

## Operations Report – 2016

2016 was a year of consolidation, with a focus on looking at ways of continuously improving what we already do and only adding new areas of work, such as our education, Wildlife Wardens and Pet Guardians projects detailed below, where we have the funding to do so.

We've focussed on staff training and development so that we can give even better care and husbandry to our animals, and ten members of the team either completed or continued with professional development during the year.

The last AGM focussed on 2015 but it also provided an update on a large part of 2016 because it was held so late in the year (largely due to the change of Treasurer in 2015 affecting the timely production of the 2015 accounts), and so the following will focus on key statistics and a summary of 2016 rather than repeat information that has already been provided to Members.

### Challenges during 2016

- The Dog Welfare Panel making the difficult decision to put Hughie to sleep, and the subsequent derogatory remarks on some social media sites.
- Finding the right blend of animal behaviourist and training skills to enable all of our rescue dogs to receive appropriate behaviour management.
- Funding running costs, and seeking additional areas of sustainable income generation.
- Feral animals (domestic animals that have 'gone native' and bred indiscriminately and/or cause a nuisance) increasing in number and variety to include cats, cockerels, peacocks – even sheep.

### Highlights of 2016

- Opening the Ramsey charity shop, which made net profit of £6,000 in its first three months of trading from October to December 2016.
- Rescuing and rehoming the four tiny puppies who were abandoned in Ramsey, tied up in a plastic bag.
- Launching the new website.
- Building seven outdoor dog pens (thanks to funding from the Scheinberg Family) that enable dogs to enjoy fresh air away from the Kennels.
- Increasing use of the PlayBarn for fundraising events such as the Easter Bunny Show, the Swing Band Evening and the Fun Dog of the Year Show.
- Introducing an electronic database, called Anilog, for our animals enabling us to record information more efficiently.

### Key statistics for 2016

Comparative Welfare figures are:

	Rescues	Welfare Reports
2016	629	201
2015	642	222

*Recording only commenced in 2015*

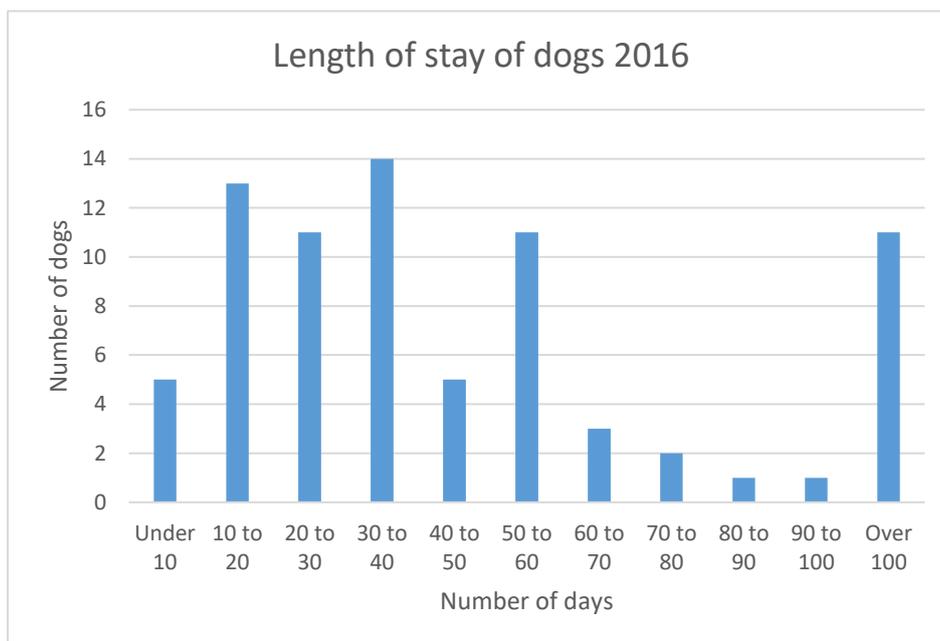
Comparative yearly figures for animals rehomed or released are:

	2014	2015	2016
Kennels	101	72	79
Cattery	323	338	362
Small Animals Unit	115	80	110
Aviary	510	428	449
<b>Total</b>	<b>1049</b>	<b>918</b>	<b>1000</b>

Comparative out-of-hours Dog Warden figures are:

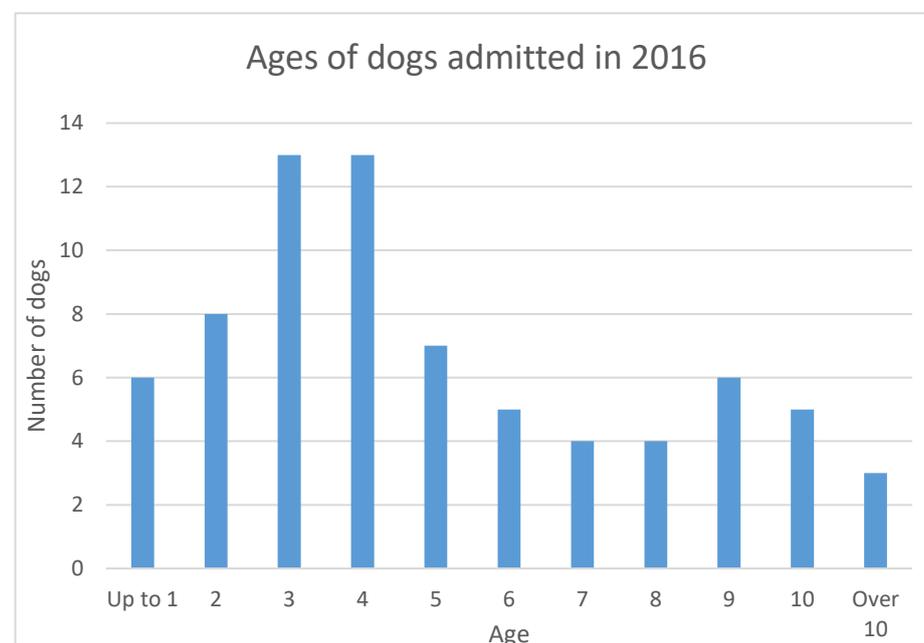
2016	91
2015	61

Key Kennels figures (Anilog will enable us to do a similar breakdown for all sections in the future):



Dogs with us for 100+ days:  
 7 x Staffies  
 3 x terriers  
 1 x Springer Spaniel

Border Collies and Staffies are the breeds most commonly admitted.



Top three reasons for gifting-in a dog:

1. Change of circumstances
2. Ill health
3. Aggressive behaviour

## New projects started in 2016

- Pet Guardian Scheme (funded by the Manx Lottery Trust): giving peace of mind to pet owners that their animals will be suitably cared for should they die or become unable to care for them.
- Wildlife Wardens (funded by Zurich): developing a network of wildlife enthusiasts who are able to help the Welfare Officers with injured animals.
- Education project (funded by Barclays): developing 40 children and young people from University College IoM and various schools, all having a range of additional educational needs. The following is a testimonial from a teacher –

*We have done 'sheltered' group work experience in other environments in the past, but the students have responded and engaged to a higher degree at ManxSPCA - due to the diversity of tasks, and the positive working relationship that has built up.*

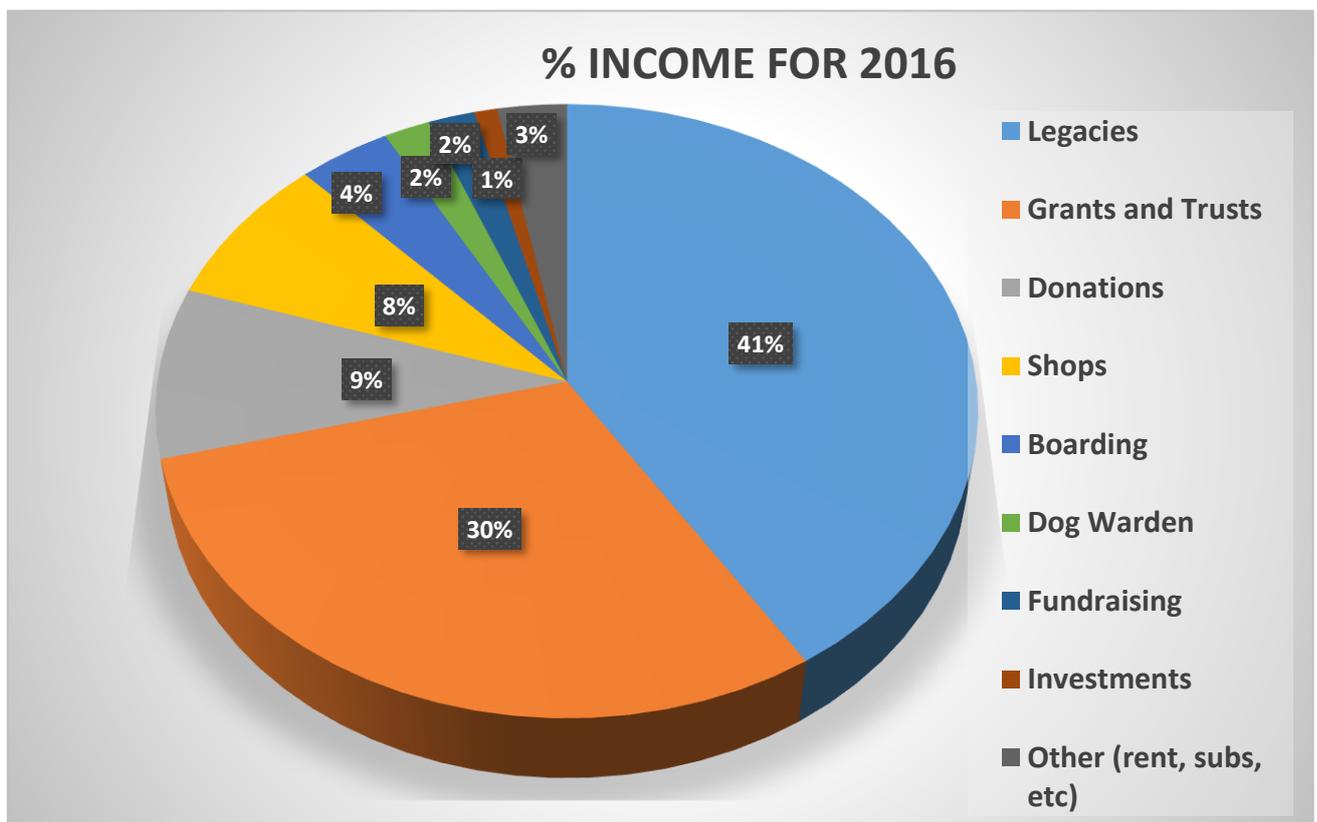
*The petting/spending time with the cats and kittens has been extremely valuable, and helped some of our students with autism. This has impacted positively on their ability to manage their anxiety, and raise their self-esteem.*

*These sessions are a calming but stimulating environment for some of our young people who struggle academically and with their relationships at school. We're not aware of any activities that would offer us a similar alternative/experience.*

*The biggest thing we have seen for our pupils is the empathy that they are able to feel and show for the animals they have encountered. We are seeing the kids sometimes being able to transfer the empathy they feel towards the animals towards their peers and in turn look after other people's needs.*

*Our pupils' favourite sessions are doing the quizzes, spending free time with the animals as well as meeting, spending time with, learning about and getting to know rarer animals such as bearded dragons and tortoises.*

## ManxSPCA income streams



## **Casper's story**

Casper was adopted in October 2016 after more than three years in the Kennels. We asked his new owner, Laura O'Sullivan, to tell us why she and her partner chose him, and this is their story: *Tony and I had been considering getting a dog for a while, but we weren't sure if we would be good candidates because we both work full-time. We decided to pay the ManxSPCA a visit to have a look around and do some investigating as neither of us really knew what to expect, but we both felt that it would be better to give a dog a home that desperately needed one rather than going to a breeder.*

*When we first arrived we looked at some of the pictures of the dogs available and Casper's picture immediately caught my attention – he looked sweet, if not a little sad. We found out that Casper had been difficult to rehome because he took so long to warm to new people, but this just made us even more determined to win his affection.*

*The adoption process was challenging – it took about two months and more than 25 visits to be able to touch him without him being scared. However, once he became comfortable with us he wouldn't leave us alone! The staff at the ManxSPCA were incredible, and so patient, spending hours and hours with us to make sure our visits went well.*

*Casper came to live with us four months after we first met him and we really couldn't have hoped for a better, more affectionate dog to become part of our family. He loves going out in the car, especially to the beach or the plantations for walks and is particularly excited when we come home with a new toy for him to destroy! But most of all, he loves snuggling on the couch, which is always nice after a long day at work.*

## **Plans for 2017**

- Launch the Animal Care in the Community programme (funded by the Co-op), enabling pet owners in remote or disadvantaged communities to access welfare advice about their animals and free/discounted microchipping.
- Complete the ChillOut Rooms, and incorporate an income-generating dog grooming service that also benefits our rescue dogs.
- Open a third charity shop in the South of the Island.
- Ensure the Tearooms maximises its potential.
- Develop a calendar of fundraising events run by both the Society and by other fundraisers.
- Play a full role in the Animal Welfare Act consultative forum.

On a personal level I have been reminded frequently over the last year of just how much emotion animals, and their welfare, evoke in us all. This can sometimes lead to polarised opinions when, actually, we all want the same thing – the best possible outcomes for animals, be they companion, wild, farm or feral. We need to be tolerant of differing opinions, have mutual respect, and work together to achieve our goals.

Juana Warburton  
General Manager  
May 2017