



**Minutes of the Annual General Meeting
Held at 7.00pm on 26 June 2008
In the John Hobhouse Meeting Room
Bath Cats & Dogs Home
The Avenue, Claverton Down, Bath**

Present for the Executive Committee:

Val Pritchard
Robin Eastman
Steve Pearson
Jean Low
Margaret Cole
Valerie Cooper
Sue Forder
Geoff Fuller
Kay Gerrett
Anita Hallam
Lynda Pearce

Chairman
Vice Chairman
Treasurer
Secretary

Friends Present:

Jan Clare
Noreen Clark
Elaine Eastman
Jean Harley
Joan Henry
Mike Holly
Roy Hulbert
Greta Keeling
R E V Marsh

Anne Meddick
C Reis
L Reis
Amanda Thorn
Helen West
Julie Weston
Ray Weston
Rosemary Williams

Apologies:

Chris Pope
Mr & Mrs Hurle
John Hobhouse

1. Minutes of Previous Annual General Meeting held on 21 June 2007

Proposed by Mrs Hallam and seconded by Mr Fuller, the meeting unanimously agreed the Minutes of the AGM.

2. Chairman's Report

The Chairman, Mrs Val Pritchard, ran through the main events of 2007:

- 2.1 The Home was once again the top re-homing centre for the 3rd year running. The staff were to be congratulated and thanked them for their hard work in ensuring the welfare of the animals in their care.
- 2.2 The Home has a new fundraiser, Gill Ford, who took up her appointment earlier this year. Ms Ford had a long and successful history in charity fundraising, and the Friends were looking forward to working closely with her, to ensure a mutually beneficial partnership.

- 2.3 The Trustees have continued in their efforts to increase membership, which currently stood at 1,360 but many more members and volunteers were needed, particularly younger members as an injection of young blood and ideas was essential.
- 2.4 There has been a very gratifying increase in the support for the Friends fund raising events. However, the Trustees have decided to concentrate on collections rather than sales, which are generally more profitable. Indeed, all collections for the Home will also be carried out in future by the Friends under the Friends logo and banner, which now has a much stronger market image thanks to the efforts and support of Sara Child, Managing Director of SJC Recruitment, an enthusiastic and long time supporter of the Friends.
- 2.5 The sales events the Friends will continue to organise will be the larger events which raise most money, such as the sale of new and nearly new designer clothes; the plants sales and raffles. The regular table top sales will be reduced in favour of renting empty shop premises in Bath for a week or so a couple of times a year and selling those goods which would normally have been included in the table top sales – research has shown that this was a far more efficient way of raising funds. The Friends sale of refreshments every 1st and 3rd Sunday of the month would continue, as these were so popular and have become a fixture. The various fund raising events raised £31.6k and collections £1,495.
- 2.6 Mrs Pritchard also specifically mentioned that Rae Carpenter, who sadly died last year after a long and brave battle with cancer, was still very much missed not only by the Friends but also by the Home too – at the Home’s recent AGM, their Chairman reported that the “blue” box collections which she looked after were down by £5k. It would be wonderful if a volunteer could be found to fill the hole that Rae has left and spearhead this effort. A bench commemorating her has now been placed at the front of reception under the shade of a tree.
- 2.7 The Friends still continued to rely heavily on legacies, but it was recognised that large legacies were a rarity. However, the Friends received £61k in bequests this year, which was very gratifying.
- 2.8 This year, the Friends have donated £155,615 to the Home as a contribution towards vets’ fees. The Friends were also funding the extension of the shop at the Home, and also an additional part-time shop assistant for period. The new extended shop will be named the “Paw Store”, hopefully at the end of July. A survey has been carried out to ascertain what goods people would buy if they were stocked. The shop would continue to give value for money but there will also be the added convenience of easy parking, trolleys to take heavy goods such as large bags of animal food to their cars and the knowledge that any profits go towards the rescue, rehabilitation and re-homing of animals. Mrs Pritchard urged the meeting to support this new enterprise.
- 2.9 The Trustees owed a debt of gratitude to the loyal army of volunteers and supporters for their hard work and unstinting generosity throughout the year. Special mention must be made of Mrs Hurle, for all the money she has raised for the Friends in the Frome area; Anne Meddick, the Friends Membership Secretary, who has battled on despite having undergone serious back surgery this year; and Jean Low, the Friends Honorary Secretary, for her efforts in covering various absences as well as editing the Newsletters.
- 2.10 Mrs Pritchard expressed the Trustees regret that Sara Child, Margaret Cole, Sue Forder and Kay Gerrett were not standing for re-election to the Committee, and thanked them for their efforts and support over the past year. They have pledged their continuing support for the future.
- 2.11 Finally, Mrs Pritchard congratulated everybody on a very successful year, and looked forward to an even better one in 2008.

3. Treasurer’s Report

The Honorary Treasurer, Mr Pearson, had prepared a more user friendly version of the annual accounts for this meeting with the financial statements broken down into three separate sections showing details of income, expenditure and a balance sheet, showing the Friends’ assets, liabilities and reserves for the year ending 31 December 2007 with comparatives for 2006. Copies were distributed to all present.

- 3.1 Because of the Friends’ income level, it was a requirement that the accounts be audited and following this meeting, these would be sent to the Friends’ auditors for them to review and prepare the statutory accounts. When available, a copy would be made available to all present today.

- 3.2 **Income** Derived mainly from subscriptions, donations, raffles, legacies, collections, refreshments, various sales, merchandising. Total income was £138,218 (£139,915 for 2006), a reduction of some £1,700.
- 3.2.1 **Subscriptions & Donations** At £33,744 were up by £1,900 as a result in an increase in membership numbers and some very generous donations
- 3.2.2 **Legacies** These were down by £11,000.
- 3.2.3 **Collections** Down by some £800 due to the reduced number of collections.
- 3.2.4 **Sales & Activities** These produced £7,000 additional income this year, the sale of calendars raised £1,132 by the year end.
- 3.2.5 **Deposit & Investment Income** The total remained fairly level but there was a shift between income from investments with CCLA and M&G equity funds which reduced by £2,300 due to reduction in the Friends' holdings, as some investments were realised in 2006 to meet the £450,000 donated towards the building of the new kennels. There was an increase in deposit income of £2,200 as surplus funds were transferred into a new high interest account with CCLA opened in 2006.
- 3.3 **Expenditure** Total expenditure, excluding donations, showed an increase of £1,300 over 2006.
- 3.3.1 **Administration** There was a saving of £950.
- 3.3.2 **Storage Containers & Other** Up by £1,300 and £1,700, respectively, due to the purchase of plastic storage crates and the cost of re-roofing and refurbishing Block M which was now used as a dry storage facility.
- 3.3.3 **Donations** £155,615 to the Home towards vets' fees, with one small donation of £250 to Julie's Wildlife Trust.
- 3.3.4 **Banking charges** Lloyds have recently altered their policy on the charging structure for charity accounts which has resulted in payment of bank charges on the Friends' current account – this was likely to cost the Friends in the region of £350 a full year. Other banking options were being investigated.
- 3.3.5 **Summary** On the whole, the Trustees have managed again to control costs and this in no small part thanks to the all the unpaid volunteers who gave their time to the Friends and for which the Trustees are very grateful.
- 3.4 **Balance Sheet** The Friends' reserves stood at £174,981, which was a reduction of £35,334 over the closing balance for 2006.
- 3.4.1 **Investments** The value of the Friends' total investments has increased by £42,573. There was a reduction in the value of the Friends' equity investments of £7,816 due to a change in the market value.
- 3.4.2 **Cash** The amount of cash held in a non-interest bearing current account has been reduced, whilst creditors have increase by £67,000 which represented the balance of the £155,000 donation towards vets' fees that remained outstanding at the end of the year. This was with the agreement of the Home as both the Home and the Friends were working together to manage their combined cash balances and investments.
- 3.5 **In conclusion** The Trustees have taken great care in managing the funds for the Friends. Activities to date have produced good results and the trustees have recently been notified of several legacies which will enable the Friends to provide further assistance to the Home.

4 Accounts for 2006

Some minor queries of fact were raised which Mr Pearson clarified. Mrs Pritchard therefore commended the accounts to the meeting, and Miss Gerrett proposed acceptance and Mrs Eastman seconded the proposal. The accounts were unanimously agreed by the meeting.

5. Appointment of Auditors

At the last AGM, the Trustees expressed their concerns about the then current auditors (Burton Sweet) and it was agreed that following a search for new auditors, the meeting agreed to appoint new auditors to be approved by the new Executive Committee. However, Mr Pearson had found Burton Sweet very helpful (they were also the auditors for the Home) and they were familiar with how the accounts needed to be prepared. Mr Pearson therefore had no problems recommending Burton Sweet again for 2007, but it was felt that a second quote should nevertheless be obtained for the future and the new Executive Committee should approve whichever auditors it felt would best serve the purpose. This was proposed by Mrs Eastman seconded by Mrs Cole.

6. Election of Executive Committee

The Yellow voting form contained details of all the candidates standing for election. There were 9 candidates, with 12 vacancies (there was an error on the form as Miss Forder was not standing again for re-election). It was suggested that the meeting agree en bloc to elect all 9 candidates without having to go through the individual voting process, and the meeting agreed. The following persons were therefore elected to the new Executive Committee:-

Valerie Cooper	Jean Low
Robin Eastman	Lynda Pearce
Geoff Fuller	Steve Pearson
Anita Hallam	Val Pritchard
John Hobhouse	

7. Any Other Business

- 7.1 Mr Holly was not able to attend the Home's AGM and asked if there was any information on the Home's current financial position. A summary was shown in the glossy report (which was available in reception) and a full copy of the Home's Report and Accounts could be obtained from the Home's accountant. Mr Pearson summarised the position that at the end of 2007, the Home's shortfall was some £360k, but the Friends contribution to the vets' fees brought this down to around £155k. However, there was great optimism that with the new initiatives – the recruitment of Gill Ford, the new fund raiser; expansion of the shop at the Home; sponsorship by James Wellbeloved – the future for the Home did look much improved
- 7.2 Miss Low asked for stories about pets rescued from the Home to go in the next newsletter.
- 7.3 **Guest Speaker** Andrew Simmonds, a partner in Garstons Veterinary Practice, which held the contract with the Home to provide veterinary services, gave a fascinating talk about the work carried out for the animals at the Home, both in the vets' suite at the Home and at the practices' surgeries in Frome, Warminster and Trowbridge. He highlighted the differences between the sort of work done for "standard" visits for pets owned by the general public and those that were required for a large re-homing facility like the Home, eg there were conditions that were prevalent in "strays" which were rarely seen in general practice. The Practice made some 6,000 consultations pa for the Home carried out in the vets' suite; circa 850 animals neutered – dogs, cats, rabbits, ferrets and even a couple of chipmunks. He also outlined what the Home and the vets were doing to reduce costs without compromising the quality of service. He also showed photographs of actual animals they had treated. All in all, a very interesting insight into the work of the vets.
- 7.5 The meeting closed at 8.45 pm.

JL/June 2008