



Wiltshire Mid Branch
Registered Charity no. 205295

RSPCA WILTSHIRE MID BRANCH
TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT
FOR YEAR ENDED
31 DECEMBER 2017





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(A) REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

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

Trustees

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

Committee

Ms. Deborah Gogarty (Chairman, Auxiliary Secretary Melksham)

Mr. Andrew Sheppard (Treasurer, Auxiliary Secretary Devizes)

Miss. Jane Barton (Secretary)

Mrs. Sheila Colcombe

Mrs. Elizabeth Davies (co-opted in 2018)

Mrs. Caroline Davy

Mrs. Claire Maggs (Auxiliary Secretary Warminster and Westbury)

Mrs. Lesley Pawlak

Mr. Richard Pearce

Mrs. Jo Sheppard

In June 2017 **Mrs. Pat Girdler**, Committee member and Auxiliary Secretary for Westbury said that she was to stand down from the Committee; her husband John's continued ill health and difficulty in getting to meetings meant she felt unable to continue. Mrs. Girdler was sincerely thanked for her hard work and contribution to the Branch's activities particularly in the Westbury area, from which she would be greatly missed.



In October 2017, a new prospective Committee member was introduced, **Mrs. Liz Davies** from Melksham was warmly welcomed. It was hoped that she would consider the Branch something she would like to get involved with, that being the case she would be co-opted onto the Committee at the first meeting of 2018 with confirmation of that co-option taking place at our next Annual General Meeting in June 2018.

Contact information

For communication purposes **the principal address** is 14 Manor Road, Upton Lovell, Wiltshire BA12 0JW.

The web site is <https://www.rspca.org.uk/local/wiltshire-mid-branch/>. Here details of how to get in touch for animal welfare purposes is shown along with current news and campaigns.

The financial accounts are **independently examined** by J S Weeks and Co, 41 St John's Street, Devizes SN10 1BL. **Branch funds** are held by Lloyds Bank, Devizes.



(B) STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

The Branch is constituted as an unincorporated association. The Branch operates as an autonomous Branch of the National RSPCA subject to its rules for Branches (as updated in 2012). A Committee of Trustees, elected at the AGM governs the Branch. All Trustees are briefed on their responsibilities as Trustees prior to their acceptance of the role.

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

A regional structure, which is overseen on a national basis, brings several Branch colleagues together along with Inspectors, regional and national representatives. The purpose is to discuss regional funding, coordinate policies and objectives as well as provide opportunities for colleagues to share knowledge and experiences. The regional representative for the Wiltshire Mid Branch in 2017 was Ms. Deborah Gogarty.

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

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

Branch management

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



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

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

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



(C) OBJECTS, OBJECTIVES AND PRINCIPAL ACTIVITIES

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

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



1. Happy KitKat!

Alleviating suffering

A priority for the Branch is to ensure appropriate veterinary care is available for animals whose owners are on benefits or a low income and may be anxious about the costs of seeing a vet.

The Branch provides donations towards veterinary treatment for sick or injured animals owned by local people on low incomes through a voucher scheme. Happy **KitKat**, pictured here, and on the front cover, is just one of the many beneficiaries of this service.

During 2017 vouchers with a total value of **£13,017.61** were issued in the Branch area. As with **KitKat** (above), the most common request for financial aid is to cover neutering. The Branch is always supportive of such requests and delighted that the number of requests we responded to in 2017 was greater than the previous year.



Requests for help with trauma and life changing conditions such as dental work, alleviation of skin conditions and the removal of an eye in a relatively young dog, etc went down year on year.

Promoting kindness and preventing cruelty

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

The Branch also offers subsidised neutering of companion animals for owners on low incomes. This helps to control dog and cat populations and promotes responsible pet ownership. In 2017 we ran a cat neutering campaign in tandem with the global **World Spay Day** programme, which started on 28 February 2017. Over the following two months we received requests from hundreds of people for support and covered the cost of neutering **329 cats**.

On a more interactive and always fun level, we continue to provide talks (by invitation) to local school children about caring for pets. Mrs. Claire Maggs attended 10 workshops and 3 school assemblies during the year, helping young people learn about the origins of the RSPCA, the role of the Inspector and the five welfare needs of all animals.

Volunteering support

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

This year we ran a recruitment campaign to attract new Trustees and were delighted to receive three positive responses with Mrs. Liz Davies being formally co-opted onto the Committee in January 2018.



(D) ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

Before we begin a record of our endeavours for 2017, our thanks must in the first instance be directed to the continued support and dedication provided by the members of the Committee and to all our helpers and supporters who continue to assist when needed with events. It has been another successful year with solid progress against each of our four goals, which are based around the principle of 'collaboration'.

Collaboration with the National Society

It is a given that we support the National Society objectives at all times – where appropriate and within our capability. Guided by our Branch Support Specialist, Mrs. Suzie Stratton and more latterly Mrs. Karen Macklin, we use the regular Branch Communications to identify opportunities to get involved.



During the year we used our social media platforms to promote several national campaigns either seasonal or topical in nature such RSPCA week, rabbit awareness week, dogs in hot cars, 'leave me alone' message about young wildlife, ending breed-specific legislation, animals as sentient beings and 'kindness at Christmas'.

As part of our commitment to running a properly regulated charity we established a number of Branch policies, including a revised data protection policy aligned to the requirements of GDPR. We adopted the principle of a Branch Annual Review, which provides a simple mechanism to reflect on past work and to plan strategic activities.

In October, Mrs. Deborah Gogarty visited the National Control Centre (NCC) to get a better understanding of how it worked and how the Branch could support



the NCC objectives. It was an illuminating experience; the sheer volume of calls responded to was breath-taking. It was a useful, if sombre, reminder of the scale of the RSPCA's work.

During the year the National Society launched the volunteer Wildlife Collection Officer role and Mrs. Deborah Gogarty was accepted into the regional group after a day's training at RSPCA West Hatch. Calls for the volunteer services will be coordinated by the NCC, freeing Inspectors to concentrate on cases that benefit from their broader experience and training.

On 28 June 2017 we held the Branch Annual General Meeting at the Cheese Hall, Devizes. Apart from Committee members the meeting had very limited attendance from RSPCA members, which was disappointing but not unexpected – something we would like to address. Membership support is a valuable asset, not least in ensuring that we are tackling the local issues that matter to our members and the wider community.

RSPCA Chief Inspector John Atkinson kindly attended and gave an animated breakdown of activities during the year, the Society having received over 150,000 complaints of cruelty, it was interesting to note that complaints received relating to Wiltshire had increased by some 19 per cent, which on paper indicated a worrying tendency, however Chief Inspector Atkinson stated that this should not be perceived as an indicator of increased cruelty within the county, but more that with increased awareness the public are more prepared to report these cases – which should therefore be considered a positive outcome.

Equines continue to present a worrying problem to the RSPCA which, at the time of our meeting had more than 700 horses in their care, the support of which presented a huge financial outlay to the Society.

Mrs. Pat Girdler and her husband John attended the meeting and were warmly thanked for all their support of the Branch, Mrs. Girdler was presented with a bouquet of flowers and a Marks and Spencer gift card with warm wishes to them both.



Collaboration with the community

This is a core objective, around which we organise the greatest part of our efforts. Each year the Branch makes a commitment to carry out at least one Community Action Event within the principal towns of our Branch area, alternating them to give as much coverage as possible, Warminster was designated to be in receipt of such an event during 2017.

Coincidentally the National Society had completed some research with regard to cat neutering and from this information had highlighted five areas in the South West Region which, in their opinion, would benefit from a more intensive, integrated approach. Warminster was one such area. To that end the National Society pledged the sum of £10,000 for each of these five areas to carry out a suitable event.

On 4 April 2017 the Branch held a Community Action Event at the Civic Hall in Warminster. Most unusually the event was not as successful as the Branch expected, with a previous event at this location having been very well attended. However on this occasion although widely publicised by leaflets, posters, social media and local press, the uptake was very poor.



This did not diminish the enthusiasm of the various charities and services represented including Cats Protection, Wiltshire County Council Dog Warden, Bath Cats and Dogs Home, Dorset and Wiltshire Fire Rescue Services, Wiltshire Wildlife Hospital, Somershire Hamster

Rescue and our own RSPCA Inspector team, pictured here at their information stand.

Nigel Blood from **Wee Beasties** talked through the very particular needs of exotic species such as snakes, lizards and spiders. He explained how he came to rescue a turtle found wandering down Westbury High Street and how one of his



own lizards had cleverly learned how to release the bolts on its cage!



2 Cat and small animal clinic at Warminster event

The number of dog owners attending was reasonable, with one young man bringing an entire litter of Boxer pups for their microchips, but the number of cat owners was minimal. This was particularly puzzling in view of the information provided by the National Society, which suggested that the area had a definite need for this type of intervention.

Post events discussions with the Civic Centre staff and the Council's local Community Engagement Officer as to the possible reasons frustratingly did not shed on light on the matter.

The Branch had intended to hold a second Community Action Event in Melksham, however due to difficulties locating a venue that was animal-friendly and finding a date which would fit in with other animal charities who normally attend our events, this was not possible and it was decided to leave it until the New Year, the results of which will be for our 2018 report.

Mrs. Claire Maggs is our education ambassador, part of a network of RSPCA trained school speakers committed to visiting schools and giving talks about animal welfare and the RSPCA's work to Key Stage 2 pupils. The aim is to cover the work of the RSPCA, the welfare needs of animals and the actions young people can take to help animals at home, at school and in the local community. In 2017 Mrs. Maggs received invitations to several schools, where a warm welcome and lively discussion was the order of the day!

In February 2017 World Spay Day took place and the Committee were keen to promote this event. In view of the fact that the National Society had promised to cover the financial outlay for the Warminster Community Action Event, the Committee agreed to use the monies that the Branch would have spent on the



event to carry out a cat neutering campaign that would last for approximately two months starting at the end of February 2017. A similar campaign had previously been undertaken by the Branch which had been run 'on line' using Google Forms and social media. This approach had been very successful and it was agreed that this new campaign should take the same format. Mrs. Gogarty and Mr. Pearce agreed to oversee the process.

In May, Mrs. Gogarty attended the local agricultural college and presented to the Animal Care students on the work of a charity Trustee. The aim was to encourage younger people to consider a Trustee role earlier in their career. This not only benefits them, but provides charities with a broader base of ideas and values.

[Collaboration with other Branches and charities](#)

At the latter part of 2016 a written appeal requesting urgent financial support for the Rochdale and District Animal Centre was received. It said that the Branch was in desperate need of financial help, operating as it did in one of the poorer areas of England. Mrs. Gogarty asked the Committee members for their thoughts and after some discussion, it was agreed that the Branch would contribute £5,000 in the hope that, along with other Branch's contributions, it would go some way towards providing them with some respite from their current situation.

At the end of the year the Committee received a heartfelt thankyou letter from the Rochdale Animal Centre, relaying the good news that because of the support offered they were now in a better financial position and able to continue their much needed work.

During 2015 the North Wiltshire Branch had asked to open a charity shop in the Wiltshire Mid Branch area in support of their aspiration to build a local Animal Rehoming Centre. The Branch had agreed to accommodate this request, the initial intention having been to locate premises in the market town of Devizes, but nothing suitable became available. However during 2016, having looked further afield, a potential shop site was located in Warminster. The shop opened



in late December 2016 and has traded moderately successfully throughout 2017. The volunteer staff were trained on how to direct animal welfare issues brought to the shop and, while the number of requests for support has not risen significantly, it is good to have such a visible demonstration of the RSPCA's presence in the local area. As part of the agreement between the two Branches, in 2018 RSPCA Wiltshire Mid will receive a payment from North Wiltshire representing 10% of the Warminster shop's profits and all cash donations.

At the end of 2016 we reported on the financial issues at the Wiltshire Wildlife Hospital at Newton Tony and our wish to provide much needed support. As previously reported our initial response had to be curtailed as, within RSPCA Branch guidelines, there is a restriction on the amount of monies any Branch can donate to outside charities. However Mrs. Gogarty and our BSS Mrs. Suzie Stratton put a lot of effort into identifying an alternative solution, which culminated in a proposal paper being put before the Regional Board.



3 Otter recovering at WWH

The proposal was that the Branch would provide long-term financial assistance in the form of a monthly invoice from the Hospital, which would be based on the number of wildlife casualties originating from the Branch area broken down into a percentage of the running costs of the Hospital. This agreement would not form part of a formal contract, more a gentleman's agreement, and all payments would be open to debate and approval. The Regional Board placed their seal of approval on the proposal and the Hospital was informed of the decision.

The Hospital were very grateful for all the assistance the Branch was proposing to give them, and until such times as the necessary figures could be obtained, it was agreed that an interim payment of £1,500 should be made a figure which



fell within the RSPCA Guidelines for such donations. The amount donated to the hospital at the end of 2017 included a further £10,000.

In the latter part of the year a request was received from Bath Cats and Dogs Home asking whether the Branch would continue to support the Home at the same level as previously committed to. After discussion the Committee decided that in the knowledge that the Home is currently well funded and the fact that the Branch have already committed to providing monetary support to the Wiltshire Wildlife Hospital for the foreseeable future, that this matter would be left in abeyance for the time being, however support would always be offered to the Home should the need arise.

In November Mrs. Deborah Gogarty visited the Bristol Dogs Home to exchange ideas and thoughts with the Chief Executive. It proved an educational visit, exposing the stresses of RSPCA personnel working in a deprived urban area. Of particular interest was the work done by the Bristol Branch to protect the well-being of their staff, with considered investment in training and other support systems.

[Collaboration with the local inspectors](#)

The knowledge and experience that RSPCA Inspectors provide to the Branch is invaluable. The monthly reports produced by the Chief Inspector provide useful insight into the issues and problems they face and areas where collaborative working will bring better results.

We are fortunate too to have an Inspector attend (usually in their own time) our Committee meetings, giving an opportunity to discuss local issues and resolution ideas face to face. This is often where we hear stories about animals in our Branch area – one of which was ‘Gary’ the Goose, who became a bit of a celebrity in his hometown of Westbury in Wiltshire.



4 Inspector Albinson and 'Gary'!

It's believed that he was abandoned alongside another goose around three years ago by the lake near Station Road. Unfortunately the deteriorating fences around the lake allowed him to wander out onto a busy road. Here he risked his safety and that of motorists in a series of near misses, prompting concerned residents to contact us.

RSPCA Inspector Miranda Albinson pictured above with Gary, went to the rescue and, after a brief holiday at the Wiltshire Wildlife Hospital, Gary and his goose gang were relocated to a much safer spot back in his hometown.

Fundraising

Our Branch is fortunate that a legacy bequeathed a few years ago has provided the means to fund our current range of activities for more than five years.

However fundraising is more than raising cash – it also provides opportunities to reinforce key messages and raise awareness of the RSPCA's work.



Mrs. Claire Maggs, a stalwart Committee member who worked hard in 2016 organising the successful 'Ladies Night', gave her all for us again by running the Bath Half Marathon.

Mrs. Maggs in company of her friend Mrs. Selina Kirkbride trained earnestly for the event, often accompanied by their dogs (pictured here!)

At our meeting in March, Mrs. Maggs said that the event had been safely completed raising £548 for Branch funds. Our grateful thanks were extended to both her and Mrs. Kirkbride.



(E) CHIEF INSPECTOR'S REPORT

The Inspectorate Group that looks after the needs of people in the RSPCA Wiltshire Mid area, covers a wide region comprising Wiltshire, Avon and Somerset and a bit of Gloucestershire

The team, led by Chief Inspector John Atkinson has a variety of roles – Deputy Chief Inspector Alan Barnes, Inspector Miranda Albinson, Animal Welfare Officer Sian Bowden, Inspector Ian Burns, Inspector Simon Coombs, Inspector Steph Daly, Inspector Kimily Downes, Inspector Daniel Hatfield, Animal Collection Officer Chris James, Inspector Rebekah Jeffrey, Inspector Sarah Kenward and Inspector Lewis Taylor.

Inspectorate Group total statistics for 2017

Complaints Investigated and resolved	3889
Animal Welfare Assessment Notices issued	905
Warning notices issued	27
Convictions	14
Cautions for offences	11
Collections completed	2211

(Number of incidents, not animals)

Branch complaints and collections in 2017

Branch	Collections	Complaints
RSPCA Bath	606	606
RSPCA Bristol	1541	1629
RSPCA North Somerset	206	420
RSPCA North Wiltshire	472	759
RSPCA South Wiltshire	21	31
RSPCA Mid Wiltshire	211	262



Introduction

We began 2017 with a somewhat depleted workforce. One of our two Animal Collection Officers (ACO) Helen, and one of our Animal Welfare Officers (AWO) Simon, had both left the group to attend the Inspector's training course.



At the successful completion of their Inspectorate training in June, we were delighted to hear that both Helen and Simon had passed. Helen came back to us briefly for part of her training course, but was subsequently posted to another group, and we wish her well. Simon was posted back to us and has taken to his new role seamlessly.

In October Inspector Kim Walters returned from maternity leave and Inspector Miranda Albinson, who had been on a six-month secondment to the Special Operations Unit, rejoined us in February. In May we were joined by Inspector Lewis Taylor, an experienced and highly regarded officer

Once back up to strength we were called to assist with adjoining groups struggling to meet demand. Our group area expanded to take in Cheddar and Axbridge, and officers have undertaken two-month secondments to support a neighbouring group area.



Wildlife Casualty Volunteers (WCV)

We launched our WCV service this year. These people support the Inspectorate by giving their time by responding to calls to collect smaller wildlife such as hedgehogs, gulls, pigeons and similar. They come from all walks of life – some have very limited animal experience while others have been eminent veterinary surgeons with a history with nationally renowned animal charities! What they all have in common is a bit of free time and an enthusiasm for helping our wildlife

The WVCs are trained and equipped by us, but they use their own cars (they can claim for fuel used). This is a great help as it frees up Inspectorate officers to deal with incidents that really demand their extensive training and experience. We started training volunteers in June 2017 and they are now on the road collecting and transferring animals. This service is in its infancy, but has thus far proved a great success, with many animals attended earlier, and taken to approved establishments or vet surgeries for initial care, safekeeping, or, where absolutely necessary euthanasia, in all events, reducing suffering.

Direct Animal Welfare

- Helping police with their enquiries



5 Female Goshawk

The skills of the RSPCA Officers in Bristol were also requested by Avon and Somerset Police.

A search warrant had been executed at an address and the police needed to search an aviary. However inside was a large bird of prey – a female goshawk!

Unsurprisingly the police officers in attendance were somewhat reluctant to enter the aviary while its occupant was still present. Putting to use the skills of trainee Inspector Helen Wheeler, who as part of her training had recently attended a bird of prey handling course.



She and Inspector Miranda Albinson managed to catch the bird and hold it out of harm's way while the search was conducted. It was later returned to its aviary without incident

- **A sticky situation!**



6 Firmly fixed ferret!

Inspector Daniel Hatfield attended a call involving a ferret! This friendly ferret had unfortunately become stuck on a glue trap left on the floor of the storeroom to catch mice and rats. The poor animal was covered in the sticky glue and couldn't free itself.

Inspector Hatfield took the ferret to the Bristol RSPCA Clinic where the staff used 'butter' to remove the glue.

- **A fishy tale**

Wiltshire Police carried out a raid on a disused nuclear bunker in Wiltshire. They uncovered millions of pounds worth of drugs and apprehended several illegal immigrants. During their search they also found four tropical fish in a 6' tank. Inspector Ian Burns and Animal Welfare Officer Sian Bowden attended. In the absence of any owner the Police signed ownership of the fish over to us and they were successfully rehomed with a local specialist pet shop.

Finally...

I am privileged, as Chief Inspector, to work within this group, SSW4, alongside dedicated volunteers, supportive Branches, leading a highly professional and motivated team of 10 Inspectors, 1 AWO and 1 ACO plus our regional press officer Suzanne Norbury. Together with our own specialists at West Hatch wildlife unit and at headquarters, we work closely with other agencies, Police, Fire & Rescue, Wiltshire Wildlife Hospital, Oak and Furrows, to name but a few. The work we carry out to 'fight cruelty and promote kindness' would be so much harder to achieve without each and every one of them. Thank you.

Chief Inspector John Atkinson



(F) FINANCIAL REVIEW

The total incoming resources for the year amounted to **£25,713.80** (2016: £23,177.18). Expenditure in the year amounted to **£44,986.65** (2016: £22,745.86) a marked increase on the previous year. This is because in 2017, as well as maintaining our spend on veterinary fees, we ran a large cat neutering campaign and gave substantial donations to both RSPCA Rochdale and District Branch and Wiltshire Wildlife Hospital.

The surplus at the end of the year 2017 is **£184,752.94** (2016: £202,432.71).

It is the policy of the Branch to maintain the free reserves of the Branch at a level equal to approximately five years' unrestricted expenditure to allow for the fluctuations in donations and legacies on which the Branch relies. The current state of accounts is improved as a consequence of a significant legacy received more than five years ago. Our Trustees are very keen not to hold onto money unnecessarily, simply to ensure sustainability – which is paramount to the needs of our beneficiaries.

Free reserves at the end of the year were approximately 7.4 years. Trustees are of the opinion that the existing level of reserves is sufficient to meet any reduction in incoming resources in the next twelve months. Free reserves are defined as unrestricted funds not held as tangible assets. The Branch does not hold any restricted reserves (funds donated for a specific purpose, which cannot be used for anything other than the purpose for which they were donated).

In line with Branch Rules, we will make an annual donation to the National Society – the amount calculated as a percentage of our free reserves. This donation will be deducted from the share of the House to House collection that we receive annually from the National Society

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



The Trustees have no designated funds for expenditure in the next twelve months. Approximately £10,500 will be donated to the Wiltshire Wildlife Hospital during 2018, representing a second donation under the 'gentleman's agreement'. The costs of an Animal Action Day in Melksham in March 2018 and potentially a second in the autumn will be met through existing operating funds.

(G) FUTURE PLANS

In tandem with our regular work supporting those in need of financial help, our plans for 2018 include an Animal Action Day in Melksham with a second event to take place in a different community later in the year (which area is still subject to discussion). We will continue to promote and support National Society campaigns as they are communicated to us.

We are looking to increase our volunteer base. We want to bring fresh ideas into the group and will start by engaging with students studying for animal management qualifications at the Lackham Campus of Wiltshire College.

We will also work closely with our local inspectors, supporting them on specific animal welfare projects as identified by them.

We will continue to support the RSPCA North Wiltshire Branch in its pursuit of new locations for its network of shop where appropriate. Approval in principle for a shop in Devizes was agreed in 2015 but the Branch has yet to find suitable premises. Any funds donated to us from the profits of the Warminster shop, will be spent on our local animal welfare activities.



(H) STATEMENT OF TRUSTEES' RESPONSIBILITIES

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

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

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent; and
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the Branch will continue in operation.

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

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

The Board of Trustees approved this report on 8 May 2018.



(I) BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2017

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

Report of the Independent Examiner To The Officers and Committee of Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals – Mid-Wiltshire Branch

I report on the accounts of the Charity for the year ended 31 December 2017, which are set out on pages 3 to 5.

Respective Responsibilities of Trustees and Examiner

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

It is my responsibility to:-

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

Basis of Independent Examiner's Report

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

Independent Examiner's Statement

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

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



understanding of the accounts to be reached.

.....
Mrs A M Cross FCCA
41 St John's Street
Devizes
Wiltshire

26 March 2018



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

**BALANCE SHEET
AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2017**

2016		2017
£		£
	Accumulated Fund	
198,051.72	Balance Brought Forward	202,432.71
	Add Surplus of Income	-
4,380.99	Over Expenditure	
	Deduct Excess of Expenditure	
-	Over Income	17,679.77
-----		-----
202,432.71		184,752.94
=====		=====
	Represented By:	
	Fixed Assets	
Nil		Nil
	Investments	
195,000.00	National Savings Income Bonds	185,000.00
38.36	Bank Deposit Account	38.36
	Current Assets	
7,736.35	Bank Current Account	11,167.90
-----		-----
202,774.71		196,206.26
(342.00)	Less:- Creditors	(11,453.32)
-----		-----
202,432.71		184,752.94
=====		=====



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

**INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT
YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2017**

2016	INCOME	2017
£		£
882.34	Subscriptions and Donations	889.06
	Devizes and District	
19.96	Collecting Boxes	63.74
53.20	Seend Fete	-
93.68	Legacies	-
50.00	Sales of Goods	-
22,078.00	Door to Door Collection	24,761.00
-----		-----
23,177.18		25,713.80
	Westbury and District	
56.35	Collecting Boxes	-
	Warminster District	
1,734.00	Full Monty Show	-
	Investment Income	
2,159.32	National Savings Bond Interest	1,593.08
-	Bank Interest	-
-----		-----
27,126.85		27,306.88
=====		=====



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

**INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT
YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2017**

2016		EXPENDITURE	2017	
£	£		£	£
5,500.00		Branch Contribution to RSPCA	5,500.00	
13,681.55		Veterinary Fees – General	13,017.61	
-		Neutering Campaigns	3,532.81	
-		Spay Costs	6,408.53	
140.15		Goods Purchased	302.30	
15.00		Bank Charges	15.00	
342.00		Audit	360.00	
-		Rochdale Animal Home Donation	5,000.00	
1,500.00		Wildlife Hospital	10,000.00	
717.80		Action Day Westbury	-	
-		Action Day Warminster	680.88	
98.00		Action Day Devizes	-	
751.36		Insurance	169.52	
-----	22,745.86		-----	44,986.65
	4,380.99	Surplus of Income over Expenditure Carried to Accumulated Fund		-
	-	Excess of Expenditure over Income Carried to Accumulated Fund		17,679.77
-----	27,126.85		-----	27,306.88
=====			=====	



(J) MINUTES OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING FOR YEAR ENDING 2016

RSPCA WILTSHIRE MID BRANCH

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

HELD ON WEDNESDAY 28TH JUNE 2017 **AT THE CHEESE HALL, DEVIZES**

The Chairman, Mrs. Gogarty opened the meeting by welcoming everyone and introducing the Officers seated at the top table amongst their number being the new Inspector for the area Lewes Taylor.

Apologies for Absence

Mrs. Gail Pearce.

Minutes of the Last Meeting

The minutes of the last Annual General Meeting were approved and signed

Matters Arising

There were no matters arising from the minutes

Inspectorate Report

Chief Inspector John Atkinson told the meeting that 2016 had been a busy year with the Society having received over 150,000 complaints of cruelty, complaints received relating to Wiltshire had increased by some 19%, however this should not be read as an indicator of increased cruelty in the region, more that with increased awareness the public are more prepared to report these cases.

Equines continue to present a worrying problem, with over 700 horses currently in RPSA care the financial implications of which are huge.

The RSPCA continues to look at alternative ways as opposed to prosecution in assisting and promoting better animal care, removing animals only as a last resort.

A scheme is currently being promoted to recruit Wildlife Casualty Volunteers, who will be trained to deal with 'safe' animal collections, applicants need to be over the age of 18 and have access to a vehicle.

On a manpower level, Inspector numbers have greatly improved with new intakes of applicants which is very promising for the future.

There were several questions from the floor with particular emphasis on the current problems that the Society are being faced with regarding the influx of unwanted horses, some emanating from cruelty cases but a large number as a result of owners being unaware of the high financial outlay needed to support these animals. Questions were also raised relating to some of the high profile court case failures,



Chief Inspector Atkinson stated that our cases were of an extremely high standard, but they are scrutinised so strongly that even the smallest loophole can result in a case being compromised.

Chief Inspector Atkinson concluded by thanking the Branch for all their support over the past year. He stressed how important the Branches were to the National Society in providing the necessary monetary support thereby enabling the Inspectorate to carry out their work.

Joint Report of Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer

Mrs. Gogarty drew the meetings attention to the Annual Report for 2016 and in particular the joint report of the Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer. In respect of this report Mrs. Gogarty highlighted the following points:-

- Collaboration
- National Society Initiatives
- Attendance at the National Society Conference
- Community Events
- School Education - Mrs. Maggs
- Other Branches
- Wiltshire Wildlife Hospital
- Fundraising - Mrs. Maggs
- Finances
- RSPCA Strategy 2017 - 2021

Mrs. Gogarty asked whether there were any comments / questions in relation to the report - none were forthcoming.

Adoption of the Accounts / Election of the Auditors

Mrs. Gogarty drew the meetings attention to the financial accounts as detailed in the Annual Report, requesting any comments to be directed to Hon. Treasurer Mr. Andy Sheppard, none were made.

There being no further queries, Mrs. Gogarty requested a proposer and seconder for adoption of the accounts and election of the auditors, Mr. Richard Pearce proposed and Mrs. Jo Sheppard seconded, in respect of the accounts and Mr. Andy Sheppard proposed and Mrs. Lesley Pawlak seconded with regard to the election of the auditors J.S. Weeks of Devizes. There were no objections.

Election of the Committee

Mrs. Suzie Stratton (BSS) drew the meeting's attention to the ballot papers which had been circulated with nine nominees standing for re-election. Having counted the papers Mrs. Stratton announced that all nominees had received 100% of the votes and were duly elected as Committee members for 2017 / 2018. She concluded by thanking the Committee for all their hard work over the past year and looked forward to working with them during the coming year.

Any Other Business

Mrs. Gogarty drew the meetings attention to the fact that Mrs. Pat Girdler Committee member and Auxiliary Secretary for Westbury had decided to stand down from the Committee due to health and



personal reasons, Mrs. Girdler was warmly thanked for her hard work and support over the past year; she would be greatly missed. In recognition Mrs. Girdler was presented with a bouquet of flowers and a Marks & Spencer Gift Card with warm wishes to both her and John her husband.

There being no other business, the meeting was concluded and was followed by light refreshments.



GET IN TOUCH

If you are in our Branch area and need our support with your companion pets or would like to talk about us visiting a school or club then please email us at:

rspcawiltsmid@gmail.com

If you need to report cruelty or an animal in distress then call the National Society 24-hour cruelty line 0300 1234 999.

The call will cost the same as any call to a UK landline number.

You will be asked several questions to ensure that your call is prioritised according to its urgency. Please note, during busier periods your call may be placed in queue.

You can also use the secure online reporting facility on the National Society's webpage

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

Help us to continue our work by becoming a member.

Details on how to join and the different options provided are shown on the main RSPCA website

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

You can also donate direct to your local Branch, [RSPCA Wiltshire Mid](#) on our webpages

<https://mydonate.bt.com/events/rspcawiltsmid/243825>



RSPCA Wiltshire Mid Branch

Registered Charity No. 205295