



***Greyhound Rescue Wales  
Annual Review 2016 - 2017***



# TRUSTEE'S MESSAGE

Jennie Street

Greyhound Rescue Wales (GRW) began its work in 1993 and is the only all Wales charity that deals solely with retired greyhounds and lurchers. Between June 2016 and July 2017, Greyhound Rescue Wales rescued 94 dogs and rehomed 93, which is about one dog every two days. We are a small charity that in the last five years has grown significantly. Turnover was in the region of £50,000 a year and is now more than £300,000. The charity is a Company Limited by Guarantee, owns its own Sanctuary and employs 12 full and part-time staff. This rapid expansion has been driven thanks to the generous legacy from the late Lee Frank. It was a very significant amount of money and has been spent on activity to support the dogs in our care.

## OUR VISION

The sad but truthful fact is that many greyhounds and lurchers face a terrible future once their working career has come to an end. Whilst some owners and trainers keep their dogs as pets when they retire and some hand them in to charities for homing, others simply dispose of them heartlessly.

**Our vision is to rescue dogs that face these terrible fates, to be able to rehabilitate and rehome them as family pets.**

## OUR VALUES

- ✓ Our dogs and their welfare are at the centre of everything we do.
- ✓ We never put a healthy dog to sleep
- ✓ Our dogs receive all the care and veterinary treatment they need for as long as they need. Every dog we rescue is neutered, vaccinated, wormed and micro-chipped.
- ✓ Not only will our dogs be given the physical care and treatment they need but we will endeavour to ensure they receive the exercise, socialisation and human attention they deserve.
- ✓ GRW campaigns ceaselessly to spread the message that greyhounds and lurchers make wonderful pets.
- ✓ GRW uses all the funds we raise for the benefit of the dogs, with the lowest possible overheads.
- ✓ Whilst GRW does not condemn outright greyhound racing or hunting with lurchers, the charity works tirelessly to promote responsible ownership of all dogs.
- ✓ GRW does however, condemn all cruelty to greyhounds and lurchers and we seek actively to engage with as many owners as possible in order to secure better outcomes for dogs that have been used in both racing and hunting.
- ✓ GRW values and respects our volunteers, supporters and staff
- ✓ We are open and honest
- ✓ We comply with animal welfare needs



## OUR STRATEGIC AIMS

To give them the life they deserve - *rhoi gwel bywyd*

We strive to make a difference to the lives of greyhounds and lurchers by ensuring they have a life after racing or hunting, a life they deserve.

In pursuit of its aims, GRW seeks to maximise the positive impact on:

### The community

including by creating local employment, purchasing goods and services locally whenever appropriate, and providing volunteering and learning opportunities particularly for disadvantaged or marginalised groups within the community;

### The environment

including by seeking to conserve resources such as energy and water and by promoting bio diversity and a healthy natural environment on the land which it owns.

## HELPING US GET THERE

### Each year we strive to:

- ✓ rehome at least 100 dogs into permanent homes
- ✓ ensure that no dogs are returned through poor assessment or lack of information to the adopter
- ✓ ensure that systems and processes are refined and consolidated
- ✓ be in a sound financial position so that we do not have to rely on volunteers to perform crucial roles in the charity
- ✓ develop the business ethos within the charity
- ✓ maintain our Sanctuary, Hillcrest Cottage, to a high standard as our tangible asset
- ✓ have small self-supporting groups of volunteers all over Wales.



## CHAIR'S REPORT

Lindsay Jackson

This report sets out the highlights of Greyhound Rescue Wales' last year. We are still in the process of implementing the recommendations of the Legacy Working Group but are getting nearer to the ultimate aim of being a charity that is sustainable for the future, providing the conduit for greyhounds and lurchers to have the life they deserve in retirement.

We are ambitious and have achieved a great deal over the year, though it has been a year of transition and development. It has also been a sad year in some respects due to the resignation of a number of long term volunteers and employees, who have moved on to do different things. Most significantly is the resignation of our first employee, Sandra Wynne, who established our Sanctuary at Hillcrest and made it what it is today. We welcome the new Sanctuary Director, Kerry Sands who continues to prioritise rescuing and rehoming greyhounds and lurchers including their assessment, training and nurturing.

Financially, GRW is in a good place. We have robust data about our finances and our supporters and volunteers work very hard to raise precious funds. The main source of our income though is from the shops in Blackwood, Cardiff and most recently Swansea. The staff and volunteers, very ably led by our newly appointed Retail Business Director, Judy Badcock have done an excellent job over the year. The shops are providing over 50% of our income, giving us the confidence to move into the future.

*Last Hope Walk 2017*



The third function of GRW has also developed massively over the year; that of Infrastructure and Support Systems. GRW has migrated to a new Management Information System, Shelter Manager, to store all the information about our dogs, members and contacts. Also we have moved to using QuickBooks Online to assist with financial management. These are huge changes, but further movement in the direction of developing the business ethos of the charity.

Fundamental to all our work is that contribution made by volunteers and we have worked hard this year to develop and strengthen our volunteer strategy. We are a way away from having lots of groups of volunteers all over Wales who devote time to GRW, but to coin a phrase 'every little helps' and we continue to encourage any and all volunteer help in whatever form.

Partnership working has increased over the year with relationships increased with other rescues, with GRAI in Ireland and significantly with FIG (Flying Irish Greyhounds) who GRW has worked with to send dogs to the USA for homing. We have become a member of ADCH and developed excellent work with Best Friends, Gower College and Swansea University, alongside delivering training and education to our own volunteers as 'Buddies' for the dogs at Hillcrest.

Our Patrons, Boyd Clack and Kirsten Jones continue to support our activities and GRW is overseen by a very able and hard working group of Trustees. We continue with their support, to strengthen the leadership and governance of our charity. We move into next year with increasing confidence in a strong team of staff and volunteers.

# OBJECTIVES, ACTIVITIES, ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

## RESCUE OPERATIONS

A major review of operations and re-organisation was carried out during 2016-17. Detailed new procedures covering all aspects of the work of the team were drawn up and, following consultation, these were approved by the Trustees.

A new online system to track progress at every stage of the homing process has been put in place and all records are now kept in Shelter Manager. This provides transparency and a permanent record of each stage of the process from the intake of a dog to the placing of a dog in a home.

### ***Objective: Rehome at least 100 dogs into permanent homes***

Rescue figures are collated monthly and an up to date review of the statistics is instantly available for any defined period using our Information Shelter Manager.

For the period 1<sup>st</sup> June 2016 to 31<sup>st</sup> May 2017 the total number of dogs rescued was **94** with **93** rehomed

As of 1<sup>st</sup> June 2017 we have **29 dogs** in our care, fairly representative of our normal numbers at any time. 14 are housed at Hillcrest and 2 at Hope GreysAbility. Currently there are 13 dogs in foster homes, of which 10 are long term foster dogs.

### ***Objective: Ensure that no dogs are returned through poor assessment or lack of information to the adopter***

11 dogs were returned during the year of which 5 have since been adopted, 1 is in foster and 5 are housed at Hillcrest for further training and assessment. This represents just 7% of the dogs rehomed, a great achievement.

### ***Objective: Ensure that systems and processes are refined and consolidated***

The Rescue Team has changed significantly during 2016-2017. At the end of 2016 Brad and Paula Evans chose to leave GRW for personal reasons. GRW will be forever indebted to them for their tireless efforts afforded to GRW. The team



members are currently Kerry Sands, (Sanctuary Director), Sandra Wynne, (Sanctuary Manager) Angie Webb (i/c Liaison with other Rescues), Stephen Tom (Trustee Director) and Alain Thomas (Trustee Assistant Director)

The team brings a range of skills and each have their own roles within the team, though there is plenty of debate and overlap. The Rescue Team now meets regularly to review and develop its work. It is now better organised, and its processes are more transparent and efficient.

Requests for us to take dogs from trainers or potential adopters generally come to us via our 0300 number or the website. The contact forms are automatically emailed to the Rescue Team as well as Shelter Manager. A member of the team makes the initial contact with the owner or potential adopter. In the case of a dog needing to come into our care we will speak to the owner, gauge the urgency and take appropriate action. With potential adopters we will answer their questions and arrange a home visit if appropriate.

Our main strength is that there is almost always, at least one member of the team available to deal with an issue. The team have also facilitated a number of 'Homed from Home' adoptions, where someone wishes to give a dog up but will keep it at home until a suitable adopter is identified. We advertise dogs on our web site, assess it and facilitate the adoption.

## WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP

We work in partnership with other rescue organisations including the Retired Greyhound Trust, Hope Rescue, Four Paws, Bridgend Dogs Trust and RSPCA Llys Nini.

GRW is committed to working with other individuals, organisations and institutions to find common ground with them in order to promote the welfare and rehoming of Greyhounds and lurchers. GRW works with a range of partners to achieve further legislation to protect racing greyhounds in Wales.

## BEHAVIOUR SUPPORT

Behaviour support has continued to be a key service during this year and enabled us to continue proving excellent through care and aftercare support to our adopters. The major reason why dogs are returned to animal rescue shelters is due to behaviour problems, so we have recognised the importance of this input to get our dogs home-ready and to keep as many dogs in companion homes as possible.

## SASHA'S STORY

*Sasha is a tri-paw lurcher who was brought into GRW when three years old. She had lost her leg in a traffic accident which had left her traumatised. She was deeply suspicious of everything. She didn't trust people and wasn't too sure about dogs either. She didn't like to be touched and had a record of having bitten. The only way to get her into the kennels when she arrived was to drive right up and open the boot so she walked straight in. Even getting a lead or collar on her was impossible.*

*The only way to start with a traumatised and fearful dog is to build trust. This began by slowly teaching Sasha some skills using food rewards and got her out of the kennels to the calmer environment of an assessment room. It was important early on to learn about her and what the triggers were that made her feel uncomfortable or threatened.*

*Slowly and gradually, Sasha began learning that life was safe and predictable. She could feel more*

The training and behaviour modification programme for the dogs in our care has been devised and overseen by Kerry Sands, but has included crucial input from the rest of the Sanctuary Team (staff and volunteers) at Hillcrest, who have implemented the programmes and worked with the dogs on their identified behaviour challenges. This has enabled the Hillcrest regime to start to become rehabilitative and transformative, which is an important achievement for this year, and one which will be developed in the coming years.

Other achievements of the behaviour and training scheme this past year include the successful rehoming of several dogs with challenging behaviours, ranging from very poor dog skills, extreme lead reactivity, bite histories, and severe separation anxiety. All of these positive outcomes have been possible due to the increased knowledge and skills of the Sanctuary Team, coupled with the excellent aftercare and support that we are proud to offer our adopters. We believe in full disclosure with full support, and this approach has enabled us to place a number of dogs in homes who previously we may have struggled to find outcomes for.



*confident in choosing to make different responses in the way she behaved.*

*As she began to make progress, a willing volunteer buddied with Sasha and recorded her progress regularly.*

*Soon Sasha had caught the attention of a prospective adopter and a new home for the troubled girl was in prospect. But we knew it was important to take it gently. After an initial meeting, her adopters visited the centre for several 'getting to know you' visits both at the centre and out and about. Once everyone felt confident she was ready*

for home, there was one last hurdle: to make sure that Sasha was comfortable with car travel again.

Six weeks after that first meeting with her adopters, Sasha was on her way to her new home. She has settled really well. Her new family have an exercise routine that works and use lots of mental enrichment to stimulate and satisfy her zest for life!

In addition to successfully finding adoptive homes for some dogs, we are very proud to offer sanctuary to a small number of dogs for whom the possibility of a home as a companion is more difficult due to their significant health or behaviour issues. For these dogs, we provide ongoing training and rehabilitation, as well as safety, security and important continuity of care. These lives matter to us and we do all we can to take responsibility for them.

## HILLCREST DEVELOPMENTS

### The Hillcrest Team



**Objective: maintain Hillcrest Cottage Sanctuary to a high standard as our tangible asset**

Hillcrest Sanctuary has evolved and blossomed into a centre of excellence for nurturing and rehabilitating Greyhounds and Lurchers in readiness for their forever homes.

### Recall Training Day



The volunteer led **'Brain Train'** and **'Buddy'** schemes ensures that the dogs' lives are enriched daily with mental and physical stimulation.

The enclosure of our field with a six foot high fence to create **'Coopers Field'** has totally transformed the exercise experience for our dogs. They can walk, trot or run round the field as they wish, picking up new smells, sights and sounds every day.

The new tractor mower was an excellent investment to keep the grounds looking neat and tidy during the summer months.

New uniform and working clothes ensures that staff always look smart and are easily recognisable. This is also useful for off site visits with the dogs in the local town, for off site assessment and attending organised dog walks and street collections in their red vests as ambassadors for those dogs needing homes.

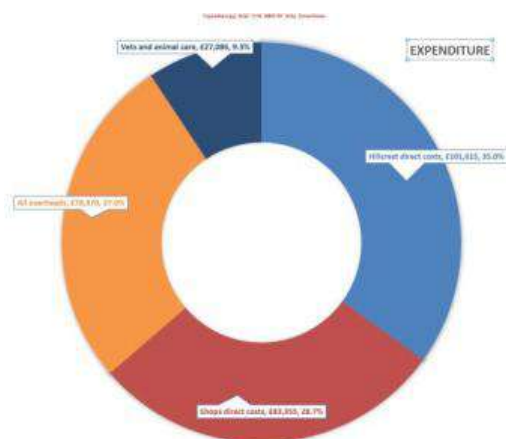
The newly refurbished office and volunteer hub in the house is helping to create a formal working environment for the staff and volunteers as they all become familiar with Shelter Manager.

Some dead trees in the garden have been cut down to create logs to keep the house warm in the winter and the Training zone with its purpose built roof is a god send in the wet weather.

# HELPING US GET THERE

## GROWING INCOME AND MANAGING FUNDS

**Objective: be in a sound financial position so that we do not have to rely on volunteers to perform crucial roles in the charity**



2016 was another successful year for the charity.

Our total income was £294,400, compared to £204,834 in the previous year. We continued to diversify our sources of funding to ensure that we remain financially resilient.

Our expenditure increased from £204,512 in the previous year to £263,349. We have made capital investment to improve facilities at Hillcrest and opened a further charity shop in Cardiff.

We continued to invest in fundraising, to build sustainable income streams such as the 'Hillcrest Supper Club' to support our work into the future.

A summary of our income and expenditure for 2016-2017 is presented below. These figures are based on the income and expenditure figures included in the full, audited and unqualified accounts for the year ended 28<sup>th</sup> February 2017.

Our policy of developing our retail income areas to ensure that we can support our work has grown well in the last year and the charity shops provide over 50% of our gross income.

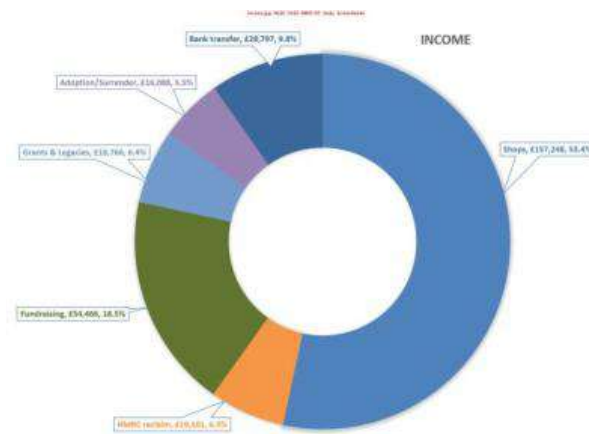
Overall fundraising through regional collections, special events and regular income schemes continues to provide a significant proportion of our income. We are indebted to our supporters for

their efforts in both raising and donating money to GRW.

During the year we were in receipt of some significant 'windfall' income. We received reclaimed Gift Aid from HMRC for the previous 4 years and also bank transfers from our 'old' bank accounts which have had to be closed since incorporation.

Similarly income from grants and legacies is a variable element that is difficult to predict in the planning process.

Income from adoptions and surrender of dogs is always dependent on the numbers homed.



In terms of managing expenditure, GRW continues to expend a major portion of its funds on the direct welfare of dogs at Hillcrest.

Expenditure on the necessary overheads that accompany running the organisation are closely monitored by the Trustees and kept to a minimum in all cases.

The retail shops' direct costs are considerably less than the income generated by them.

## OUR MEMBERSHIP

The membership continues to grow year on year and from a wide UK base and currently stands at around 1,000.

Our members are mainly concentrated in the South Wales region and are of a variety of types from those that have adopted dogs to those that provide the critical help and financial support we need.

All of our members receive Greyhound Express twice a year through a postal mail. After member feedback and in order to reduce the increasing cost of this process, we asked members if they would prefer to receive this communication via an email. To date about 50% are happy to receive Greyhound Express as an electronic communication. This will be implemented from November 2017. We will also be implementing a single membership renewal date of 1<sup>st</sup> March as from 2018.

**Objective: develop the business ethos within the charity**

## SHOPS

January 2017 saw the closure of the first ever GRW shop in Llandysul. Liz Haines and her very dedicated team embarked on this venture some seven years ago which paved the way for the current shops. They have worked tirelessly for GRW but the owners are selling the premises and

### *Blackwood Shop*



closure was the only option. All the donations in the shop were transferred to the other shops and put up for sale, so nothing was wasted. We will be eternally grateful to all involved in blazing the trail.

Also in January we suffered the very sad death of our dear friend Pete Bushel, 4 weeks after he lost his little canine companion Buffy. Pete did so much for the cause in our Blackwood shop from house collections, stock rotation, all of the fixtures and fittings at Cardiff and the DIY in both shops, to supplying both shops with enough cakes and biscuits to feed a small army.

A very fitting tribute was paid to him in the form of a memorial dog from GRW. An honour to a very rare gentleman!

Blackwood shop continues to be a beacon on the High Street and the manager Justin Nicholls ably assisted by Michelle Jones have increased takings to almost £47,000 during the year. Justin came to Blackwood as part of the Jobs Growth Wales scheme and is now the manager. A prime example of how GRW works hard to develop its staff.

The Cardiff shop achieved recognition for their fabulous Valentine window display; they had one of the top 10 best charity shop windows nationally. The very clever Natasha Owen has set

#### *Cardiff Shop*



the standard for our shop window displays which is maintained throughout all the shops. Cardiff has gone from strength to strength with the assistance of Janine Graves to produce a massive £70,000+ in takings over the year.

In the early part of 2017, the Trustees agreed to open another shop and targeted Swansea as the location. The lease was signed in early May and the Swansea GRW shop was opened in only four

#### *Patrons open Swansea Shop*



weeks from start to finish. A stunning achievement and Claire Franklin and Lara Jones took more than £4,500 in just three weeks trading.

Strong links exist between the shops and there is a cherished aim for GRW to become known as a major player in high street charity shop retailers.

All of this would not be possible without the aid of our fabulous volunteers who work tirelessly at all of the shops, often going above what is expected of them! We salute them all!

#### *Swansea Shop*



We also took the view that as the shops are becoming the major financial contributor to GRW, then we needed a strategic leader and so Judy Badcock was appointed as the Retail Business Director. She has already made an impact by opening the Swansea shop so quickly and she is on the lookout for the next one.

#### **GRANTS**

Until recently grant applications have been carried out by one of the trustees. However, due to too few trustees doing too many jobs it was decided to appeal for grants officers. Claire Gardner and Jane Davies gallantly rose to the challenge. Claire and Jane have been drawing up a list of grant giving bodies and have discussed GRW's priorities with the Chair and Hillcrest Sanctuary Director. They are drawing up a list of dog success stories to show to potential funders. In the short term they are prioritising the purchase of two vans, one for GRW shops and one for Hillcrest

## REGIONAL ACTIVITY

**Objective: have small self-supporting groups of volunteers all over Wales empowered to carry out activities on behalf of GRW.**

All of our collections now qualify for the HMRC small donation gift aid scheme (GASDS) which means that we receive 25% of the value of collections from them without the need to have a gift aid declaration. This has been a real boost to our fundraising and all figures quoted here can be 'inflated' by that percentage.

## SOUTH EAST WALES

The year since June 2016 has been a year of great success.

Continued street collections in Abergavenny, Monmouth, Cardiff, Newport, Bridgend, Cowbridge and Porthcawl, with new collections taking place in Cwmbran and Blackwood, along with numerous events, store and supermarket collections, resulted in fundraising from these events raising well over £9,000. This is due to the amazing team of committed volunteers who, once again, did us proud and turned up week after week in all weathers.

The 2017 fundraising season got underway in April, with collections in Cardiff, Newport, Bridgend, Measteg and Chepstow so far raising £3,756.

2017 has also seen Andrew Burn, Kerry Baker and Izzy Clyde Lewis running the various street collections in SE Wales with Stephen Tom overseeing the area – a huge thank you to the three of them for taking on this role and everyone

*Porthcawl collection*



*Newport collection*



who attends the collections to give them their support.

## SOUTH WEST WALES

Susie Clayton, Yasmin James and Magdalena Gryczmanska along with Nicola Jones in 2016 have collected far and wide across the South West from Swansea through Neath, Ammanford, Carmarthen, Haverford West and Pembroke Dock. Their 'patch' is large but they have managed to amass £5,500 in 2016 and already £1,000 in 2017.

## MID & NORTH WALES

In Mid and North Wales there is a dedicated small team of volunteers who continue our work on a regular basis raising £3,500 in 2016 and £1,700 so far in 2017.

We are always looking for members to join us in our efforts especially along the North coast region where we have struggled a little over the last twelve months since the sad passing of our great friend and rock, Jennie Street.

*Welshpool collection*



# ADVOCACY FOR GREYHOUNDS AND LURCHERS

**Objective:** GRW believes that its advocacy for greyhounds and lurchers also improves the lives of humans; because children and adults gain emotional benefit from greater interaction with animals.

## BEST FRIENDS

Greyhound Rescue Wales is working in partnership with the Centre for Business and Social Action (CBSA), delivering the “Best Friends” project funded by the Big Lottery in Wales. “Best Friends” works with young people who have not thrived in the formal education system. The young people visit Hillcrest where GRW staff and volunteers provide training to allow them to understand dog behaviour and interact safely and sensitively with the hounds. Following training the young people accompany volunteers and their dogs and visit elderly people in Care Homes in south west Wales. Care home residents enjoy the visits and the young people gain confidence and skills which may help them gain employment. The case study below illustrates the impact this project can have on the young people involved.



*Mel joined the Best Friend project after the issues with her illnesses showed that she needed a flexible approach to learning and development and a course that would wait for her health to improve without imposing strict deadlines on course work and attendance.*

*Mel has embraced the Best Friends project, joining in with evening sessions every Wednesday and successfully completing her Level 1 NOCN in Work Related Education, and moving on to Phase 2 of the project, becoming a fully-fledged Pets and Friends volunteer. She is also an active member of the Young People’s committee that organise and help plan visits and events for project.*

*Mel shows us all how projects such as Best Friends can offer an alternative for young people who cannot work within a formal educational structure, and who, once given the opportunity, flourish.*

## CASE STUDY

*Mel suffered with coeliac disease throughout her life, and this often misunderstood and difficult illness compounded her bipolar mental health diagnosis. It is hard enough to deal with one debilitating illness, but two that compound each other made day to day life and study very difficult for Mel.*

*Her College course provided work placement in a beauty salon as a statutory part of the qualification, but her illness made participating fully difficult and Mel was quickly losing hope and interest in the course. She made the very difficult decision to leave college, and luckily found the Best Friends project.*

*Mel said: “I really enjoy the visits (to care homes). I’m a bit nervous around dogs, going for a walk first and getting to know the dogs made me feel comfortable and I learnt more about the dogs. This helped me talk to the residents of the care home, and we had a really good chat. I loved it, and when I have my job interview I will have something really interesting to talk about that shows my skills”.*

## STUDY AID

During 2016-17 GRW and the Best Friends Project visited students at Swansea University as part of the “Study Aid” programme which helps students de-stress at exam time. Study Aid is organised by Swansea University Students’ Union. The students, many of whom miss the dogs they left behind at home, loved interacting with the hounds and these visits proved to be one of the most popular events of the Study Aid programme.



## GOWER COLLEGE PROJECT

A new scheme in 2016-17 involved students from Gower College, Swansea visiting Hillcrest to interact with the dogs and carry out voluntary work. The students said things like this about their experience:

*'it was great to be outdoors and have the chance to work with the dogs when we finished our work'*

*'we had to understand how the dogs were feeling and not be too loud or mess about around them'*

*'you can tell how the dogs are feeling because of their ears'*

*'I would live there if I was a dog'*

The Course Co-ordinator’s feedback was:

*“From a curriculum point of view Hillcrest was a perfect place to take this group of learners. There*

*were lots real opportunities for students to improve both their social and academic skills. Following instructions, working in a team, following health and safety guidance and using their own initiative; all are skills that were enhanced by this experience.*

*The students’ relationship with the animals was a great success. For students to understand that their behaviour could impact on the dogs well-being was amazing to see. They really did think about how they were being around the dogs, often reminding each other to be calm, sensible and quiet. This management of behaviour gave me the opportunity to explore this further during tutorial sessions and the wider impact of how they behave in social spaces, in the workplace and in college. We also discussed the impact of our behaviour on others and people’s impressions of us. The learners are keen to come back as they placed so much value on the dogs they really felt like they were helping both the centre and the dogs”.*

## Study aid



**Objective: to see the unnecessary suffering of animals reduced**

**GRAI**

GRW continues to support the work of Greyhound Rescue Association Ireland (GRAI).

Over the past year GRAI has firmly established itself as a strong advocate for the welfare of Greyhounds in Ireland. GRAI members have met with Government officials, given evidence to a Government committee, participated in prime time TV and radio programmes, and initiated numerous media reports, highlighting welfare issues and calling for effective action both from Government and the racing authorities in Ireland.

**FLYING IRISH GREYHOUNDS**

During 2016, Greyhound Rescue Wales formed a new partnership with the Irish Charity “Flying Irish Greyhounds” (FIG). FIG transfers Irish bred greyhounds from Ireland or the UK to Greyhound Pets Incorporated, (GPI), a partner rescue in north western United States who then place them in homes as family pets. It therefore makes sense to transfer greyhounds to the United States where there are more homes available. The project also draws attention to the acute need for homes for Irish greyhounds.

A FIG representative travels with the dogs on each

flight and the dogs fly in a pressurised, sound-proofed and temperature controlled part of the hold. The whole journey takes less time, and is less stressful for the dogs than the land and sea journey many Irish dogs undertake to new homes in Europe.

During 2016-17 a total of eight Irish bred but Welsh based greyhounds flew to the USA under the FIG scheme and a further two are due to fly at the end of July 2017. GRW wishes to thank the special team of Foster Carers who stepped forward to make the first flight possible.

**PARTNERSHIP WORKING**

We remain dissatisfied with the UK Government’s lack of action on improving the welfare of racing Greyhounds. DEFRA has failed to provide appropriate protection for dogs whilst at trainers’ kennels, where they spend 90% of their time.

We understand that some 3,500 dogs are retired from racing each year and remain unaccounted for, but as the industry will not publish data with respect to injury, euthanasia, or rehoming numbers, the true scale of the problem is uncertain. We will continue with our partners to apply pressure.

*FIG Foster group*



## ADCH

In 2016 we applied to join the Association of Dogs and Cats Homes (ADCH) and were successfully awarded full membership after passing their rigorous screening and assessment process. Membership of this body enables us to network with reputable wider animal rescue organisations such as the Blue Cross, RSPCA, Dogs Trust and other greyhound-specific charities. It also allows us discounts on products and services key to running a rescue centre and it also allows us priority-access to certain grant funding.

We are very proud of our accreditation showing that our care for the dogs at Hillcrest meets these very high national standards.

## OTHER RESCUES

We have recently strengthened our existing relationship with Hope Rescue and a number of the Sanctuary Team took part in a 'Visiting Volunteer Day' in April at their recently opened rescue centre in Llanharan. We believe in supporting other rescues with similar ethics to our own, and offering our services voluntarily is one such way that we can achieve this.

We have also recently started a pilot project at Hope Rescue, in conjunction with positive dog trainers Houndability, which will see us apply a positive dog training methodology to some of the long term ex-racing greyhounds in our care. You can read more about this innovative scheme, called 'GreysAbility', by following the project on our official Facebook page '**Greyhound Rescue Wales**'. You can help us to make it a success by sharing the progress and bios of the dogs on the scheme needing new homes.

*GRW at Hope Rescue*



**Objective: GRW aspires to ensure that its volunteers benefit socially and emotionally from their work with us. Such benefits will vary but include: increased confidence, increased sense of self-worth, skill enhancement, and the pleasure of working with like-minded people.**

## VOLUNTEERS

Greyhound Rescue Wales relies on volunteers to fulfil its aims. Volunteers give very generously of their time, energy and commitment, whether it is fundraising, retail work, homechecking, helping at Hillcrest, etc. Volunteering is not only vital to the welfare of GRW dogs, but promotes GRW's work in the wider community and, as volunteering has been shown to promote health and wellbeing amongst volunteers, it is important in GRW's social role.

Volunteering at GRW has developed organically through local informal networks. It has worked very well, but as the charity continues to grow we felt that a strategy was needed. One of our supporters, Karen Stephens, kindly agreed to work with a trustee on ways to improve the volunteering process. To this end a strategy has been produced and is on the website.

*From Kennels to Cuddles*



*Hillcrest Assessment Room*



It has three key aims:

- ✓ Understand the number, aims and types of volunteers we have and how we can actively recognise, value and support them.
- ✓ Where needed, to increase the number of volunteers we have and the types of roles available.
- ✓ To consider strategic partnerships.

An online volunteer survey was carried out in February-March 2017. This showed that while volunteers were generally happy with their roles, some requests from potential volunteers had not been followed up, and a small percentage of existing volunteers were unsure as to whom they should contact for information. It is intended that in the near future volunteer requests and volunteer information will be stored on Shelter Manager. This should reduce such problems.

June saw the nationwide 'Volunteers Week' and GRW highlighted the work of its volunteers through social media and an advertisement for volunteers to apply for grants for GRW resulted in two volunteers who are doing sterling work in looking for opportunities to bid for grant funding.

## HILLCREST VOLUNTEERS

We currently have 6 highly skilled, engaged and reliable volunteers who come to Hillcrest at various times across the week to work with the dogs.

They have been instrumental in establishing the BrainTrain and Buddy Scheme and regularly support events and attend workshops to develop their skills and knowledge on working with rescue sighthounds.

## FOSTERERS AND HOMECHECKERS

Some of our dogs are cared for by foster carers. During the last year GRW has had an average of about fifteen foster homes active at any one time. Some of these were very short term 'project-based' fosterers who came on board to help with the Flying Irish Greyhounds (FIG) scheme. Others were long-term fosterers who have typically taken on a dog with chronic health conditions or behaviour needs that make the dog challenging to adopt. Typically a foster carer will look after one, or a sequence, of dogs and will then decide to take a well-earned break.

Foster homes perform an invaluable role to complement our kennelling facilities and are

crucial to helping our ex racing greyhounds to transition to life as a companion animal. Dogs may be placed in a foster home for a variety of reasons: they may need special care for an injury, or they may just have been in kennels for a long time and just need the experience of living in a home to help them to acclimatise.

Fostering is a critical element of our rehoming strategy and we do find that dogs who have spent some time in a foster home are often quicker to settle in their adoptive homes. This is 'Kennels to Cuddles' in action.

We are currently developing our foster carer service, including devising a programme of training and support to complement this critical role. We will also shortly be recruiting for a volunteer foster co-ordinator to help embed our new scheme to support foster carers.

Our team of Homecheckers are also vital to the homing process. They are situated all over Wales and at any time may be contacted to undertake a Home Check in their area. They make judgements about the suitability of the home for one of our dogs and pass the information on to the rehoming team. This year over 150 home checks were undertaken.

## LONG TERM FOSTER CASE STUDY

*Alfie was found to be suffering from Chronic Superficial Keratitis which is an inflammatory condition of the cornea in dogs. He was in constant pain from this dry eye condition and it's not curable, so Alfie has to have drops in his eyes twice a day. Also Alfie has to wear his 'doggles' (doggie shades) as his eyes are sensitive to light, and a baseball cap to shade him from UV. As he needs full time attention he now lives with his permanent foster carer who will look after him for the rest of his life.*

*Alfie*



# INFRASTRUCTURE AND SUPPORT SYSTEMS

## LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT COURSES AT HILLCREST

Hillcrest Centre continues to be an ideal venue for events, training courses and Supporter activities. All new staff and volunteers (including project volunteers) undertake our 'Working with Rescue Sighthounds' induction training which is delivered by our Sanctuary staff team.

*Hillcrest Training*



In the past year, we have also invested in our existing volunteers, and provided them with considerable development, through the 'Brain Train and Buddy School' – a 6 week classroom based training programme through which volunteers learnt the basics of how dogs learn and how to use positive training methods in their interactions with our dogs during their volunteering.

One off workshops such as that on 'Recall' offered by positive dog trainer 'Houndability' have further developed the skills of Sanctuary staff and volunteers and have given the kennel dogs important out of kennel enrichment as well as important skills for their new lives as companions.

In 2016, we also offered Supporters the opportunity to learn more of these skills through a dog training event entitled Walk, Train, Play, which raised important revenue for continuing the development of the dogs in our care.

## INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

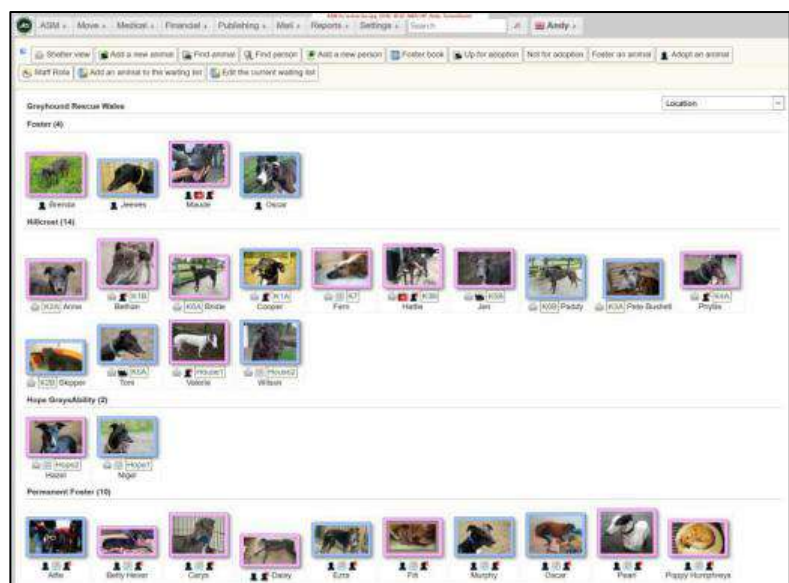
### SHELTER MANAGER (ASM)

During the period from January to April 2017, GRW upgraded its management system. This major change involved the conversion and import of our historical database into our new system, Shelter Manager and the integration of our web site to this new system .

Shelter Manager now allows us to hold all our data and communications in one application as well as giving us a more appropriate tool for managing all our processes.

Incoming communications now come direct from our web site and are directed to ASM where they are

*ASM Shelter View*



contained in one place. This makes the data/information process of receiving, processing and homing dogs more efficient and transparent within the GRW structure.

Shelter Manager makes our publication of information about dogs available for adoption on our web site instantaneous and reduces to zero the effort needed for this process as data is entered once and shared many times.

Another key improvement is the ability to manage all aspects of our membership data and record all our HMRC Gift Aid donations, making the arduous process of managing these area significantly more accurate and efficient.

## WEBSITE

The website continues to be our main communications 'shop' window. It now provides a two way, instantaneous link with our management

### Web site Adoption Page



system ensuring that GRW is able to react rapidly to information requests.

It is planned to re-assess the structure and content of the web site and its suitability for purpose during the coming year.

## FACEBOOK AND TWITTER

During the year our two presences on Facebook have continued to provide an additional route for communication as well as a valuable forum for members and non-members alike. With over 3,000 followers of the 'Greyhound Rescue Wales Supporters' group and 2,700 followers of the 'Greyhound Rescue Wales' page, this represents a major platform for us.

As from June 2017 all official posting from GRW will take place on the GRW Facebook page to ensure and promote a professional approach to social media, whilst the supporters group will continue as an area for the sharing of information, stories and general interest topics.

Claire Price continues to manage the GRW Twitter feed with great enthusiasm, providing yet another social media feed with 850 followers.

## QUICK BOOKS ONLINE (QBO)

GRW has taken the significant step of moving all its financial management from the previous Microsoft Excel base to Intuit QuickBooks online. This has been implemented in order to ensure complete data security, greater accounting auditability and to accommodate the vastly increased number of transactions required by the 70% increase in our turnover in the last four years.

This major change means that our capacity to manage the increasing financial complexity as GRW grows. Data is now contained within a sound business financial system, recognised worldwide as the leading provider for small to medium organisations.

Trustees can now be kept up to date with the GRW financial position on a day by day basis, rather than retrospectively as was the case in the past.

## PLANS FOR THE FUTURE

Our plans for the future are to consolidate what we are already doing, whilst inducting our staff into their new roles – Kerry, Dave, Judy, Justin, the Swansea shop staff and any new recruits.

We also plan to undertake these activities in order to achieve our strategic aims:

- ✓ We will continue to look for opportunities for partnerships to help our homing work and get our dogs seen by more potential adopters
- ✓ We will strive to increase our volunteer base across Wales so that we have a presence in the major towns

- ✓ We will continue to ensure that we are financially sound and will look at grant applications for major purchases and refurbishments to the kennels at Hillcrest
- ✓ We will continue to develop the Retail Business Strategy to include more shops and more services to members
- ✓ We will continue to provide advice to governments on animal welfare legislation, in partnership with other animal welfare organisations where appropriate

## OUR IMPACT

Greyhound Rescue Wales is Wales' only charity focussing specifically on greyhounds and lurchers.

The impact of our work addresses greyhound welfare as evidenced by the Last Hope dogs.

*Last Hope was a greyhound found left for dead, badly injured and with both ears cut off on a mountainside in the Rhymney Valley. He was discovered lying on rubbish with a hole in his forehead on 2nd May 2004 by a walker, and was later humanely destroyed*

*But out of such cruelty can come some good. Greyhound Rescue Wales set up a 'Last Hope Fund' and holds an annual sponsored walk to raise money for this. This money has been used to rescue, treat and rehome especially desperate greyhounds or lurchers for whom the only other*

*Malcolm (now Murphy) - Last Hope Dog*



*Last Hope bench at Hillcrest*



*option would have been euthanasia.*

Our rehoming addresses the immediate issue of helping dogs in need. In the last five years, we have rehomed more than 750 dogs. In the medium term, our work with welfare organisations in Ireland and the UK will help to improve standards for working dogs and our education and information work has the long-term impact of changing attitudes within society so that people take a more responsible view of dog ownership and welfare.

We continue to develop work with volunteer groups impacting upon the lives of some of our most vulnerable citizens.

## RISKS AND CHALLENGES

The risks we face are identified here along with the contingency plans (in brackets) in place to mitigate them.

- ✓ Insufficient income to run the activities of the charity (*Reserves Policy*)
- ✓ Fraudulent activity by members, volunteers or staff (*Charities Commission Finance Procedures*)
- ✓ Loss of Reputation (*Legal requirements*)
- ✓ Lack of volunteers (*Employ staff to undertake essential duties*)

## PUBLIC BENEFIT

The Trustees have given careful consideration to, and complied with, the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit.

This is reflected in the review of the activities undertaken by the charity contained in this report.

We believe that our vision of a world in which every greyhound and lurcher is treated with kindness and an understanding of its needs benefits society as a whole.

We provide public benefit by:

- ✓ helping to control the incidence and spread of disease through vaccination and neutering
- ✓ providing volunteering opportunities for those who wish to support our work
- ✓ providing advice to governments on animal welfare legislation, in partnership with other animal welfare organisations where appropriate
- ✓ enhancing the quality of life for people in care homes by homing dogs into care homes and by visiting with our dogs
- ✓ providing opportunities for young people to learn from interaction with our dogs

The challenges we face every day are:

- ✓ The need for space to take all the dogs we are offered
- ✓ The assessment and training of dogs to help their journey from working to companion dogs
- ✓ The recruitment, development, training and support of volunteers
- ✓ Getting our message across that 'Greyhound Make Greyt Pets' in order to home more dogs.
- ✓ Ensuring GRW is financially secure.
- ✓ Our continuing responsibility for the employment security of our staff.
- ✓ Being financially secure and able to maintain Hillcrest as the major asset

*Love is...*



# PERFORMANCE MONITORING – ANNUAL SURVEY OF MEMBERS

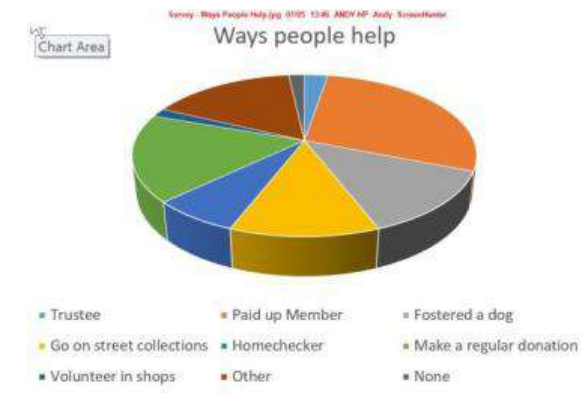
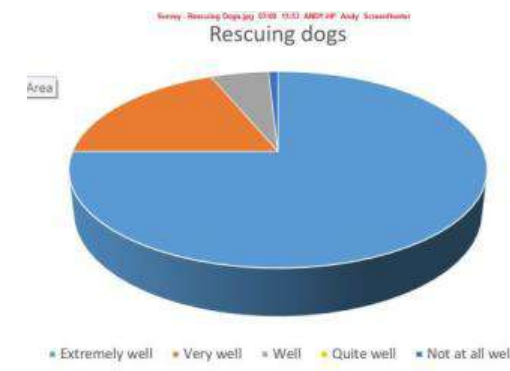
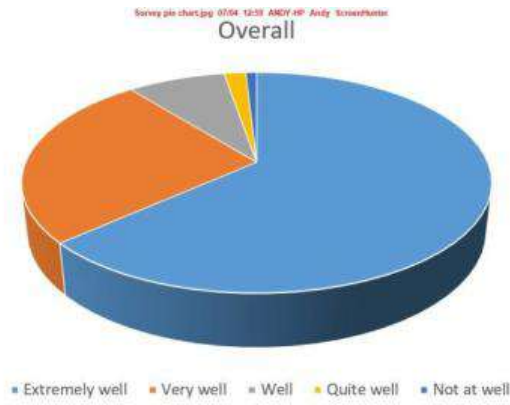
This year we repeated the survey of members that we undertook for the first time last year. The questions are based on our charitable aims and objectives, as set out in our Memorandum and Articles of Association and as agreed with the Charity Commission. 111 members and one member of staff responded.

## MAIN FINDINGS.

89.3% of those who responded were either very satisfied or extremely satisfied with the performance of Greyhound Rescue Wales. This is a very high rate of satisfaction and the high levels that were identified in the previous surveys have generally been maintained.

Members are overwhelmingly older. 92% of the members who responded were over forty and 72% were female. Typically dog owners are likely to be older as the adoption requirements involve a fenced garden and accommodation where animals are permitted. However, we do need to ensure we encourage involvement from all sections and ages in our community.

It is encouraging to see that more than 33% of those who responded make a regular donation to GRW and 25% go on street collections. What is most heartening is that more than 25% have fostered a dog. Despite having lots of volunteers in our shops, less than 5% reported volunteering in them.



# IN CONCLUSION

During 2017/2018 GRW plans to 'improve on previous best' and to consolidate the progress made in this year.

Each function plans to:

## RESCUE AND REHOMING

- ✓ develop the sanctuary as an 'ethos'
- ✓ broaden the intake of dogs
- ✓ individualise the rehabilitation and rehoming of dogs
- ✓ nurture further partnerships and collaborations
- ✓ promote staff , volunteers and adopters as ambassadors of the key message that greyhounds and lurchers make great pets

## RETAIL BUSINESS

- ✓ open two further shops
- ✓ introduce gift aid processes into shop donations
- ✓ develop on the job training and support for staff and volunteers
- ✓ promote corporate standards across all the shops
- ✓ ensure GRW is a significant player in the high street charity shop business

## INFRASTRUCTURE AND SUPPORT

- ✓ continue to develop a secure, single point data system
- ✓ increase the size and range of funding sources
- ✓ widen and enhance the volunteer participation base at all levels of GRW across Wales
- ✓ further our partnership working
- ✓ support the continuing development of Hillcrest as our key asset



## HOW TO SUPPORT US:

Greyhound Rescue Wales relies entirely on income generated through our retail charity shops, adoption fees, donations, sponsorship and membership fees in order to continue our work.

If you would like to help us help the dogs then please consider leaving a gift in your will, becoming a member, sponsoring, making a donation or volunteering.

### THANK YOU, ON BEHALF OF ALL THE DOGS!

Our vision is to rescue greyhounds and lurchers that face terrible fates, to be able to rehabilitate and rehome them as family pets.

### CONTACT DETAILS

web: <http://greyhoundrescuewales.co.uk/>  
email: [info@greyhoundrescuewales.co.uk](mailto:info@greyhoundrescuewales.co.uk)  
telephone: 0300 0123 999

Address:  
Hillcrest Cottage  
Bryncethin Road  
Garnant  
Ammanford.  
SA18 1YS

Company number: 8411721  
Charity number: 1152650

*Sandra, Bethan and Banjo*

