



York & Harrogate Branch Annual General Meeting Minutes

Date 24th June 2025 Online

Attendees

Name	Member or Guest
Barbara Boyce	Member
David Hardwick	Member
Graham Collett	Member
Jonathan Latham	Member
Sandra Cole	Member
Pete Duggan	Member
Peter Gorbert	Guest
Ruth Bentley	Guest
Andrea Dryburgh	Member
Alice Barker	Member

Agenda

Meeting started at 18:01.

1. Apologies for Absence

Wendy Hogg, Nikki Payne, Alan Baker, Susie Forster.

2. Minutes of Previous AGM 2024

Jonathan Latham proposed accepting the minutes. Alice Barker seconded, these were passed unanimously.

3. Matters Arising

None.

4. Report from Branch Committee

Jonathan Latham provided a report on the actions of the charity in 2024.

Objectives and Public Benefit

Jonathan reminded the meeting of the purpose of the Charity, which is to prioritise animal welfare in alignment with the national RSPCA society, focusing on animals rescued by the Inspectorate to reduce suffering and promote humane values.

Animal Welfare and Rehoming

In 2024, 244 animals were rehomed (70 dogs, 117 cats, 57 small animals).

Rehoming remains via online applications and appointments only. Legal case dogs which must remain with us until the conclusion of legal proceedings and the XL Bully ban limited available kennel space and rehoming options.

Rescue and Operational Challenges

Jonathan noted that a shift in national RSPCA policy has led to increased intake of complex cases, including animals with behavioural or health issues. Further guidance has led to us reducing the availability of space for small animals.

Facilities and Rebuild Planning

Urgent repairs were completed, including kennel roof work and tree felling. Planning for a full site rebuild (estimated £4m) continues but is delayed at planning application stage by floodplain constraints. The costs of the rebuild exceed our cash on hand and will require us to undertake a significant fundraising effort to complete the rebuild in full.

Financial Performance and Reserves

Rising costs have contributed to a projected £300k deficit in 2025. Trustees have committed £1m of reserves to the rebuild. The charity continues to rely on income from legacies to cover running costs.

Fundraising and Legacy Income

With no fundraising staff, local volunteer efforts remain crucial. Legacy income is key, with a policy change in 2024 to recognise it at probate notification, boosting reported income, but having nil effect on cash on hand..

Retail Performance

Retail income fell in 2024 due to economic conditions and staff shortages. This is reflective of wider trends in charity retail. York and Malton shops were particularly affected, though Malton is now improving. Gift Aid increased, but volunteer shortages continue to limit performance.

Volunteer Contributions

Volunteers are vital across operations and are central to our success. Recruitment and retention remain challenging. Corporate groups and individuals (Peter, Trevor, David Forster) provided notable practical support.

Governance and Trustee Oversight

Jonathan noted that the Trustee board has remained stable, while welcoming members with new skills supporting the rebuild. Progress continues toward becoming a CIO to modernise governance and reduce risk.

Outreach and Local Impact

The branch supports wider welfare through York's stray dog contract and surplus food redistribution. These efforts bolster community presence and animal welfare impact despite limited resources. As we look ahead we will adapt our services to meet growing needs within our limited resources.

5. Receiving Annual Report and Accounts

Peter Gorbett presented the draft annual report and accounts. Peter then took questions on them.

Graham Collett asked a question about Legacy income and how these were accounted for in the accounts. Peter Gorbett replied that legacies needed to be accrued in the year that we have been notified about them.

Graham Collett also asked why sundry income had fallen by £8,000 and why the costs of audit had increased to £7,600. The audit fees had increased as we had reached the £1,000,000 threshold for an audit rather than an independent examination. Peter agreed to review the sundry income and return to Graham with an update.

POST MEETING NOTE: The 2023 sundry income was made up of a £5,500 insurance claim and commissions from PetPlan from when an adopter signed up to the Pet plan insurance scheme. This income was not repeated in 2024.

Barbara Boyce asked if the increased costs of the audit related to changes in the audit rules, Peter confirmed that this was not directly attributable to the cost increase.

David Harwick added that trustees had asked for a list of notified legacies to be regularly shared and monitored at monthly trustee meetings.

Members approved the draft accounts.

6. Appointment of Auditor

David Hardwick proposed Barbera Boyce seconded the appointment of Brown Butler as the auditors.

Members approved the appointment of the Auditors.

7. Election of Branch Committee Members

Peter Gorbert ran the Election of the Branch Committee, this was ran by a online ballot.

After conclusion of the ballot Peter confirmed that all candidates were unanimously returned to the Trustee board.

8. Any Other Business

Alice Barker wished for a note of thanks to be added to the minutes for all staff and volunteers.

Meeting closed at 18:46.