



Scottish Staffordshire Bull Terrier Rescue Annual Report 2021/22

Introduction

The Trustees have opted to produce an annual report for the AGM which details activities of the previous year and sets out the plan for the following year.

The Trustees for 2021/22 are as follows:

Amanda Wells (Rutherford), Chairperson
Emma Smith, Secretary
Rachel Johnston, Treasurer
Anne Robinson, Trustee (resigned April 2022)
Holly Fisher, Trustee (appointed January 2022)

Trustees

One new Trustee was recruited in January following a campaign. Another Trustee resigned due to other dog rescue commitments in April. She continues to be involved with SSBTR. A recent campaign to recruit volunteers and Trustees is ongoing.

Patron and Ambassador

We continue to have Dowager Duchess of Hamilton, Kay Hamilton, as our Patron.

Recently we have introduced our new Ambassador, Retired Police Dog, Stella. Stella is a rescue Staffordshire Bull Terrier who had a terrible start to life but went on to work as a police dog for many years. She recently retired. The Trustees felt that Stella makes the ideal ambassador because she challenges the misconceptions around the breed, particularly given that she was a rescue dog.

50th Birthday

The rescue will celebrate their 50th birthday of rehoming their first dog next year. A plan will be made in order to celebrate throughout the year.

Constitution

The new constitution was adopted in March 2022 following approval from OSCR. This now formally allows Trustees to meet via online platforms and allows for up to 8 Trustees to be on the board.

Animal Welfare License

Under the Animal Welfare (Scotland) Act 2021, SSBTR now require to be licensed via the local authority. The license was granted by Midlothian Council in March 2022 for one year with annual renewal. A complaint has been raised with Midlothian Councillors as the rescue is being charged the same amount as breeders who rehomes more than four dogs per year. This issue will continue to be raised with Midlothian Council.

Issues rehoming dogs

There has been a significant change in the issues arising with dogs coming into rescue. In May this year it was decided to place a halt on dogs incoming simply because the needs and health conditions were significant. The Trustees understand that continuing to take on dogs with significant health issues would be unsustainable financially. SSBTR are being asked to take on more and more dogs with health or behavioural issues.

In addition to this, the applications for dogs changed in that the majority were people requesting a dog under the age of 1 or one with no behaviour issues. As a result there is a bottle neck of dogs with behaviour issues requiring a home and incurring significant expense while waiting on a home. Significant outgoings were incurred with vet, behaviourist and kennel bills. This is not sustainable for a small rescue. This situation is ongoing.

Dogs

It has been a slow year with an intake block for the last six months which has led to far fewer dogs than normal have been rehomed.

Rehomed – 9 dogs

[redacted]

Currently in foster – 4 dogs

[redacted]

[redacted] and [redacted] both have significant health issues and both came into rescue in extremely poor condition. [redacted] is likely to be adopted and [redacted] likely to become a lifelong foster dog.

Kennels

[redacted] is awaiting his forever home. [redacted] is extremely reactive with other dogs. The priority is to get [redacted] out of kennels as soon as possible

Lifelong foster dogs – 2 dogs

[redacted], [redacted]

Owner decided to retain dog – 4 dogs

[redacted] [redacted] [redacted] [redacted]

Deaths

Sadly we lost some of our foster dogs this year - Roxy, Cassie, Delilah who all died very happy old ladies.

The application process is easier to manage as all applications relating to foster, adopt and surrender coming through the website which has made processing applications simpler. However there is ongoing discussion around whether this is the most time efficient way.

Vets

The rescue continues to work with vets throughout Scotland. The vast majority give discounts to the rescue and maintain a good relationship.

Kennels

SSBTR continues to use [redacted] Kennels due to their flexibility and exceptional care of our dogs by the owners.

Behaviourists and trainers

The rescue has maintained links with a multitude of trainers and behaviourists this year to work with dogs with issues. These include:

June McPhillips, Midlothian
Becky Milne, East Coast Dog Training, East Lothian
Shanta, Dogpanions, Inverness
Al Bunyan, Kilmarnock

Other Rescues

The Trustees have taken time to build links with other rescues with the view that working together is better and in the best interests of the dogs. The Trustees wish to thank Staffordshire Rescue Scotland, Staffie Smiles, and Oldies Club for their support and willingness to work in partnership this year.

Association of Dog and Cat Homes

SSBTR are members of the Association of Dog and Cat Homes. The Trustees have access to these resources and assistance from the larger rescues. ADCH have been incredibly supportive.

Pedigree Adoption Mission

SSBTR continue their partnership with Mars Pedigree which allows access to free food, adoption packs and training resources.

The Animal Team

Most homechecks and dog assessments now go via the Animal Team who vet volunteers on behalf of rescues and provide homecheckers and assessors throughout Scotland.

Information Commissioners Office

SSBTR is now registered with the ICO and are registered data controllers in order to comply with GDPR

Scottish Fundraising Adjudication Panel

SSBTR has signed up to the Good Fundraising guarantee

Finance

The rescues resources are dwindling due to the health needs of dogs in the rescues care and ongoing behavioural support required for some dogs. The cost of living crisis is beginning to hit donations with less income at stalls this year.

Continuing issues are ongoing with TSB bank and their poor customer service. It has been agreed that the charity will change their bank account to Virgin Money Charity Account.

Recent appeals have resulted in additional monthly donations. In addition to this, the Charity is in the process of claiming Gift Aid.

A new way of supplying branded clothing is in the process of being developed which means the charity won't have any outlay, supporters have much more choice and the charity will profit from each sale.

Donors

The rescue receives around £1000 in vouchers per year from Pets at Home Foundation to spend at Pets at Home. These vouchers are used to purchase cosy dog style harnesses and new leads for each staffie coming into SSBTR's care. It is also used to purchase enrichment toys and training treats for dogs in foster care and anything else that they may require.

We have several regular donors who pay amounts monthly by standing order and PayPal which has increased this year. We also receive several one-off donations through PayPal and Justgiving. We introduced Amazon Smiles and have an Amazon wishlist. We have recently reactivated Easy Fundraising.

Events

SSBTR held a stall at Inverness Highland Games and Newhailes in August. We are looking for events throughout next summer.

The rescue held an online auction in the summer and had a lot entered in One Voice for Animals auction

One of our supporters daughters did a sponsored swim for staffies raising over £300.

We have opted again not to do a calendar or Christmas Cards this year as these are not particularly well supported. However the new hoodies and t-shirts will have a Christmas section.

Bequests

There have been no bequests in the last year.

Van

The SSBTR van was donated by Pets at Home Foundation in 2016. Ongoing discussion around whether this should be sold or donated to another rescue because the costs of running the van are high in relation to how often this is used

Insurance

Insurance is in place to cover the physical assets and liabilities of the rescue. The insurance programme has been reviewed over 2021-2022, with additional covers taken out to better manage the risks the charity is exposed to. Insurers are updated on an ad-hoc basis to ensure the policies are on the correct basis and will respond to a claim.

Website

The new website is now in place with some updates recently.

Volunteers

A recent recruitment drive has led to more volunteers coming on board which gives us more support for website, social media and fundraising.

The Charity has joined Scottish Voluntary Services Organisation and Trustees have attended events.

The Charity has signed up to Volunteer Scotland to enable recruitment of volunteers.

Membership

The membership list has depleted over the last few years and the Trustees are very keen to increase this number to allow supporters of the rescue to have more input into what should be expected of the dogs. Work still requires to be done to increase the membership of the Charity.

For next year

- Volunteer management system
- Focus on supporting and recruiting volunteers to manage/assist with tasks including applications
- Funding for volunteer training
- Putting key volunteers and roles on website
- Recruit specific Trustee for financial management
- Improve merchandise
- Claim Gift Aid to increase income
- Events throughout the year to bring a steady source of income
- Change banking to Virgin Money
- Continue work on policies and procedures
- Define roles for Trustees
- Building social media presence
- Plan for 50th birthday celebrations