary Street House, Mary Street, Taunton, Somerset, TA1 3NW

Bankers

Lloyds, 92 St Mary Street, Weymouth, Dorset, DT4 8PA

Investment Managers

Epworth Investment Management Limited, 9 Bonhill Street, London, EC2A 4PE

Employment Advisors

Croner, Croner House, Wheatfield Way, Hinckley LE10 1YG

Legal Advisors

Womble Bond Dickinson, Temple Quay, 3 Temple Back East, Bristol, BS1 6DZ

RSPCA National Society

Parkside, Chart Way, Horsham, West Sussex, RH12 1GY

Cruelty line: 0300 1234 999

Advice line: 0300 1234 555

Website: www.rspca.org.uk

Trustees

The Trustees serving during the period and since the period end are as follows:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Darron Cox – appointed 16.11.23 | <input type="checkbox"/> Julie Burgess – resigned 05.06.23 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Catherine Moore – appointed 16.11.23 | <input type="checkbox"/> Colette Weston – resigned 16.11.23 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fiona Renouf – appointed 16.11.23 | <input type="checkbox"/> Paul Weston – resigned 16.11.23 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Christine Elgar – appointed 16.11.23 | <input type="checkbox"/> Cathy Briggs – resigned 16.11.23 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sarah Fisher – appointed 16.11.23 | <input type="checkbox"/> Martin Bailey – resigned 16.11.23 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Nicola Pengelly – appointed 16.11.23 | <input type="checkbox"/> Jenny Hopper – appointed 03.08.23 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Paul Moore – appointed 16.11.23
resigned 23.11.23 | resigned 16.11.23 |

YOUR LOCAL RSPCA CHARITY SHOPS

<p><u>Bridport</u> 29 West Street Bridport Dorset DT6 3QN 01308 421683</p>	<p><u>Weymouth</u> 119 Dorchester Road Weymouth Dorset DT4 7LA 01305 603081</p>	<p><u>Sherborne</u> 52a Cheap Street Sherborne Dorset DT9 3BJ 01935 814608</p>
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All of our shops are in need of volunteers, if you are interested in helping out please pop in or give the shops a call.

We always welcome donations of good quality clothing, books, CDs, bric a brac and other saleable items.

As well as donated goods, we also sell a wide range of high-quality new items, including products from Ulster Weavers and the Puppet Company.

Our shops are our most important fundraising resource – please do support them and help us to help local animals.

LEGACIES – OUR LIFELINE

In the past, the RSPCA West Dorset Branch has been deeply indebted to those supporters who have been kind enough to remember the Branch in their wills. It was thanks to the generosity of two ladies who made bequests to the Branch in their wills that the 'Taylor's Rehoming Centre' project was able to go ahead, and we have since received additional generous legacies which have enabled us to continue helping animals in need. It is a tribute to their love for animals that in the years to come we will be able to help many hundreds of creatures find loving new homes. Please remember that if you wish the money to be spent helping animals in the West Dorset area, or at 'Taylor's', your will must be specifically worded to mention the West Dorset Branch. Any member wishing to leave a legacy to the RSPCA West Dorset Branch may find the following wording useful:

“I give the sum of £_____ to the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals West Dorset Branch (Registered Charity No. 248616) and I declare that the receipt of the Honorary Treasurer or other proper officer for the time being of the said Branch shall be sufficient discharge for the said legacy.”

If you already have a will, your solicitor can add to it a section (a codicil) based on the above words

A MESSAGE FOR OUR SUPPORTERS

2023 saw changes for the RSPCA West Dorset Branch including an exciting new shop opening and a whole new team of trustees. At the same time Taylors Rehoming Centre continued to look after all the animals in its care and find suitable new homes for many.

Despite holding a variety of fundraising events, it was still a challenging year financially with legacy income down, in common with many other charities. We are always touched by any legacies we receive as it shows people really appreciate the work of the local branch and want to help it continue.

This meant we were more dependent than ever on income from our charity shops. We were very pleased to be able to open a new shop in Weymouth and look forward to this growing and establishing itself in 2024. We must give a big thank you to all our shop staff and volunteers whose hard work and dedication enabled us to fund the work carried out at Taylors and ultimately help more animals in need. Thank you also to our many loyal customers who come in to shop and donate. Any amount small or large is appreciated so please do help us by donating unwanted goods we can sell and coming in to do your shopping whenever you can.

We will be looking for potential new sites in 2024 to complement our existing Bridport, Sherborne and Weymouth shops so please keep an eye on our website and Facebook page for updates and let us know if you have any suggestions.



Taylors had a very successful year with over 190 animals rehomed including 26 rabbits and 120 cats and kittens! This could not be achieved without a huge amount of work from Tess, Laura, Cara and the rest of the team of staff and volunteers who show such dedication to the animals in their care and we would like to thank them for all their hard work.

The Taylors Open Day was another great success. There were lots of visitors on the day, the raffle was as popular as ever, and an amazing £4,104 was raised in total. 2024 will see a new name for this event so please look out for details of our 20th anniversary 'Gala Day'.

A new team of trustees were appointed towards the end of the year, and we look forward to doing all we can to promote the work of the branch and help raise funds for the future. We have lots planned, including attending a number of local fairs and events so if you see us, please come along and say 'Hello'.

Catherine Moore
Trustee
April 2024

2023 TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

Objectives and public benefit statement

We promote the work and objects of the national RSPCA, being to prevent cruelty, promote kindness, and to alleviate the suffering of animals, in the West Dorset and Axminster (Devon) area.

Our charitable activities

1. We take in to care and rehome unwanted and stray pets through “Taylor’s Rehoming Centre”.
2. We assist pet owners in the Branch area who are on low incomes with payment for female cat neutering.
3. We promote the work and objects of the National RSPCA - to promote kindness and to prevent or suppress cruelty to animals by all lawful means. We support the work of local RSPCA Inspectors.

Objects and public benefit statement

1. The RSPCA West Dorset Branch is an unincorporated charitable association and a separately registered branch of the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (the Society), carrying out its direct animal welfare work in the area of West Dorset (and Axminster).
2. The objects of the Branch are to promote the work and objects of the Society - to promote kindness and to 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.
3. The trustees have reviewed the outcomes and achievements of our objectives and activities for the year, to ensure they remain focused on our charitable aims, and continue to deliver benefits to the public. We have complied with the duty under the Charities Act 2006 to have due regard to public benefit guidance published by the Commission.

Advancement of animal welfare

1. Under the Charities Act 2006, the advancement of animal welfare is recognised as a distinct statutory charitable purpose. This legislation and the Animal Welfare Act of the same year indicate an acceptance by society that treating living creatures with compassion has a moral benefit for the public as a whole. Whilst this public benefit is clear, it is sometimes difficult to quantify and must be balanced against any detriment.
2. The Branch’s animal welfare work, although local in nature, benefits society at large, and also aims to help people in need with the care of their animals. The next section of this report highlights the Branch’s main activities and demonstrates the benefit provided to the public (*in italics*). All our charitable activities, as described in more detail in the following pages of this report, focus on promoting kindness and preventing or suppressing cruelty to animals and are undertaken to further these purposes for the public benefit.

Charitable activities pursued for the public benefit

1. We support our local Inspectors by taking in, free of charge, 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.

2. We provide subsidised neutering of female cats for those in the Branch area on low incomes. We do this through our Welfare scheme. This work helps to control cat populations through neutering and benefits those on means tested benefits by giving them financial help to neuter and microchip companion animals, thereby promoting responsible pet ownership.
3. Animals in our care receive veterinary treatment, vaccination, neutering, micro-chipping and are assessed for rehoming. This work helps to control the incidence and spread of disease and suffering through vaccination and neutering.
4. We rehome animals in need at low cost to people willing and able to have a companion animal. Whilst we recognise that companion animals provide measurable benefits to people's physical and mental health, we consider the provision of pets as a subsidiary to the main charitable aim of this service, which is to reduce animal suffering. Our policy to charge a reasonable adoption fee for animals aims to highlight the ongoing personal and financial commitment of pet ownership. It would not be in the best interests of animals, and therefore would fall outside our objectives, to rehome to those who could not afford them.
5. We take in, free of charge, lost animals and take steps to reunite them with owners. This work benefits our local community (including local authorities) by preventing animals straying and posing a risk to themselves and to people through road traffic accidents.
6. We respond to enquiries (both direct and via the Society's national call centre) from the public about animals locally. The public benefits from knowing that we can intervene to assist animals in need.
7. We offer free animal care advice at our rehoming centre. The public benefits through the promotion of responsible pet ownership.
8. Within the terms of our governing document, we support the National Society and other RSPCA branches through collaborating on animal welfare initiatives and providing financial support for pet owners. The public benefits through our collective efforts to provide additional financial support by working together.
9. We provide volunteering opportunities for those who wish to support our work, including trusteeship, fostering and fundraising. This benefits local people and companies by providing the possibility of doing work which is compassionate and rewarding.

Aims and Objectives

- To build on the success of Taylor's by maximising the numbers of animals re-homed.
- To assist with female cat neutering for pet owners on low incomes within a set budget.
- To support the Inspectorate by taking in National RSPCA generated animals.
- To increase fundraising revenue and responsibly manage expenditure.
- To promote and maximise the income from our charity shops.
- To look for opportunities to open further shops to raise funds for the Branch
- To continually plan for the future of our rehoming facilities.

Strategies to achieve Aims and Objectives

- • To take full advantage of all fundraising and promotional opportunities.
- • To hold an annual "Open Day" event at Taylor's.
- • To seek to encourage legacies to the Branch.
- • To maximise income from all shop sites.
- • To maximise on-line sales and social media presence.
- • To increase publicity and public awareness of the work of the Branch.

ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

Fundraising

2023 was another challenging year for the Charity. The Bridport shop performed well, but the Sherborne shop has seen a drop in income. A new Weymouth shop was opened in June but has not yet performed as well as hoped. All three shops have had a lot more focus since November 2023 with a view to identify improvements that can be made to increase income. Total income for the year from all three shops was £190,030.

The Branch received £8,692 in Legacy income during the year. As ever, we are extremely grateful for the generosity of our donors, and committed to ensure that the legacy income we receive is spent for the maximum possible benefit for the animals in our care. The Trustees were actively engaged in promotion of Legacies to protect the future finances of the Charity and will continue to do so in 2024. In addition to Legacy income, the Branch received £876 from Funeral Donations.

Income is generated at Taylors Rehoming Centre through homing donations, sale of food, litter and other goods, a small provision for holiday boarding for animals rehomed from Taylors (now ceased), pen sponsorship, general donations and fundraising events. The Taylors Open Day event continued to be a popular and successful event raising £4,104 this year. Total income generated by Taylors in 2023 was £49,239. In addition to this, income from the "Friends of Taylors" and regular standing orders brought in £4,798.

£23,094 was received from RSPCA Headquarters in respect of the national door to door fundraising initiative. The Branch itself does not carry out door to door fundraising, but we are very grateful for the proportion of funds raised which are passed to the Branch as a result of the National RSPCA initiative. Our investments generated £10,464 in interest and dividends. The Trustees closely monitor the performance of our investment portfolio and endeavour to maximise income with minimal risk to capital. We were able to reclaim £3,454 in Gift Aid in 2023. We are grateful for our donors who kindly elect to allow us to claim Gift Aid on their donations, and also for all small cash donations, which are eligible for Gift Aid payments under the GASDS scheme.

Our static collection boxes throughout the Branch area, brought in £327. We would like to thank the shops and businesses who kindly allow us to keep collection boxes on their premises, and to the volunteers who kindly manage them.

Performance

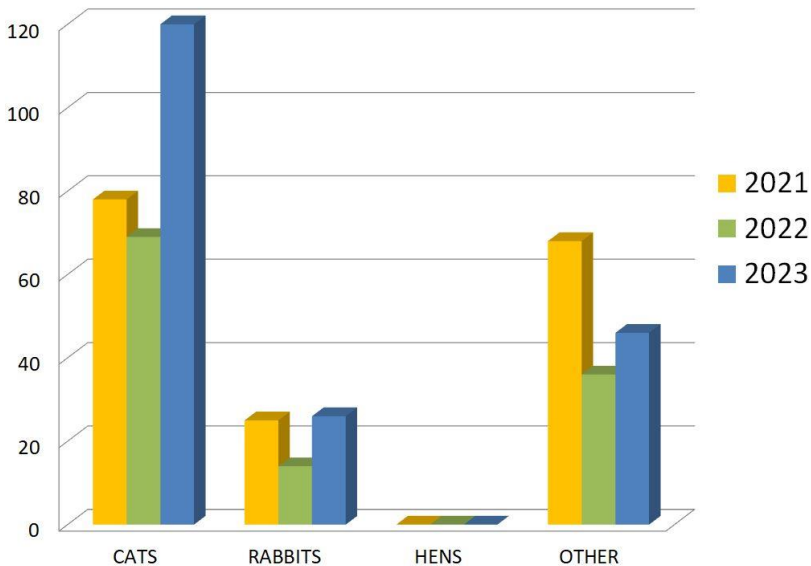
The income generated by the Branch is used to meet the three main charitable objectives of the Branch set with regards to public benefit.

1. We take in to care and rehome unwanted and stray pets through "Taylor's Rehoming Centre".

Taylor's total running costs for 2023 were £192,093. The following table shows the number of animals rehomed in the past three years

Re-homing: Numbers of animals re-homed by Taylor's 2023

	CATS	RABBITS	HENS	OTHER
2021	78	25	0	68
2022	69	14	0	36
2023	120	26	0	46

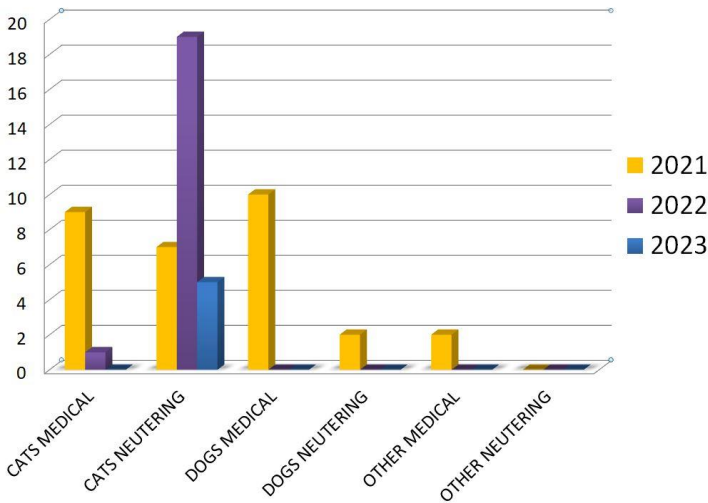


2. We assist pet owners in the Branch area who are on low incomes with payment towards cat spaying

The total cost of Welfare expenditure in 2023 was £200. This is substantially less than in years prior to 2022 when the Trustees voted to focus on the neutering of female cats only. This will be reviewed again in 2024 with consideration given to expanding Welfare activity as and when the financial situation permits. The following table shows the number of animals assisted by our welfare activity over the past three years. We also work together with the Portland Food Bank to provide pet food for qualifying food bank customers throughout the year.

Welfare : Veterinary procedures financially assisted by the Branch 2023

	CATS		DOGS		OTHER	
	MEDICAL	NEUTERING	MEDICAL	NEUTERING	MEDICAL	NEUTERING
2021	9	7	10	2	2	0
2022	1	19	0	0	0	0
2023	0	5	0	0	0	0



3. We promote the work and objects of the National RSPCA - to promote kindness and to prevent or suppress cruelty to animals by all lawful means. We support the work of local RSPCA Inspectors.

During 2023 the Branch continued to use its social media profile to promote national campaigns and the Branch provides support to the National RSPCA Inspectors by taking in Inspectorate generated animals wherever possible.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

The Branch received income from donations and legacies totalling £84,936 during the year compared with £70,277 in 2022. Additional income received consisted of income from other trading activities totalled at £199,906 (2022: £208,543) and investment income was £10,464 (2022: £10,027). Total income for the year increased to £301,384 compared with £294,088, in 2022.

Total expenditure increased slightly to £360,063 (2022: £359,032). The net deficit for the year was £75,682 (£123,525 in 2022 including investment losses).

Our Financial Reserves policy

As of 31 December 2023, total funds stood at £602,928 which includes £528,592 of free reserves available (including investments) to the Branch. This is equivalent to more than 17 months' current expenditure. The Branch aims to ensure that the financial reserves at any one time would cover at least twelve months predicted expenditure. This is to protect the Branch from fluctuations in income in order that levels of service provided for the welfare of local animals may be maintained in the event of a reduction in incoming resources. Reserves, in this context, means funds that are freely available for the Branch's general purposes after all commitments have been met and excludes fixed assets.

If the financial reserves substantially exceed eighteen months predicted expenditure at any one time, the trustees will seek to increase and expand the animal welfare activity of the Branch.

In previous years a large part of the Branch income has been legacy related and whilst the trustees do all they can to encourage legacies to the Branch, by its very nature legacy income cannot be predicted.

FUTURE PLANS

In 2024 the Trustees aim to maximise the profitability of the Bridport shop, and increase revenue from the Sherborne and Weymouth shops via constant review and implementation of new marketing strategies, improved staff engagement, increased promotional events, and the introduction of the sale of electrical

goods. Suitable premises for other shops will be sought, including 'pop up' shops if possible. The performance of all shops will continue to be closely monitored. Legacies will be further promoted via leaflets, in-shop campaigns, social media, and contact with local solicitors. The Branch will aim to substantially increase the number of fundraising and promotional events as resources allow. Use of social media will be further increased to promote the work of the Branch. Taylors Rehoming Centre will have a number of improvements, including the installation of new, more suitable rabbit facilities, and the replacement of outdated heating equipment. This will provide better conditions for the animals on site and help to maintain the excellent standard of care given. The increase in promotional events and use of social media will help maximise the number of animals rehomed.

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

The charity is a branch of the South West Regional and National RSPCA and was registered on 13 July 1966 (number 248616). It is governed by the RSPCA Branch model rules and subject to the overall supervision of the RSPCA, but otherwise manages its own affairs and finances independently.

The charity is run by the branch committee whose members are the charity's trustees. The Committee is elected by branch members at the AGM (5 to 14 trustees), or may be co-opted by the existing committee if they have particular skills required; up to 3 trustees may be co-opted in a year. Candidates for election at the AGM must be nominated by two eligible branch members and must receive in excess of 50% of the votes of those eligible members who are present and who vote at the AGM. To stand for election at the AGM, or to exercise voting rights, individuals must have been members of the branch for at least 3 clear calendar months. A declaration of willingness to act must be completed and signed before being eligible to vote at meetings.

Induction and training is covered by the provision of information packs and booklets from the National Society and the Charity Commission, as well as guidance and training from existing committee members.

There are three lead officer posts, Chairman, Treasurer and Secretary, and additionally nominated trustees take a lead responsibility for such things as line management of the re-homing centre, shops and website management.

Trustees receive support and advice from the Branch Partnership Manager (from the South and South West Regional RSPCA) who attends branch committee meetings and is always on hand to offer guidance.

Additionally one trustee is elected to the South West Regional Board, which meets on a regular basis to agree and assess campaigns, networking and home visiting schemes, and receives information on Inspectorate issues.

Matters that require a vote must be proposed and seconded by individual trustees and all trustees present at the meeting have one vote. The Chairman of the meeting is not eligible to vote unless in the case of the tie, in which case the vote of the Chairman is the deciding vote.

The trustees are legally required to draw up and implement a Risk Management Strategy. Once it is in operation daily implementation can be delegated, but the final responsibility lies with the trustees, who are liable for any infringement. Our very comprehensive Risk Management Strategy has been put in writing and made available to our auditors. The Strategy is reviewed and updated regularly.

STATEMENT OF TRUSTEES' RESPONSIBILITIES

The trustees are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards including Financial Reporting Standard 102: The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

The law applicable to charities in England & Wales requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and of 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 judgments and accounting estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements, and
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in business.

The trustees are responsible for maintaining proper accounting records which 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 Act 2011, the Charity (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 and the provisions of the trust deed/constitution. 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.

The trustees are responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the charity and financial information included on the charity's website. Legislation in the United Kingdom governing the preparation and dissemination of financial statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.



RSPCA West Dorset Branch

Statement of Financial Activities

For the Year Ended 31 December 2023

	Note	Unres- tricted £	Res- tricted £	Total 2023 £	Unres- tricted £	Res- tricted £	Total 2022 £
Income:							
Donations and legacies	2	70,178	14,758	84,936	58,892	11,385	70,277
Income from other trading activities							
Trading income	3	199,906	-	199,906	208,543	-	208,543
Other fundraising income		6,078	-	6,078	5,241	-	5,241
Investments	4	10,464	-	10,464	10,027	-	10,027
Total income		286,626	14,758	301,384	282,703	11,385	294,088
Expenditure:							
Costs of raising funds							
Investment manager's fees		3,223	-	3,223	465	-	465
Trading expenditure	3	132,431	-	132,431	156,073	-	156,073
Other fundraising and publicity costs		75	-	75	-	-	-
Charitable activities	5	196,782	27,552	224,334	54,239	148,255	202,494
Total expenditure		332,511	27,552	360,063	210,777	148,255	359,032
Net income/(expenditure) before other recognised (losses)/gains							
		(45,885)	(12,794)	(58,679)	71,926	(136,870)	(64,944)
Gains/(losses) on investments							
		(17,003)	-	(17,003)	(58,581)	-	(58,581)
Net income/(expenditure) before transfers							
		(62,888)	(12,794)	(75,682)	13,345	(136,870)	(123,525)
Transfers between funds							
	12	-	-	-	-	-	-
Net movement in funds							
		(62,888)	(12,794)	(75,682)	13,345	(136,870)	(123,525)
Reconciliation of funds							
Total funds brought forward	12	593,398	85,212	678,610	580,053	222,082	802,135
Total funds carried forward		530,510	72,418	602,928	593,398	85,212	678,610

A full copy of the audited accounts is available to download from our website
www.westdorsetrspca.org

RSPCA TAYLOR'S MANAGER'S REPORT

From fish to ferrets - we have had another very interesting year taking in a wide variety of animals, even if it is just until we can move them on to a facility that is licenced to care for them. There have been some changes with our former Deputy Manager, Cara, moving on to a new career, and having a full change of charity Trustees. We are ever so grateful for all the hard work and dedication of the staff and volunteers.

We have been helping the Inspectors with a multi cat household, where there were 70 cats living in just one room of the property. We have taken in some of the cats with the help of other branches and animal centres. Some have already been rehomed, others are taking a bit of time to get ready for rehoming. Some of the cats were expecting and had to give birth and raise kittens, all of the cats needed to be neutered, and others needed treatment for conditions such as a broken hip, missing eye, and ongoing ear problems.

We have taken in a mum cat with her 6 six week old kittens that were dumped in a box on a path. They all were very skinny and had fleas. Happily, all have now been successfully rehomed.

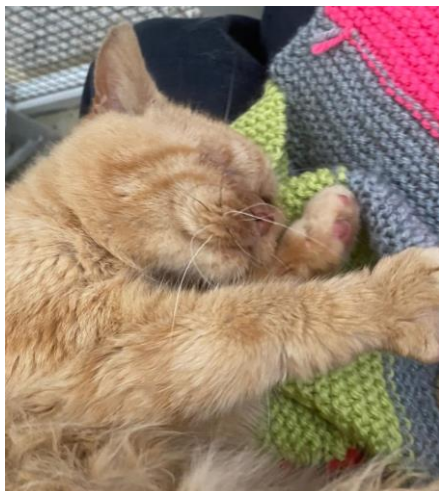
We were delighted to rehome a beautiful cat called Alvin who had been with us for 18 months as he had some behavioural issues which took time and dedication to resolve. He now is settled into his understanding forever home.

We have taken in more stray animals this year, cats, rabbits and even a guinea pig. We believe that the cost of living crisis is impacting on the animals, some people are asking for help and others, sadly, seem to be just leaving their pets behind.

Our 2024 fundraising has got off to a good start - we held our annual quiz in February and raised £484. We are already planning for the summer "Gala Day" on August 18th, and we look forward to seeing all of our wonderful supporters and getting updates on all of your rehomed animals. You don't need to wait until you can see us in person as we always welcome email updates and photos!

Thank you from all of us here at Taylors!

Tessa Every
RSPCA Taylor's Rehoming Centre Manager
April 2024



DORSET AND WILTS INSPECTORATE REPORT 2023

During 2023 the Dorset & Wiltshire group dealt with 3383 animal welfare incidents and 34 possible prosecution cases were investigated.

Following on from challenges presented by previous years with Covid and abandonments of animals, 2023 started to truly show the effects of the cost of living crisis with remarkable strain on the society's resources. This has meant an increased workload for our officers dealing with cruelty and neglect and stressful working conditions dealing with this impact with very limited resources available to them in order to do what they need to do. I am very proud of all of my team, making difficult decisions on a daily basis to prioritise what they have in front of them, dealing with animals in situ as often as is reasonable and removing animals when it is an absolute must. It isn't easy when we very often end up being the last resort for situations which are left with no other agency taking responsibility. Our team are very experienced, compassionate and committed and the way they work to resolve issues which at first can seem impossible never fails to inspire me, making good use of animal welfare improvement notices as needed.

Throughout 2023 we continued to do our best for animals in Dorset and Wiltshire whilst also adapting to changes in our way of working; the Inspectorate modernisation saw the continued reduction of our officers attending calls for sick and injured wildlife. Many of these calls are now passed to volunteers when involving smaller wildlife such as birds and hedgehogs, or advice is given to members of the public to provide help in the first instance and resolve via taking directly to vets or wildlife rescue charities. We continue to provide assistance with larger wildlife as our officers are best placed to deal with these with their technical skills and handling experience - but even these calls have reduced due to the NCC opening hours being reduced to close at 17:00 for new calls in from members of the public (we are waiting for updates on if this will be a permanent decision or not).

The reduction in attending wildlife calls means officers are able to attend more calls of neglect and cruelty which is good because no other organisation does this work. It is important because it appears to be that there are increasing levels of deliberate harm being seen in society now, as well as the neglect resulting from the pandemic and the subsequent cost of living crisis. Although bringing extra focus to this area is positive for the animals suffering from cruelty and neglect, it does mean that our officers are more susceptible to compassion fatigue with the loss of some of the more enjoyable parts of the role. Historically, the depressing complaint side of the job was broken up more frequently with the more lighter side when members of the public were welcoming our arrival with a smile as we attend to help the injured pigeon they had called about.

We are thankful to all our branches for the help and support given through 2023, without you, our work would be so much harder - last year, together, we made a huge difference to animal welfare and this just wouldn't have been possible without the support of branch members, volunteers and shop staff. We look forward to working with you all closely again this year.

Throughout the year the group worked incredibly hard showing their dedication and professionalism and I am immensely proud of them. We continue into 2024 doing all we can whilst navigating further changes - I take my greatest inspiration from my team and am thankful to them for that.

Donkeys

Inspector Charlotte Le Brun dealt with two clinically obese donkeys in Portland. Charlotte attended with The Donkey Sanctuary and Dorset Trading Standards. The Donkey Sanctuary was able to source a vet whilst Trading Standards legally have the powers to access the land and take an animal into possession under the Animal Welfare Act 2006. The owner admitted she could no longer cope following the death of her husband and the donkeys were also being fed by walkers daily. They were signed over to The Donkey Sanctuary. The Donkey Sanctuary was eventually able to find space for the pair and were able to arrange transport for both of them to go to Sidmouth!



Rabbits...

Inspector Charlotte Le Brun dealt with an incident in the Dorchester area involving a large number of rabbits being kept without their needs being met and exposed to hazards and unsuitable housing. With animal spaces at RSPCA centres being very hard to find, especially for rabbits, having a call about 60+ rabbits being kept in cages is always worrying! It was a great result to be able to resolve this incident and improve the lives of these rabbits with help from colleague Animal Rescue officer Gemma Gumbleton, Taylor's Animal Centre, and in partnership working with one of our approved private boarders "Purton Cattery" in Swindon. The photo shows Stevie's now happy life with new mate Shadow.



Cats

On Halloween, Inspector Ken Snook and ARO Jo Blackburn, attended a multi-cat household of over 70 cats in Weymouth and were in need of assistance. Luckily, Inspector Charlotte Le Brun and Inspector Patrick Bailey were already with a Vet and Vet nurse at another job which meant they were able to dash down to assist their colleagues. ARO Gemma Gumbleton also headed down whilst DCI Steph Daly manned the fort. Multiple cats were deemed to be in a suffering state by the Vet, and were brought into the urgent care of the RSPCA. Inspector Ken Snook has taken the lead and we are awaiting a decision regarding a possible prosecution case for this job.

Monkeys

Inspector Charlotte Le Brun had a daunting call about a monkey being kept in a cage in Dorchester. Having a call about such an exotic pet and the struggles we have in finding places for these animals is always enough to make anyone worry about how a job will unfold - but Charlotte had no regrets on attending when she was presented with a poor marmoset that was being kept inside a cage barely big enough for a budgie. It was a recipe for disaster so Charlotte had the marmoset signed over without delay. The marmoset called 'Greta' spent the night at a local vet and was assessed and health checked by a specialist vet first thing in the morning. After passing the health check with no concerns, lucky Greta was secured a place at Wild Futures, a Monkey sanctuary in Cornwall and was transported there with help from some of our lovely volunteers. Here is Greta and her new home!



Gulls

The RSPCA is regularly called to injured or trapped gulls. Inspector Tina Ward was called to assist a gull that was trapped in the middle of a tidal river in West Bay, Dorset. The gull had a fishing hook through its upper beak with a huge length of trailing fishing wire attached which was buried deep down in the mudflats trapping the bird in situ. The bird was exhausted and at risk of drowning at the next high tide. Due to the hazardous muddy tidal river environment Tina needed help and the Dorset Fire and Rescue team were excellent. They were able to carefully make their way to the bird and retrieve it to safer shores

where Tina was able to expertly assess and remove the fishing hook utilising her new Leatherman tool which had been very gratefully donated by West Dorset Branch - the new tools were helping to make a difference already! The gull was able to be released following the removal of the hook.

20 weeks custody & banned from animals for 5 years

A man who was found guilty at trial, was sofa surfing in Weymouth when he mistreated the cat while staying at a friend's home, a court heard. A veterinary report noted the cat had swelling along the bridge of the nose, between the eyes and on the top of the head. She also had multiple areas of fur loss that were noticed at the back of the head, shoulders and flanks and inflammation of the ear. The report also noted that down the backs of the hind legs and underneath the tail was wet and had a pale brown discharge and her vulva and surrounding area was swollen. She also displayed a significant level of back pain and struggled to pass faeces. The report said: "The numerous areas of fur loss, consistent with the hair being pulled out rather than clipped, cut or scratched out with some areas having minor skin abrasion also supports the assertion that she had sustained injury via the skin being roughly handled, grabbed or pulled resulting in tearing of the subcutaneous tissues. The cause of the swollen vulva is unclear, although rough handling of these tissues will result in such swelling with an absence of bruising or abrasion. The reluctance to pass faeces un-aided by an enema is consistent with the cat experiencing pain when straining to pass faeces. When passed, the faeces were normal without blood or mucus. There was no internal damage." The male, who was brought to court on warrant after being found living with no fixed abode in Chester, was also disqualified from owning animals for five years.

Five year disqualification and a two year conditional discharge

A case which lasted almost a year, came to an end in September after a trial and sentencing. Inspector Charlotte Le Brun and Inspector Patrick Bailey were able to get the case heard at trial following a non-guilty plea. At the trial, Charlotte, Patrick and Ken all were required to give evidence against the owner from Weymouth who was found guilty of causing unnecessary suffering. She was sentenced to a 5 year disqualification on all dogs, a 2 year conditional discharge, a £26 victim surcharge and a deprivation order for both elderly dogs which she refused to sign over for the entire investigation. Sadly, both dogs needed euthanasia when we eventually achieved this due to being blind, deaf, incontinent and suffering from mild strokes.



THANK YOU...

Many thanks again to all of our branches and volunteers within the Dorset and Wiltshire group area for all your support through 2023, it really is appreciated. Also great thanks to everyone who has assisted us with placements for animals over the last 12 months as it really has been challenging especially;

- Ashley Heath Animal Centre
- Oak and Furrow Wildlife Rescue
- Taylors Animal Rehoming Centre
- Purton Cattery

Thank you all for your continued support, no matter how big or how small it really does make a difference.

Lewis Taylor
Chief Inspector Dorset and Wiltshire

HOW YOU CAN HELP

Volunteering

If you have a few hours to spare each week, would you like to volunteer in one of our Charity Shops, or at Taylors Rehoming Centre? Would you like to find out more about becoming a Trustee? Please contact us, or drop in to one of the shops, to pick up a volunteer application form. An online volunteer form can also be found on our website.

Regular or one off donations

Donations are incredibly important to us. The easiest way to donate is via the DONATE logo on our website – you can donate using any debit or credit card, or your PayPal account. If you would like to make a one off or regular donation, you can do this through the DONATE link. You can Gift Aid your donation as part of the process.



Check out our eBay store



We are selling more than ever on eBay, both donated and new goods. 100% of the profits help the animals at Taylors

Support our shops

Please remember our shops when you have goods to donate. We aim to sell a quality range of clothing, bric a brac, books and household items. Shopping with us and choosing 'pre-loved' over new goods is of massive benefit to the environment as well as helping the animals.



Crochet or knit a purple poppy

RSPCA West Dorset Branch sell knitted and crocheted purple poppies at Taylors Rehoming Centre and in our charity shops in Bridport, Dorchester and Sherborne for Remembrance Day. Can you help by knitting or crocheting some for us? There is a pattern on our website, or you can follow any pattern you find online. We love our volunteers to make them throughout the year so we have plenty for October / November.



Give the animals a little something...

We are always grateful for donated cat food (Whiskas or Felix), crocheted or knitted cat blankets and items from our animals AMAZON WISH LIST – you can find the link on our website.

Got an old car to scrap?

Giveacar is a non-profit fundraising organisation that raises money for UK charities by scrapping and selling old cars. They provide a FREE nationwide service which:

Arranges collection of the vehicle from your home
Depending on its age and condition, recycles it at an Authorised Treatment Facility or sends it to auction.

Scrap donations raise an average of £35 (depending on the price of metal) while auction cars can raise much more.

To arrange collection of a car, visit <http://www.giveacar.co.uk/charities/rspca-west-dorset> or call 020 7736 4242, quoting RSPCA WEST DORSET BRANCH as your preferred charity.



GIVEACAR

Keep in touch with us on social media



www.facebook.com/rspcataylorsrehoming/

www.facebook.com/rspcawestdorsetshops

twitter.com/rspcawestdorset

www.instagram.com/rspcataylorsrehoming/



RSPCA WEST DORSET BRANCH

MINUTES OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD ON

16 NOVEMBER 2023

Present

Anthony Whittington
Christine Elgar
Fiona Renouf
Martin Bailey
Sarah Faulkner
Susan Stow

Cara Watts
Claire Procter
June Lawrence
Nicola Pengelly
Sarah Fisher
Tess Every

Catherine Moore
Darron Cox
Lyn Lacey
Paul Moore
Sue Yarrow
Victoria Robson (BPM)

Apologies

None

Welcome and Report

Victoria welcomed everyone to the AGM and explained that her role as Branch Partnership Manager employed by the National RSPCA was to support Branches. She stated that this was an unusual AGM as none of the current Trustees were standing for re-election, and asked if the membership were happy for her to chair the meeting in the absence of the Chairman. It was proposed by Paul Moore and seconded by Darron Cox that Victoria should chair the meeting, all members were in favour.

Victoria proceeded to explain that the AGM was originally planned for August but was cancelled due to insufficient numbers of members wishing to stand for election to the committee.

Susan Stow read out a letter from Paul Weston (retiring Chairman) and Colette Weston (retiring Trustee) giving an overview of the successes of the Branch during their years on the committee and wishing the incoming Trustees well in their new roles.

Minutes of the 2022 AGM

The Minutes of the last meeting were approved as a true and correct record (proposed by Martin Bailey and seconded by Cara Watts) and will be signed by the Chairman accordingly.

Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

Treasurer's Report (by Branch Administrator in absence of a Treasurer)

Susan Stow gave the following report:-

Please refer to pages 7 to 10 of the Annual Report booklet which can be found online at

www.westdorsetrspca.org/2022report.pdf

The full financial report can be found in the 2022 Annual Report, but in summary, 2022 was definitely a somewhat challenging year. The Bridport and Sherborne shops performed well, but we had to close Dorchester a year ago due to increasing costs and decreasing footfall. Most significantly, the Branch has been hit hard by a decline in a legacy income, with only just over £1,000 received in 2022. In previous years, we were fortunate enough to receive significantly more in the way of legacies. This concerning trend has continued in to 2023 with only just over £8,500 received to date. In 2022 the Branch made an overall loss of over £123,000. Thankfully, the level of reserves held by Branch is high enough that we are still financially secure for the short term future, but expenditure is significantly exceeding income in 2023 so far. The Branch has been without a Treasurer since the last AGM in June 2022, but the Trustees have acted with extreme caution on all financial matters, and costs have been cut wherever possible, but unfortunately the current financial climate is such that prices, including wages, which is the by far the largest expenditure for the Branch, keep increasing whilst people have much less disposable income which affects donations, and trade in our shops.

Susan invited question relating to the accounts and any financial matters but none were raised.

Acceptance of Branch Accounts

Branch accounts can be found at www.westdorsetrspca.org/2022fullauditedaccounts.pdf

It was proposed by Fiona Renouf that the Branch Accounts be accepted. This was seconded by Christine Elgar and all those present and entitled to vote were in favour.

Appointment of Auditor for 2023

It was proposed by Darron Cox and seconded by Fiona Renouf that "Albert Goodman" be retained as auditor for 2023. All those present and entitled to vote were in favour.

Election of Branch Committee

The seven members standing for election introduced themselves and explained why they wished to become Trustees of the Branch.

The following candidates were duly elected:

Darron Cox

Christine Elgar

Sarah Fisher

Catherine Moore

Paul Moore

Nicola Pengelly

Fiona Renouf

Consideration of Resolutions

There were no resolutions

Any Other Business

No other business

Victoria thanked everyone for attending, and the meeting was declared closed at 8.51pm.



JOIN THE FRIENDS OF TAYLOR'S

You can become a 'Friend of Taylor's' for a minimum donation of £10 per year (£8 for under 16s / over 60s). You will receive a welcome pack, badge, membership card, newsletters and the chance to join our Centre staff for special 'Friends Tours'. Your donation will go exclusively towards the day to day funding of the Centre.

I wish to become a 'Friend of Taylor's Rehoming Centre'

I enclose a donation of £ _____

£10 individual membership

£15 joint adult membership £20 for a family of up to 5 members
for one year's membership

£100 one off payment if you wish to become a 'Friend for Life'

£250 one off payment if you wish to become a 'Life Patron of Taylor's'

£500 one off payment to become a 'Life Patron of RSPCA West Dorset Branch'

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

TELEPHONE _____

DATE _____

Please make cheques payable to RSPCA West Dorset Branch

If you prefer to join online please visit www.westdorsetrspca.org/friends.htm

**PLEASE CUT OUT THIS FORM AND RETURN TO:-
'FRIENDS OF TAYLOR'S REHOMING CENTRE'
RSPCA TAYLORS REHOMING CENTRE
HIGHER DAIRY, KINGSTON MAURWARD COLLEGE
DORCHESTER, DORSET, DT2 8PY**

GIFT AID DECLARATION

Boost your donation by 25p of Gift Aid for every £1 you donate

Gift Aid is reclaimed by the charity from the tax you pay for the current tax year. Your address is needed to identify you as a current UK taxpayer.

I am a UK taxpayer and understand that if I pay less Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax than the amount of Gift Aid claimed on my donation in that tax year it is my responsibility to pay any difference. I want to Gift Aid my donation of

£ _____

and any donations I make in the future to RSPCA WEST DORSET BRANCH

NAME _____

HOUSE NO OR NAME AND POSTCODE _____

SIGNED _____

DATE _____

Please notify us if you want to cancel this declaration, want to change your home address or no longer pay sufficient tax on your income or capital gains.

SPONSOR A CAT PEN

You can 'Sponsor' a cat pen, cage or hutch at "Taylor's" by way of a 'one-off' donation or a yearly payment, from as little as £25. All Sponsors are recognised by way of a personalised plaque displayed on the pen or hutch. This is a wonderful way of showing your support for the Centre, and you and your friends will, of course, be able to visit Taylor's to see 'your plaque' on the pen, cage or hutch!

I WOULD LIKE TO SPONSOR A PEN AT TAYLOR'S

NAME
ADDRESS

EMAIL
TELEPHONE

DATE

Please make cheques payable to RSPCA West Dorset Branch

If you prefer to sponsor a pen online please visit www.westdorsetrspca.org/sponsorapen.htm

I enclose a donation of £_____ for the following Sponsorship category (PLEASE TICK BOX)

- Sponsor a Hutch - £50 Sponsor a Cage - £25
 Sponsor a Cat Pen:- 1 year - £70 2 years - £100
 3 years - £150 5 years - £250 10 years - £450
 15 years - £650 20 years - £800 25 years - £1000

If you would rather make an Annual Sponsorship payment please tick here
 Annual donation of £ _____ (minimum £25)

Please contact us for details if you would like to pay by standing order.

PLEASE FILL IN BELOW HOW YOU WOULD LIKE THE REST OF THE INSCRIPTION TO APPEAR ON YOUR PLAQUE. PLEASE USE BLOCK CAPITALS.

	S	P	O	N	S	O	R	E	D		B	Y	

GIFT AID DECLARATION

Boost your donation by 25p of Gift Aid for every £1 you donate
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I am a UK taxpayer and understand that if I pay less Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax than the amount of Gift Aid claimed on my donation in that tax year it is my responsibility to pay any difference. I want to Gift Aid my donation of

£ _____

and any donations I make in the future to RSPCA WEST DORSET BRANCH

NAME _____

HOUSE NO OR NAME AND POSTCODE _____

SIGNED _____

DATE _____

Please notify us if you want to cancel this declaration, want to change your home address or no longer pay sufficient tax on your income or capital gains.

SMALL CHANGE APPEAL

We are always very grateful for your support so we can continue to assist local animals. We know how many demands there are on your money, so we are only asking if you could please consider a regular donation of just £2.50 a month. Every penny really does count!

£2.50 a month?



Small change for you...



...life changing for me

In order to continue our work we need to raise in the region of

£350,000 a year

We receive no lottery or government funding

Just £2.50 a month could make all the difference

Please consider making a regular donation towards our work.

We are grateful for any amount, however large or small.

Our ability to continue helping local animals depends entirely upon the support of local people.

Please complete the standing order form on the next page and send with the details below to:-

RSPCA TAYLORS REHOMING CENTRE, HIGHER DAIRY, KINGSTON MAURWARD COLLEGE, DORCHESTER, DORSET, DT2 8PY

(If you would prefer to make a one-off donation, please make cheques payable to RSPCA West Dorset Branch and send to the address above)

Your Name

Your Address

Email Address

**PREFER TO DONATE OR SET UP A DIRECT DEBIT ONLINE?
YOU CAN DO THIS VIA THE DONATE BUTTON ON OUR WEBSITE**

