

OFFALY SOCIETY FOR THE PREVENTION OF CRUELTY TO ANIMALS Ltd.



ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR 2022

Summary

2022 was another successful year for the Offaly Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. Our major achievements were:

- Subsidising or paying for the neutering of 862 Cats and Kittens;
- Rehoming 166 Kittens and Cats;
- Neutering 255 Feral Cats via our TNR Initiative;
- Neutering 40 Dogs;
- Rehoming 33 dogs;
- Rehoming 2 rabbits and 5 guinea pigs;
- Fundraising over €48,271 to augment the €25,500 government grant.

This was all on a voluntary basis and no expenses were claimed. We are so grateful to everyone who helped in any way to keep us afloat for another year. As most of you know we have no shelter and are totally dependent on our volunteers, most of which have been helping us out for many years. If it was not for these great people taking the many cats, dogs, kittens and other animal species into their own homes and taking such great care of them until they are ready to go to their new homes we would have to close our doors.

Board Members

The 5 member Board of Directors during 2022 were:

Jane Lewis	Chairperson
Caroline Meally	Secretary
Marion Tully	Dog Programme
Shirley Mahon	Cat & Kitten Programme
Colette Coates	Treasurer

Office

We are still very fortunate to have our office in Market Place. We are very grateful to Mr Tom Stokes for leasing us this office at a very favourable rate. Without this great space we would not be able to carry out our business as efficiently as we do on a weekly basis.

We are also very grateful to the Community Employment Scheme for providing us with Jane and Marion for another year. Their work and commitment to our organisation is very much appreciated and we hope they will be with us for another year.

Cat and Kitten Programme 2022

2022 another very busy year for Offaly Spca as we struggled to help large numbers of unwanted kittens.

The season began with a small “trickle” and we hoped that the results of all the neuterings carried out in the previous years would finally start to pay off and that the numbers of calls about kittens would continue to be “just a trickle”.

Unfortunately we had no such luck. The trickle grew to a flood as kittens poured out from every direction.

We bottle fed many abandoned litters, nursed sick or injured ones, fed the starving, comforted the terrified & emptied countless litter trays; all in the comfort of our fantastic and much appreciated fosterers homes.

New and long time veteran fosterers rallied around and rolled up their sleeves to save as many cats/kittens as possible. Fosterers gave these little ones the chance to have a normal healthy & happy life in their new adopters homes.

During 2022 we put in place 2 special low cost neutering campaigns for tame domestic cats/kittens at just €20 per cat.

We also had a continuous “Feral Cat” neutering campaign at just €10 per cat trapped in a humane cat trap.

We provided a total of 862 neutering vouchers through these campaigns.

We paid the full cost of the trapping, neutering & returning (TNR) of 255 feral cats at various locations around Offaly.

Between vouchers provided, TNR’s and the cats/kittens that came into our care that amounted to 1,281 felines. For a small voluntary run charity with no animal shelter and no paid staff these numbers are quite astonishing.

The dedication, care, compassion and hard work of fosterers and all of those involved in trapping, coupled with the ladies who carry the kitten phone to deal with the many calls, is invaluable and saves so many little lives.

Those who foster and care for these animals say they have a wonderful sense of achievement seeing their hard work paying off as these cats and kittens are adopted to caring homes where they are loved, valued and respected as all animals deserve.

To say “Thank you all” seems so inadequate but it is truly heartfelt and sincere. Thank you. May your hearts & homes be filled with joy and happiness; and your clothes and couches... !!! Well...

Forgotten Feral Felines

A “feral cat” is a cat that has not been handled as a kitten and is not used to or comfortable around humans, preferring instead to keep their distance.

There are thousands upon thousands of feral cats roaming around in search of food and producing litter after litter of even more feral kittens; thereby adding greatly to the already vast numbers. With nobody taking responsibility for many of these feral cats their suffering can very often be quite shocking.

Cats are prolific breeders. An unneutered female cat can have up to 3 litters each year with litters varying in size from 3-7 kittens. By the time mama cat is nursing her third litter of the season her first litter of that year may already be starting to breed too.

A reasonably well nourished kitten can become pregnant at around 4-4.5 months old. In just 14 months a single stray unneutered female cat in your yard or shed can add 36 more to your area. These numbers are astonishing and account for the huge population of stray and feral cats.

The solution is to try to deal with the “one” cat before the problem grows to uncontrollable numbers. The steps involved in this solution are as follows:

- * **Borrow a humane cat trap from us;** we ask for a refundable deposit to ensure traps are returned.
- * **Office personnel will demonstrate how to use a trap correctly & offer advice** on the best way to achieve success in catching the cat.
- * **We give a voucher for just €10 to neuter a feral cat;** Offaly Spca pay the balance of the cost of neutering the cat to the vet from their funds.
- * **Return the cat to their original location to be released 24 hours after neutering.**

It sounds simple and is simple, but the difficulty is that when the “one” cat is not neutered before the problem starts then many people fail to contact us for traps, vouchers, advice until there are 20, 30, 40 or even astonishingly over 50 cats roaming in the area. At this stage they then expect someone to come and take all of these cats away, which is an unrealistic expectation entirely.

It makes sense to neuter that one or two stray cats in your area. Neutered cats are usually much healthier than those that are breeding. Females become emaciated and unhealthy from constant breeding. Males roaming around looking for unneutered females to mate with compete with and enter into horrific fights with other male cats, tearing each other to shreds.

We are collectively responsible for the welfare of animals including feral cats in order to prevent suffering. Complaining about large numbers of cats in an area will not solve the problem

but doing something about it will. When we need “someone” to do something about a problem that “someone” is usually ourselves.

To those who have taken the trouble to neuter even one feral cat THANK YOU, you have saved so much suffering and hardship.

BE AMAZING, neuter a cat. Thank you.

Dog Programme

2022 brought many changes and challenges for the Dog Programme, and were proud to have successfully rehomed 33 dogs.

We also ran a neuter campaign all year at the discretion of the dog team to help medical card holders /elderly or rescue dogs the voucher are €60 and OSPCA pay the balance. There has also been microchip campaign to help pets reunited if lost or stolen.

The latter half of the year.. proved to be very busy on the phone due to the many calls from people who want to surrender their dog. The majority of these unwanted pets are due to the pandemic and as we only have a small group of foster homes we unfortunately cannot accommodate all calls but we advise and help refer them somewhere who can. We have a limited number of fosters and the strays, the sick and the injured are our priority, but soon numerous surrender calls began.

During the pandemic, as people tried to adjust to lockdown, many people felt isolated and in need of companionship and what better way to have company and also to get out and about for fresh air than to have a dog. A dog, the most affectionate, loyal and truly loving, caring and non-judgmental friend on the planet.

Unprecedented numbers of people suddenly wanted a dog and every dog shelter, pound, animal rescue organisation in the country was bombarded with calls for a dog.

When all these organisations were totally emptied people turned to breeders.

Unscrupulous breeders asked for astronomical amounts for puppies and people paid what they were asked to pay.

Many dogs landed on their feet in loving caring homes where they became part of the home and family. Unfortunately and very sadly many many more did not.

In 2022 as people gradually returned to normal life they found that the “must have” dog from a year or two ago was no longer needed, wanted or appreciated. In fact many dogs found themselves in “the way”. We in the OSPCA always strive to help as many animals as we possibly can and we faced the dog crisis that began during 2022 with the utmost focus and determination.

Thanks

We in the OSPCA would like to record our thanks to everyone who helped in during 2022. Special words of thanks to our dedicated committee members who have been volunteering for more years than we care to remember and of course their families who are constantly by their side ready and waiting to help too.

We would also like to thank the following:

- The Department of Food Agriculture and the Marine for their generous funding;
- The Veterinary practitioners in Offaly who continue to support us year on year;
- The public who always rally around when we need them;
- Tom Stokes for leasing the office to us at a favourable rate;
- And last but not least THANK YOU to our volunteers, we could not continue to carry out our work without you.

Financial Report 2022; Treasurer Colette Coates Reports:

In financial terms Offaly Spca began the year 2022 in a healthy position. The Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine awarded Ospca a greatly appreciated animal welfare grant of €25,500 in December 2021 to be used for animal welfare needs and benefits in 2022 in the Offaly area.

This amount, coupled with a credit balance from 2021 and general generous donations from the public through PayPal, Facebook, Direct Debits, donations through our office and several fundraising efforts enabled us to continue the voluntary work of animal care and welfare throughout 2022 without the added stresses of financial hardship.

Careful and continuous monitoring and management of our finances helps to maintain a healthy financial position enabling us to continue benefiting animals in Offaly.

Our financial figures show that our greatest expenses are, as always, our veterinary fees, as should be the case. It is with the continuous help and support of the various dedicated veterinary practitioners that Offaly Spca makes such a difference to the lives of animals in greatest need of help.

Our aims, objectives, mission and mantra has for many many years been, NEUTER, NEUTER, NEUTER, to try to reduce the numbers of unwanted litters of animals particularly kittens.

While huge amounts of neuterings are being carried out, unfortunately it simply is not enough. Until there is a greater awareness of the need to neuter to PREVENT the problem BEFORE it begins rather than AFTERWARDS when there are large numbers of unwanted litters, the problems will continue.

We have been so lucky over the years to receive fantastic financial support from the people of Offaly and for this we are eternally grateful. We continue to strive to get the best deals for anything we need to purchase and therefore keep our costs at a minimum. All our volunteers continue to help without receiving a penny, and work tirelessly for the sake of the animals. I feel very proud to work alongside these wonderful people year after year.

We would also like to offer our enormous thanks to Mr. Tom Stokes who lets us rent our little office in Market place, Tullamore at a very favourable rate, having this wonderful space is invaluable to the work of the Offaly S.P.C.A.

Colette Coates.

Treasurer

OFFFALY SOCIETY FOR THE PREVENTION OF CRUELTY TO ANIMALS LT

Financial Accounts for the year ended 31st December 2022

	<u>2022</u>	<u>INCOME</u>		<u>2022</u>
<u>EXPENDITURE</u>				
Veterinary Fees(neuter&spay)	€41,741.53	Collection Boxes		€ 1,630.00
Veterinary Fees(general)	€10,873.31	Church gate collections		€ 2,176.00
Maintenance cost of animals	€4,120.96	Dog Adoptions		€ 4,980.00
Fundraising costs(calendars, badges, tokens)	€ -	Cat Adoptions		€ 7,170.00
ISPCA Affiliation and insurance	€1,352.00	Dept of Agri Food And The Marine		€40,825.00
Telephone	€2,758.11	Donations From Schools		€ 545.00
Stationary & Postage	€ 260.88	D. Debit Donations		€ 240.00
Bank Charges	€ 554.71	General Donations		€ 6,158.43
A. G.M / Meeting Costs	€ -	Facebook Donations		€ 3,649.42
Accountancy Fees	€1,865.00	Cat Vouchers		€12,702.00
Water Rates	€ 114.17	Dog Vouchers		€ 1,540.00
Rent	€2,340.00	Christmas Raffle		€ 385.00
Electricity	€1,211.64	Micrichip Vouchers		€ 865.00
Recruitment expenses	€3,500.00	Paypal Donations		€ 3,060.92
		Corner Closet		€ 3,170.10
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	€70,692.31	TOTAL INCOME		€89,096.87
<u>PROFIT FOR YEAR</u>				€18,404.56