



KWWSPCA'S Chairperson's Report for 2019/2020

80th Anniversary this year

The Chairperson of the Kildare & West Wicklow Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (KWWSPCA) would like to remind everyone that 2020 is the 80th Anniversary of the founding of the KWWSPCA (originally just the Kildare SPCA). It is one of the oldest Animal Rescue Charities in Ireland. A few activities had been planned to celebrate the occasion but had to be cancelled due to the pandemic. The Chairperson would like to congratulate the Society and all the people who support its work and have supported it in the past. A very large number of animals have been helped by the KWWSPCA during these 80 years.

New Shelter Update

Officially we must move out of our present Shelter by October 2021. The money raised for a new Shelter is now about €180,000 which was mainly raised in 2019 and is ringfenced for a new Shelter. No specific Shelter fundraising has been undertaken this year, because of Covid-19. The GoFundMe Campaign, however, is still up and running and has brought in nearly €37,410 so far. Offers were made on two properties during this year. The first offer was refused as the seller wanted a higher price which we were not prepared to give. With the second property, we were advised that a neighbour would strongly object to our locating there and it was therefore decided not to proceed.

Approaches have been made to Kildare County Council again, but they have said they have no suitable land or premises. A direct approach to farmers and landowners has also had no success to date. Local TDs and County Councillors have been asked to help and this is ongoing.

The present Shelter is still operating well. The landlord and his son had given advice on its original drainage system and one of our volunteers has done a lot of work to reduce the flooding in the outside runs. Most of the dogs seemed happy at the Shelter but foster homes are still used for puppies and some of the dogs and all the cats and kittens.

Animal Rehoming in 2019 and 2020

2019. Approx. 250 dogs and 300 cats were rehomed in 2019 and 630 wild and semi wild cats were trapped, neutered and returned to the wild. One horse came into our care as well as several other domestic pets and wild animals. Of the dogs coming into our care in 2019, almost 90 were cruelty or neglect cases or were surrendered into our care for other reasons; just over 100 came from the Kildare Dog Pound; the rest had either been born in the care of the KWWSPCA (21), or had come from the ISPCA (9), or had been returned into our care, having previously been rehomed by the Society (26). These were dogs that were originally rehomed by the KWWSPCA, but for a variety of reasons, the new owners were no longer able to keep them. Our rehoming policy has always been to take back our rescue dogs if they could no longer be kept by the person who adopted them.

2020. So far this year, just over 260 dogs have been rehomed, about 200 cats and one horse, as well as a few other domestic pets and wild animals. Because the Kildare Dog Pound has been closed for a good part of the year due to Covid-19, only 45 dogs have come from there. Most of the dogs that we have taken into our care this year have come from other Dog Pounds (125) or from the ISPCA (34). No puppies have been born in our care this year and there have been about 30 cases of cruelty/neglect/surrender. The number of dogs returned into our care was 28 so far. Of the dogs rehomed in the two years, 25 were rehomed to Sweden in 2019 through our close links with a Swedish dog rehoming charity and so far this year 33 have gone to Sweden. We must thank our volunteer who organises most of our dog rehoming for all the work she has done during these last two years to rehome dogs.

Some Animal Welfare Cases this year

One of the worst welfare cases this year involved Paddy, the lurcher, who was found with a very severely injured front leg in Maynooth. He had been injured for some time and was very poorly when found in a ditch by a passer-by. The vets did not think he would survive. His leg could not be saved but he was a fighter and he recovered slowly but very well in his foster home. He became such a part of that family, that he was adopted by the foster home and renamed Patrick. Wyatt was a springer spaniel puppy who was very badly neglected, with sores all over his body. Whilst getting veterinary treatment, he was found to have nails and a considerable amount of plastic in his stomach. He was seized by the Garda

in Athy at the end of last year and the owner, after a court case earlier this year, was given a 5-month custodial sentence, was made to surrender the puppy into the care of the KWWSPCA and was fined. One of the Garda based in Athy fostered Wyatt until the court case and eventually adopted him. Holt was an America staffie who was seized in Castledermot; he had been abandoned with no food or water and a big open sore on his back. He responded very well to treatment and care in his foster home and was then successfully rehomed. We also had 7 Pomeranian cross pups come into our care a few months ago that had been seized by Gardai on welfare grounds. Unfortunately, two did not survive, but the other 5 were fostered by our Animal Welfare Officer in

Athy until they were old enough to be fully vaccinated and then were all happily rehomed.

Volunteers

All the work done in the KWWSPCA is done on a voluntary basis. There are no paid employees. None of its income goes to pay wages. The KWWSPCA is extremely grateful to all the volunteers who give up their time to help in the Shelter, in Noah's Ark, those who assist when we have fund raising events as well as those who provide foster homes for animals when needed. Without all this valuable voluntary support, the KWWSPCA would not survive. We are fortunate to have one volunteer Animal Welfare Officer who is based in Athy and who works closely with the ISPCA and the Gardai.

Two of our other Welfare Officers left us in 2019 and another one earlier this year. So we have not been able to respond to as many cruelty and neglect cases as previously and are relying more heavily on the ISPCA and on other rescues such as the Kildare Animal Foundation for wild animals and My Lovely Horse Rescue for equines. The Trap Neuter Return ladies also left us this year. We therefore no longer have a dedicated TNR (Trap, Neuter & Return) Group and so the number of wild cats that we have been able to trap and neuter has been much smaller this year, although we do still offer this service on a limited scale when we can.

Noah's Ark/Online Auctions/Online Selling

Firstly, thanks need to be given to all the supporters who have donated items for sale in Noah's Ark, or for online sales and auctions. Noah's Ark is the KWWSPCA's Charity Shop (in Cutlery Road, Newbridge) and has become one of the main sources of income for the Society. Unfortunately, this year, due to Covid-19, the shop had to close for nearly three months during the first lockdown and for 6 weeks during the second

lockdown, so the income directly from the shop will be much lower this year than in previous years. Our landlord did halve the shop rent during the time the shop had to close, for which we are incredibly grateful.

However, online sales and online auctions this year have been extremely successful and brought in a regular income. This has involved a great deal of extra work especially for the volunteer who has organised all the auctions and most of the online sales, but it has been very well worthwhile financially.

Face mask sales. Many thanks must be given to one of our Noah's Ark volunteers who has been self-isolating during the time of the pandemic and has spent her time making cloth face masks. These she has been

selling on our behalf and they have also been on sale in Noah's Ark and online. This has already brought in over €1,500.

Finances

The main sources of income for the KWWSPCA are the income from Noah's Ark and, this year, from the online sales and auctions on the Noah's Ark Facebook page and elsewhere online; rehoming fees (we ask for a minimum of €150 when we rehome a dog and €80 for a cat); a Government Grant from the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, which has been €25,000 for the last two years and for which we are very grateful; fundraising events and donations from our supporters. Our main expenditures are veterinary fees (which in 2019 were almost €100,000) and rents for the Shelter and the Charity Shop (which totalled €35,000 in 2019).

2019 was a relatively successful year financially and the KWWSPCA ended the year with a surplus. This year will be more challenging, but we seem to be keeping our heads above water. Most of the regular fundraising events have been cancelled this year and it is unlikely that we will be able to hold any events in the foreseeable future.

The KWWSPCA would like to thank all its kind supporters who have sent in donations of cash, cheques, items for Noah's Ark and donations of pet food and other pet products. Thanks also should be given to the many people who donate money on a regular basis by standing order, PayPal donations, through Facebook and through other channels, as well as supporters who organise fund raising activities on our behalf.

Giving a Gift to the KWWSPCA in a Will

The KWWSPCA will shortly be sending out leaflets to Solicitors' Offices in Kildare and West Wicklow with details of how a gift can be given to the KWWSPCA in a Will. More information about this will be available on the KWWSPCA website.

Governance

The KWWSPCA is a Registered Charity (Reg. No. CHY 6280) and is registered with the Charities Regulatory Authority (number 20011048). The accounts are audited annually and available for inspection in the Companies Registry Office and on the KWWSPCA website. The KWWSPCA is also registered with the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine to rehome dogs and cats and other animals according to the Department's regulations. Its Registration number with the Department is IPT20001C. The KWWSPCA is a Company Limited by Guarantee (Company Number 448178).

There is a new Charities Regulatory Authority's Governance Code with which the KWWSPCA must be compliant by October 2021. The relevant documents and procedures will be compiled and put in place over the next few months and Directors' meetings will be held during the coming year to ensure compliance.

Christmas Support

To raise more funds before Christmas, the KWWSPCA is selling its Gift Cards, whereby someone can donate money to the KWWSPCA and then have a card sent to a loved one in lieu of a present. For more information, email kwwspca@gmail.com. There are also two Christmas raffles for Christmas Hampers, one for humans and one for dogs. Tickets are available through the KWWSPCA Facebook page and payment can be made through PayPal. Many Christmas gifts and decorations are being sold on the Noah's Ark Facebook page and in Noah's Ark which reopened for business on 2 December 2020. Christmas tree decorations are also being made and sold by one of our volunteers on the KWWSPCA Facebook page.

Thank you to Rachel Monahan

It is with great regret that the KWWSPCA is saying goodbye to Rachel one of our volunteers who is moving to Waterford this month. Rachel has been invaluable to the Society over the last few years, bringing a wonderful level of commitment of both time and talent. Her ability to handle dogs has been impressive, intuitively knowing their strengths and weaknesses. She has regularly taken dogs into her home to 'Cat Test' them with her own wonderful Zen cats. Rachel has also played a big part in the TNR Cat programme, spending many hours sitting in hedges on cold rainy days waiting to trap some very cunning feral cats. Her time and tolerance in this area has saved much suffering in the feral cat communities. She was also able to liaise very well with other volunteers and visitors to the shelter and she has fostered many cats, kittens and dogs. Two of these dogs, Solomon and Rua, managed to behave so well that they stayed with the family permanently, but frequently revisited the Shelter to soothe some of the more nervous dogs in our care. We also need to thank her family, Liam, Melissa and Conor, who have also been a great asset to the KWWSPCA. This was especially true during the time of the snowstorms in March 2018, when most of us were trapped in our homes as the roads were blocked. The family trudged through the snow several times a day to the Shelter to feed and care for the dogs that were there. Rachel was also a volunteer in Noah's Ark. We would like to wish her and her family every happiness in their new home. They will be much missed.

The Directors, Committee Members and Volunteers of the KWWSPCA would like to wish everyone a very Happy Christmas and Health and Happiness in the New Year.

Yvonne McGuinness, Chairperson, KWWSPCA

December 2020