

7th Heaven Animal Rescue Trust

Trustees' Annual Report

1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020



(Some of the animals rehomed 2019-2020)

Charity Registration in Northern Ireland: NIC101696

HMRC Registration: XR65507 (March 2003)

7TH Heaven Animal Rescue Trust

Registered address:

PO Box 198, Newtownabbey, BT36 9BP

www.7thheaven.org.uk

Structure, governance and management

Nature of governing document

7th Heaven Animal Rescue Trust, which is also recognised as a charity by HM Revenue and Customs in Northern Ireland, is operated under the rules of its Trust Deed dated 24 March 2003.

Organisational structure

The Trust is governed by the Trustees.

A new Trustee may be appointed by resolution of a meeting of all the Trustees, passed by a majority of those present

Trustees:

Mrs Heather McMurray: Chair

Mr Stephen McMurray: Treasurer

Mrs Lorna Peppiatt: Secretary

Objectives

The Charity is established for the protection of all small domestic animals from abuse, neglect and distress by providing for their care and treatment in a safe environment with the aim to rehoming and in particular:

- A No Kill policy will operate except when an animal is suffering unnecessarily and when no further treatment is available and only following consultation with a veterinary surgeon and permission of 2 trustees
- To provide or make arrangements for the provision of animals which cannot be rehomed

Achievements and Performance 2019 / 2020

7th Heaven has continued to be inundated with requests to help the abused, neglected, distressed, unwanted or abandoned animals throughout Northern Ireland. We can't help them all, but we will always try to take in, care for and re-home as many as possible. We hope that in doing so, we will be promoting compassion and empathy in the public, whilst also giving a sense of companionship and well-being to those recipients of the re-homed animals

1. COVID 19 Lockdown

Our charity was hit with an unprecedented crisis as the Government initiated Lockdown across the country from the middle of March.

How the crisis initially impacted our charity:

- Instructions/guidelines were either confusing or non-existent as the various schemes we offer are both unique and essential to help the public get through this crisis.
- All rescuing, rehoming & deliveries of pet food & shelter were halted.
- There was uncertainty how this crisis would impact people with pets or feeding ferals eg inability to get food due to illness/self-isolation and severe financial issues.
- Our 2 Trustees continued to care for all of the rescued animals.
- All communication channels remained open with the public, offering advice.
- We were overwhelmed by requests to trap, neuter and remove feral cats during this time, as the other main charities whose role this was, remained closed.
- There were concerns with the scarcity and restrictions imposed on food purchases in the stores.
- Sainsbury's Pet Food Bank donation point in Forestside was suspended.
- 85% of our funds were in accounts that could not be released until November 20 at the earliest.
- Fundraising in-store events ceased and our pet food donation point was suspended during lockdown.

We sought clarification from the Executive & other Northern Ireland Ministers and on 10 April received confirmation that we were classed as essential workers and permitted to restart the pet Food Bank & Project Wildcat schemes. Rehoming did not restart until much later on 28 June.

We were extremely grateful to all who helped us get through this difficult time. More details will be provided in next year's report, but we felt that there needed to be some acknowledgement of the amazing help and support we received to get our charity through this. Although we did not have any volunteers, there were various people /companies who shone through:

- Sainsbury's in Forestside restarted the Pet Food Donation Point as soon as it was possible. Their customers have continued to donate pet food at astonishing levels. Their staff have been remarkable in co-ordinating this.
- Mackle Food, who have supplied 2 pallets of cat & dog tinned food.
- Doagh Equestrian Feeds, who have helped us ensure that we have a good, regular supply of pet food not only for those in our care, but to help the extraordinary number of requests that followed.
- Enkalon Foundation who were first to come to our financial rescue, providing a £1000 grant in late April 2020 to help us get through this.
- Friends of the charity who continued with their regular donations, aiding financial security.
- Many members of the public and our friends who donated key necessities- pet food, litter, bedding.
- Firmount vets for providing unrivalled access even during critical times.
- Student Roost for providing duvets/bedding.
- NICVA for keeping us informed of charity guidelines / updates

Moving forward during these uncertain times, we continue to ensure the welfare of the animals in our care and provide unprecedented help to the public in financial distress through our Pet Food Bank, Project Wildcat & Made in Heaven Matchmaking Schemes.

2. Animals:

Rehomed by 7th Heaven:

36 Cats

9 Dog

7 Rabbits

7 Guinea pigs

7th Heaven's current long-term residents:

Cats: 2 very nervous – average age 12 - 14 years old

4 long-term health issues – average age 12 – 15 years old

We also paid for 5 dogs to receive dog training visits or attend courses

Our charity is set up to help animals in difficult situations. The animals generally coming into the charity will be anxious, distressed, or have been abused. This means that we need to spend a considerable time in rehabilitating them before they will be ready for rehoming. Whilst in our care, we aim to provide them with love, attention and the best quality living environment.

Our charity remains focused on rescuing cats that are older, have medical problems, in dangerous situations or are difficult to home, as there are few options available for them elsewhere. Most of them came from people whose lifestyle was changing, those who were becoming homeless, going into hospital or who had passed away. There was no one else to care for them, and their only other option was to put them down. Although we still try to find them all a home, we acknowledge that some may remain in long-term care with us, so we have set aside larger spaces including an 'oldies' home' where they can live out the remainder of their life in comfort and company. Their owners can be secure in the knowledge that they will be loved, get well looked after and will not be put down, as we have a 'No Kill' policy.

All received love, attention and whatever treatment necessary whilst in our care, with the aim of rehoming them to suitable, responsible owners. This, of course, is of great benefit to the animal but also has great rewards for the new owner who gets companionship and a lot of pleasure out of caring for an animal and from the affection it shows in return.

Our main requests this year were to help those with too many animals or 'hoarders'. In a few instances this meant people who had up to 37 unneutered cats living in their home. We worked with councils and other groups to take them in, get them neutered and treated & start to rehabilitate. Some were sociable and were reasonably easy to rehome, but others that have behavioural 'scars' are likely to remain here long-term.

Here's some of the pets we rehomed:



Other activities:

We can't help all the animals but we try to assist as many as we can. Where we can't actually bring them in, we try to help re-home them via our 'Made in Heaven Matchmaking' scheme. If the owners want to keep the animals but are struggling financially, we have our Pet Food Bank to help them.

3. Made In Heaven Matchmaking Scheme



Animals rehomed:

15 dogs

9 cats

1 Guinea pig

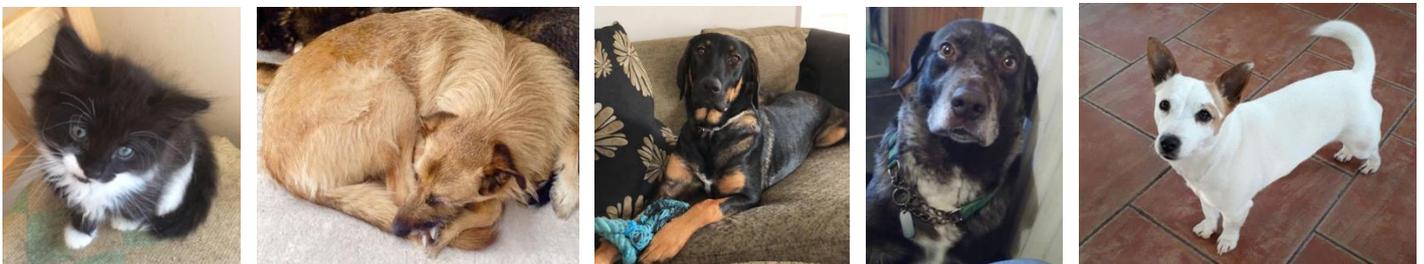
In addition, we advised / supported 19 people / families. 7 decided to keep their pet following our support.

We also paid for 6 dogs to receive behavioral training; all animals neutered and arranged for the microchips details to be transferred to the new owners.

Our free 'Made in Heaven' Matchmaking Service offers owners who are concerned where their dog will end up the chance to become more involved in the re-homing process. Ultimately, they have the choice of where their pets are going to be homed whilst holding on to them in their own home environment until that is achieved. This not only helps the animal by preventing them becoming stressed in kennels but also helps the owner get peace of mind. A substantial increase to 40% of owners changed their mind and decided to keep their pet after discussing their options or problems with us and taking the advice or support we offered including the help of a dog trainer and paying for the cost of neutering. We continue to receive extremely positive feedback from those who used this service that this service alleviates stress from them being able to choose the new owner, the new owner can find out the history of the animal and everyone is happy with the level of support we have provided to them throughout.

This service continues to help towards promoting responsible animal ownership. It is has also proved very effective in helping the public rehome during the crisis, especially when taking in animals was restricted & prevented overcrowding.

Here's some of the animals that we helped find a new home:



4. Pet Food Bank



183 pets received a substantial supply of free pet food:

- 121 dogs**
- 46 cats**
- 3 rabbits**
- 1 budgie**
- 1 hamster**
- 2 pygmy goats**
- 3 pet rats**
- 6 hens**

We also had a significant increase in requests for repeat supplies of food: 11 people with 46 animals requiring additional help up to 3 times:

- 20 dogs**
- 25 cats**
- 1 hamster**

Total pet food supplied: 229

68 people / families with pets received at least a month's supply of pet food

The pet food supplies were provided through donations to our pet food banks and groups (below) and from compassionate individuals

7th Heaven paid an extra £487.20 for extra pet food, or special food in exceptional circumstances

We delivered 229 pet food provisions through our Pet Food Bank to people in crisis during 2019/20.

Our Pet Food Bank is designed to support people in financial hardship and distress by providing free pet food to enable them to hold onto their pets. This means they don't have to endure the stress of seeing their animal suffer distress by being put into kennels or pounds. Whilst we aim to provide temporary help to those in need, we acknowledge that there may be a few who may require a longer period of help, mainly due to benefits stopping suddenly, losing their job or prolonged / sudden illness. We always assess each person's requirements individually.

We have a Pet Food Bank donation point in Sainsbury's Forestside, Belfast. This has been a huge success, providing pet food & treats to all in need. Other companies and their customers and staff helped by various donations:

Estimated value of pet food donated 2019 / 2020:

Sainsbury's Forestside	£2,268.54
Tescos, Ballygomartin, Belfast	£706.95
Sainsbury's Carrickfergus (stopped Dec 19)	£1,773.10
Jollyes Glengormley	£218.00
22 Great Victoria Street, Belfast	£125.00
Total	£5091.60

We also received large supplies of pet food from individuals including Andy, Donna, Holly, Ruth, Fay, John & Eddie.

Pets at Home donated £532 VIP Lifeline vouchers (see below) which we used to purchase pet food & equipment.

Here's some of the donations received:



Individual – Andy



Pets At Home VIP Lifelines



Holly



Jolley's Glengormley



Sainsbury's Forestside

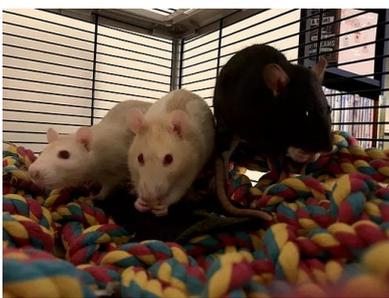


We have shared out all this pet food, delivering it to pets whose owners are in need, and those helping feed the feral and community cats throughout Northern Ireland.

We provide regular updates on our website and Face book pages - 7th Heaven Animal Rescue Trust and Seventh Heaven, both on the pets helped and the donations gratefully received.

We would like to thank everyone who donated pet food to help feed them throughout the year. You are helping keep pets in their owner's homes and prevented at least 183 animals needing to be re-homed. We would also like to especially thank Community Advice, Antrim & Newtownabbey and other organisations for their numerous, necessary referrals to us.

Here's some of the pets we helped:



In addition to helping re-home domestic animals and supplying free pet food to pet owners we also assist feral cats in the community via our Project Wildcat Scheme

5. Project Wildcat Scheme and Feral Cat Month



Shelter:

30 Plastic Snugs and bedding were given out at a cost of £1040

Approximately 102 feral / community cats were provided with a safe home

2 shelters were donated by the public

Neutering:

We paid for 32 feral cats to be neutered/treated. Total cost: £1204.01

Feeding:

287 feral cats were supplied with a substantial supply of food.

81 feral cats received repeat supplies of food up to 3 times

25 individuals, families or community groups were supplied with pet food to help the feral cats for which they were caring

Pet Food Bank Winter Vouchers:

£50 - Garvagh. 3 feral cats were supported

The pet food supplies were provided through donations to our pet food banks and groups and from compassionate individuals. 7th Heaven paid an extra £651.71 for extra emergency pet food supplies.

We delivered 368 pet food provisions for feral/community cats through our Project Wildcat during 2019/20

Project Wildcat was set up to help feral cats and those who care for them by providing free shelter, neutering and food. We had identified quite some time ago that there were a large number of feral cat colonies throughout Northern Ireland and, although many were being fed by volunteers or local people, the cost to them was substantial. Many more cats are neutered by other Trap, Neuter and Return individuals who contact us to provide shelter and food after this has been done.

7th Heaven had previously set up a pet food voucher scheme especially for those with larger colonies of cats we try to help with food. This was to help those feeding them manage their supplies of food over a longer period, particularly during the winter time, when supplies were low or the weather prevented us delivering. However, this year we were able to deliver supplies so only 1 voucher was needed. We have also benefited from the ASDA click & collect to reach the public further away or who may need supplies urgently.

Although we feed the ferals all year round we also highlight their plight by designating October as 'Feral Cat Month'.

The public continue to be very supportive of our Project Wildcat project. We have a sponsorship support 'Feed a Feral' which for the £10 donation, we provide dry and wet food to this value to a feral or community cat. In addition, there is the opportunity for the public to sponsor the purchase of a snug or donate a shelter, which we will provide to a feral. 2 shelters were generously donated last year providing feral cats with a dry, safe home. Our thanks to Cosy Cages who provide the snugs at a discount.

From the positive feedback and support we have received about Project Wildcat scheme and Feral Cat Month, they are a major success. We are the only people in Northern Ireland who provide this service and the obvious need for it means we will continue to help feral/community cats as part of our core services.

Here's some of the cats supported and shelters and pet food provided:





We delivered **597** pet food provisions for animals in both schemes during 2019/20

6. Pet Friendly Landlord Scheme



7th Heaven continues to see a huge increase in people having to give up their pets when they move to new accommodation. Landlords seem reluctant to let pets stay in their accommodation and many who do, charge extra insurance, which many tenants cannot afford. This forces people to give up their beloved pets when their circumstances are beyond their control.

We set up the Pet Friendly Landlord Scheme in 2015/16 to help pet owners in this difficult situation and had contacted the majority of those involved with landlords, including councils, associations and central bodies to ask if there was anything, they would be willing to do to help. Although we received only minimal response, we continue to offer free advertising to any landlord willing to offer a home to a pet owner. We continue to support the public to prevent them having to give up their pets in these unfortunate circumstances and encourage landlords to see the benefits.

One family had not been able to find anyone willing to let them keep their 2 beloved dogs and if they couldn't find anywhere their options were to be homeless or give up their pets, which was devastating to them. As a result of our advertising & contacting landlords, they received several offers from kind and generous landlords. They have let us know that because of our help, they have found a dog friendly landlord and a new home which has an amazing dog run with shelter and heated kennel if they are outside.

There's nothing more special than being able to help keep pets with their owners in their homes!

7. Daisy Day



7th Heaven designated the 24th December as Daisy Day – a time to remember all the animals killed and injured in war. We have chosen the daisy as it symbolises innocence and, like the animal victims of war, they are numerous and always overlooked. We want everyone to say a prayer or spare a thought for the innocent animal victims of human war at this traditional time of peace.

On the 24th December each year now and on the days leading up to it, we ask everyone if they could like and share our Daisy Day face book page and encourage others to do so. We are hoping, maybe, that we could create a better awareness of their plight and by everyone on this day thinking of those animals taken from us by man's conflicts, we could create a 'daisy-chain' of compassion, our thoughts, the links of love, joining us all

together, across borders, race and religion. Maybe we could create a world where man no longer solves disputes by force or resolves differences by weapons. Maybe then the animals will stop suffering and dying at our hands. We ask that you please spare a moment to remember them.

8. Finance

Income raised	£10,694.29
Payments	£19,573.06
Balance	- £8,888.77
Cash Funds brought forward:	£75,268.19
Funds at 31/3/2020	£66,379.42

Income raised:

Sainsbury's

Sainsburys' Forestside store invited us In-store to promote animals needing a home, our schemes to help the public and receive donations. Thanks to their generous customers, we received £158.43 as well as pet food. We continue to receive pet food donations from kind customers through our donation point set up in-store in Forestside, which is helping both the Food Bank and Project Wildcat schemes.

We would like to thank Sainsbury's customers for their generosity throughout the year and to Sainsburys and their staff, especially their Charity Champion, for making this possible.

Jollyes

In 2019/20, in addition to the pet food donated to our Pet Food Bank donation point, we received £21.80 through our collection tin. We are grateful to Jollye's customers and staff in Glengormley, who have supported us for many years.

Tesco, Ballygomartin

Tesco, Ballygomartin invited us In-store to promote animals needing a home, our schemes to help the public and receive donations. Thanks to their generous customers and staff, we received £152.18 as well as pet food.

Pets at Home

Pets at Home, Support Adoption for Pets and VIP Club and their customers have supported our charity throughout the year. We received £532 VIP Lifeline vouchers which we used to buy pet food supplies to support our Pet Food Bank/ Project Wildcat schemes and new equipment for the animals in our care.

E-Bay / PayPal Giving

The funds of £1,866.22 from E-Bay sales and Humble Bundle donations from PayPal Giving Fund have provided significant contribution towards income raised, with several individuals regularly donating each month. We would like to thank everyone who donated funds from their sales, items for selling through our E-Bay charity site and for on-going regular support through PayPal Giving.

Friendship Scheme and Shelter Sponsorship

We have 14 Special Friends who continue to support our charity each month; 11 others who continue to donate both large and small amounts each year, 7 who specifically sponsor our kennels, long term residents, Project Wildcat shelters and our Feed a Feral for a £10 scheme.

Grants/Large Donations

We received very generous donations from the following sources:

Belfast Animal Rescue - £2,000 from a supporter who donated this legacy (June 2019)

Latharna Canine Dog Training club - £350 on its closure (Jan 2020)

Maureen Boal Trust £2,000 – long term resident donation (March 2020)

Restricted funds

£69,398.46 of our charity funds have been locked into fixed rate bonds until November 2020 & January 2021 to provide additional interest each year to help cover repairs etc. Due to unforeseen additional emergency repair work needed during the year, we had to request release of £10,000 in December 2019. Progressive Building Society did so on the proviso that we could not release any additional funds until the full term of the bonds. When the Covid crisis hit, we have had to seek additional funds from grants in 2020/21 to help us through these difficult times, both to help with the significant increase in requests for pet food support & inability to raise funds through our normal sources in-stores.

Events

Events were mainly through Tesco, Ballygomartin & Sainsbury's Foreside in-store collections. Sainsburys Forestside also chose our charity of 1 of 4 charities to support as part of their 150 days of community. The funds of £3483.50 raised between June 19 and March 20 will be paid to us during the 2020/21 year.

Others support:

We have other ways to raise funds and help our charity including (details are on our website):

- Amazon Wish List
- Give as You Live
- Payroll Giving in Action
- Charities Aid Foundation
- Pets at Home VIP Club Lifelines

Since joining these organisations for free, we have started to receive donations from the public interested in supporting our charity. We are grateful as this has started to provide us with a further regular supply of funds to help those in need

Payments out:

We will make no personal profit from an animal's misery, which is why nobody involved in our charity gets paid. This is why there are no expenses for staff wages.

Project Wildcat costs of £2,895.72 was used for the purchase of 26 shelters, pet food and the cost of neutering and treating of ill feral or community cats. Quite a lot of the pet food had been donated through our Pet Food Banks, VIP scheme and various food donations from the public, however due to the amount we support on a regular basis; we still needed to purchase £651.71 of additional pet food to support them. We receive no funding for this, but have the opportunity for the public to donate shelters or donate funds to support this scheme.

We have set up click & collect arrangements with Asda, Tesco's and Sainsburys to order pet food for people in our schemes in times of emergency. This has become critical during the Covid crisis to have this contingency in place.

We do a lot of promotion of 7th Heaven's animals and the schemes. Administration costs are for the internet / website access and necessary IT upgrades (NB. there is no charge for the design or upkeep as this is provided by the trustees) and leaflets and business cards for the schemes and for events. We continue to keep printing costs low by preparing the newsletter for publishing and designing our own leaflets ourselves and using the excellent printing service of Print NI to produce high quality colour newsletters, posters and leaflets.

9. Thanks

We do not charge to take in or re-home any animal. As our motto states, "**Animals are not commodities to be bought or sold. They are beautiful creatures with beautiful souls**". We are not their 'owners' merely their 'guardians' and, therefore, have no moral right to put a price tag on their head. This is why we do not and never will charge for our animals. Nor do we do not charge for any of our schemes or support we provide. We do not receive any government support. So we would particularly like to thank everyone who donated funds to 7th Heaven. This is important to our charity to help us provide everything necessary to help animals both in our care and people and animals supported through our schemes.

We would like to acknowledge all the people who have helped us in other ways. We really appreciate the regular donations of pet food direct from individuals to feed our long term and elderly residents. We also receive regular supplies of bedding which the animals are especially appreciative of. This all helps keep our costs low, Thanks to all the good Samaritans out there who did not look the other way, but contacted us when they found a lost, ill or abandoned animal and many who provided a shelter for them until we could find room to take them in or a new home, especially when the weather was very bad, We would especially like to thank everyone who has offered each of our rescue animals a new chance and a loving home.

10. Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities

The trustees are required 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 incoming resources and application of resources 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;
- make judgements and 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 keeping proper accounting records that 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. The trustees 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 declare that they have approved the trustees' report above

Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees:

Stephen McMurray

Trustee/ Treasurer

20 December 2020