



**RESCUE
HOTEL**

...Supporting Cardiff Dogs Home

ANNUAL REPORT

2023 – 2024



Foreword

A message from the Chair of Trustees

The year started with a bang in April when the charity was awarded an incredible £180,000 from The Pets at Home Foundation to complete our mission to raise £500,000 to refurbish the kennels.

In May our largest ever event, Bark in the park, took place. Organised entirely by volunteers, the event rivalled professionally organised events and I am so proud of the day that was created by a small team.

In September, we, along with all other animal welfare charities who work with dogs, were dealt the devastating blow that the XL bully would be added to the list of banned breeds. The impact this ban has had and will continue to have on the welfare of those who work with dogs is huge but we as Trustees will continue to do all we can within our remit and power to support owners of banned breeds.

In March we finally got planning permission for phase 1 of the refurbishment. While at times it felt like this was taking forever and we were keen to get moving I know in reality what we have achieved is huge and the kennel refurbishment project as a whole has moved quickly.



I am so excited for the year ahead and cannot wait to see the refurbishment unfold.



Toria Acreman, Chair of Trustees



Kennel Refurbishment

In April just under 2 and a half years after we launched the Kennel refurbishment fundraising appeal we met and exceeded our £500,000 target thanks to a £180,000 grant award from Pets Foundation. One of the largest grants ever awarded by the foundation.

The campaign was launched in December 2020 by the charities first ambassador Sam Warburton who was delighted with the award and meeting the huge target. Sam says *"Cardiff Dogs Home and its charitable arm 'The Rescue Hotel' is very close to my heart. As somebody who has adopted and lived with dogs from a young age, the work of the dogs home and their staff are truly amazing. The grant awarded from the Pets Foundation of £180,000 will allow us to create a home that the dogs and staff deserve whilst searching for their forever home. I can't thank the Pets Foundation enough, as well as all the other contributors to making this dream happen."*



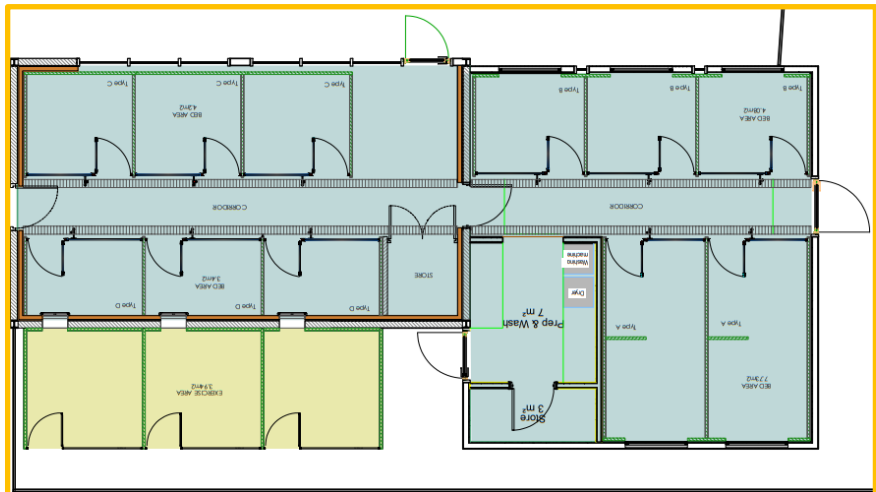
Once the funds were in place it was time to move on to planning. Once again thanks to Sam Warburton Capital Construction Training Group came on

board to help support this build as much as possible. Without the support of this group the cost of the refurbishment would run into the millions which would simply not be possible for the charity to achieve.

From the group members Knox and Wells have kindly allowed Keith Hopkinson to project manage the refurbishment on a pro-bono basis. Over the past 12 months he has worked closely with Sharon Wooton from BECT and Ashely Eley from Kingfisher Wales to get all of the plans, costs and surveys in place to be submitted for approval. On 28th March, plans for Phase 1 which will see the current stable block extended and turned into 11 kennels were approved by Vale of Glamorgan Council. The initial deposit for the kennels was paid to kennel build on the same day and work will start in June.

Splitting the refurbishment in to 2 phases is vital as it will allow there to be some functioning kennels during the refurbishment of the main kennel block.

Phase 1 kennel block plans



Lives Saved

Helen's Story



Helen, unlike many of the dogs who need our help was not ill when she arrived at the home as an unclaimed stray. Helen had been let down cruelly by humans all of her life. First as a pup when her ears were cropped. A practice which is illegal in this country, taking place behind closed doors in unsanitary conditions and with little pain relief for the poor dog.

Then by her owner who dumped her after her litter was still born as she was no longer profitable to him and served no purpose. Then by the Government who ignored the advice of animal welfare charities who had campaigned for years to end breed specific legislation as it was not working who decided to add the XL Bully to the list anyway. Helen who arrived at the home prior to the ban being introduced now found herself in the position of needing to find a home before the end of 2023 or she would be put to sleep, simply for the way she looks.

Helen remained at the home with no suitable applications and the clock ticking on the impending ban. In December it was clear that further intervention from the charity would be needed to help Helen find a home and spare her life. As banned breeds are uninsurable the Trustees agreed a support package including help with veterinary fees that would remain with Helen for life to help her find a home. On Christmas eve her miracle happened, and she was officially adopted just 1 week before the ban would come into place. She is now happy and loved still alive thanks to our work.



Lucia's Story

In January the team were growing increasingly concerned about our wonderful Lucia. The concern was so great she was rushed into emergency exploratory surgery to find out what was causing her so much discomfort. When Lucia was opened up a huge mass spanning the length of her intestines was discovered which was causing a major blockage. It is believed the mass was predominantly rawhide that had been there for months. The blockage was successfully removed, and Lucia has now made a full recovery as well as finding her forever home. We used Lucia's story to spread the message about the dangers of rawhide via our socials so hopefully an important message was learnt by many, and we will continue to educate pet owners on this topic.



Veterinary Suite

Our veterinary suite continues to provide a vital service. In the past year over 1000 surgeries were performed at the clinic providing affordable operations to not only the resident dogs and helping the charity to manage our veterinary spend but also the general public. Most notably was the increase in surgery days being offered to support owners of XL Bullies looking for affordable neutering that had been quoted up to £800 elsewhere.



In the past year a total of **943** dogs were neutered at the clinic and **2472** vaccinations were administered.

Lives Lost

Remembering Kenno

In October our dear beloved Kenno lost his life. Sadly, following an incident whilst out with a volunteer walker he was put to sleep. The staff at the home fought so hard to save him but unfortunately there was nothing that could be done and the decision was taken out of their hands.

Kenno had an incredibly difficult life, and his story is so tragic but all we can do is take some solace in the knowledge that he most likely experienced his happiest moments at CDH. He passed the rainbow bridge after having a tasty steak dinner and surrounded by his favourite staff. We hope he is at peace in doggy heaven and knows how loved he was.

Kenno was not a bad dog, he was let down by humans during his life and sadly, despite the best efforts of everyone at CDH, it finally got to him.

Kenno's life was not taken in vain though and processes were put in place to minimise risk and ensure the safety of both volunteers and the dogs they are walking as a result.

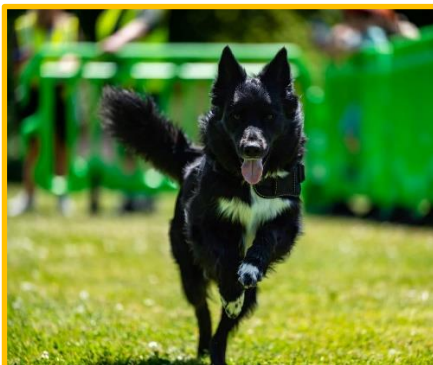


Bark in the Park

On Sunday 21st May we hosted our first-ever Bark in the Park Dog Show at Victoria Park in Barry. The event was a huge success, with over 1500 people and hundreds of dogs in attendance. The event spanned 4 hours and featured a dog show with 5 categories for people to enter their canine companions.

There was plenty of fun outside the show ring as well, with activities such as Have-a-go agility (with Valleys Dog Behaviour and Training) and the doggy dash. For humans, there were market stalls to browse, food vendors, face painting, lots of walkabout entertainment, and a meet & greet with our very own ambassador and rugby legend, Sam Warburton.

For 2024 the event plans to be even bigger and better with a move to Romilly Park in Barry allowing for the addition of a car show, children's activity zone and many more food and drinks vendors.





Community Events

During the past year a total of 15 meet and greet and fundraising events took place across Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan raising a total of £9,000.

The meet and greet events are a vital part of the work we do as a small charity. Since the kennels were closed to the public during Covid these events are often the only opportunity for members of the public to meet some of the dogs prior to submitting an application. It can be difficult for people to want to adopt a dog based on a picture on a website so these events help bridge that gap. The events are also an opportunity for dogs to get a much needed break away from the stresses of kennel life with the opportunity to experience new smells and sights.

In December, as a result of the success of these meet and greets the first open day at the home was arranged. The day was a huge success with over 15 adoption matches being made. There are now plans to hold further open days in 2024 as a result of the success of this event.

The meet and greets are also a great opportunity for volunteers to get to know each other and make new friends. Here is a small selection of quotes from volunteers about how they help.

“The meet and greets is a way to getting to know other volunteers, who share our passion for the dogs, where friends are made.”

“I love seeing how many happy people turn up to meet the dogs, and how happy the dogs are to be out meeting people, It makes me smile so much, when someone comes and asks about a particular dog they’ve seen online. I think it is valuable for people to be able to get that low commitment engagement with the rescue. It is lovely chatting with people about the difference between a rescue and a breeder. I always feel warm and fuzzy inside after our meet and greets.”



Social Media

Our social media channels remain at the heart of what we do as a charity. Our charity was born through social media and it continues to allow us to engage with the general public sharing the dogs available for adoption, sharing important educational messages and helping us to fundraise.

During the past year our Facebook following grew by an incredible 25.5% to 43,608 and our Instagram page gained an additional 3,700 followers. Our biggest surge in new followers came in December as we continuously campaigned to find a home for our XL type Helen as well as sharing the plight of other XL's around the Country desperately seeking a home before the ban kicked in.

Our post reach on Facebook increased by 60.6% to 3.1 million and there were a total of 135,200 click links through to our website and the CDH website. Our Instagram continues to improve massively with post reach increasing by a staggering 280% to 324,500.

The 2nd best performing post of the year was an educational post regarding off lead dogs and how they should not be allowed to approach on lead dogs. As a charity being able to have such a huge educational impact on the general public through a forum that most people use is hugely important in helping us to achieve our objectives.



New Trustees

In August we welcomed two new Trustees to the fold. They have spent their first few months getting to know the charity and we are excited about the skills they will both bring to fold.

Andrew Plain – Legal & Governance

Andrew started as a volunteer dog walker in 2020. His enthusiasm and love of walking the dogs became evident when he started doing videos to help promote the dogs in his spare time which led to greater and greater involvement with the charity's activities. Andrew has a law degree and is currently completing his Masters in Law/Legal Practice Course to soon start practicing as a trainee solicitor. It is this skill set in particular that Andrew brings to his role as the Trustee for Legal and Governance, making sure that the charity's systems and policies are up to date and compliant. He also takes a very active role in the day to day running of the charity and in particular assisting at fund raising events and other promotional activities.



Hayley Perkins – Education

Hayley started volunteering at Cardiff Dogs Home in 2012 over the Christmas holiday season, as the thought of animals being neglected especially at this time made her feel that she wanted to do something meaningful. Now being part of the team at The Rescue Hotel, the education role includes teaching children and the public about the work the charity does in helping residents at Cardiff Dogs Home. Along with fun facts about different breeds, teaching basic commands and how to safely approach dogs.





Facts and Figures

Financial Activities

	23/24	22/23	21/22
INCOMING RESOURCES			
Unrestricted Income	£145,186	£225,407	£46,346
Restricted Income	£214,949	£24,030	£118,057
TOTAL INCOMING RESOURCES	£360,134	£249,436	£164,403
RESOURCES EXPENDED			
Unrestricted Funds Expended	£124,610	£82,878	£49,597
Restricted Funds Expended	£33,748	£2,436	£17,781
TOTAL RESOURCES EXPENDED	£158,358	£85,314	£67,378
NET SURPLUS/(DEFICIT) FOR THE PERIOD	£201,776	£164,122	£97,025

Dogs Supported

Total number of dogs taken into facility – 688
 Dogs returned to owner – 232
 Dogs successfully adopted – 290
 Dogs temporarily boarding (social services etc) – 5
 CDH dogs neutered by TRH – 306
 Life changing surgeries - 69
 Volunteer hours – 15,692
 Volunteer dog walks – 20,128



Thank you

We are continually blown away by the support we receive each and every day. In the past year we have built lasting relationships with many people and organisations. We can't name all of our supporters but here are a few of the corporate partners who have gone above and beyond for the dogs in the past year.

