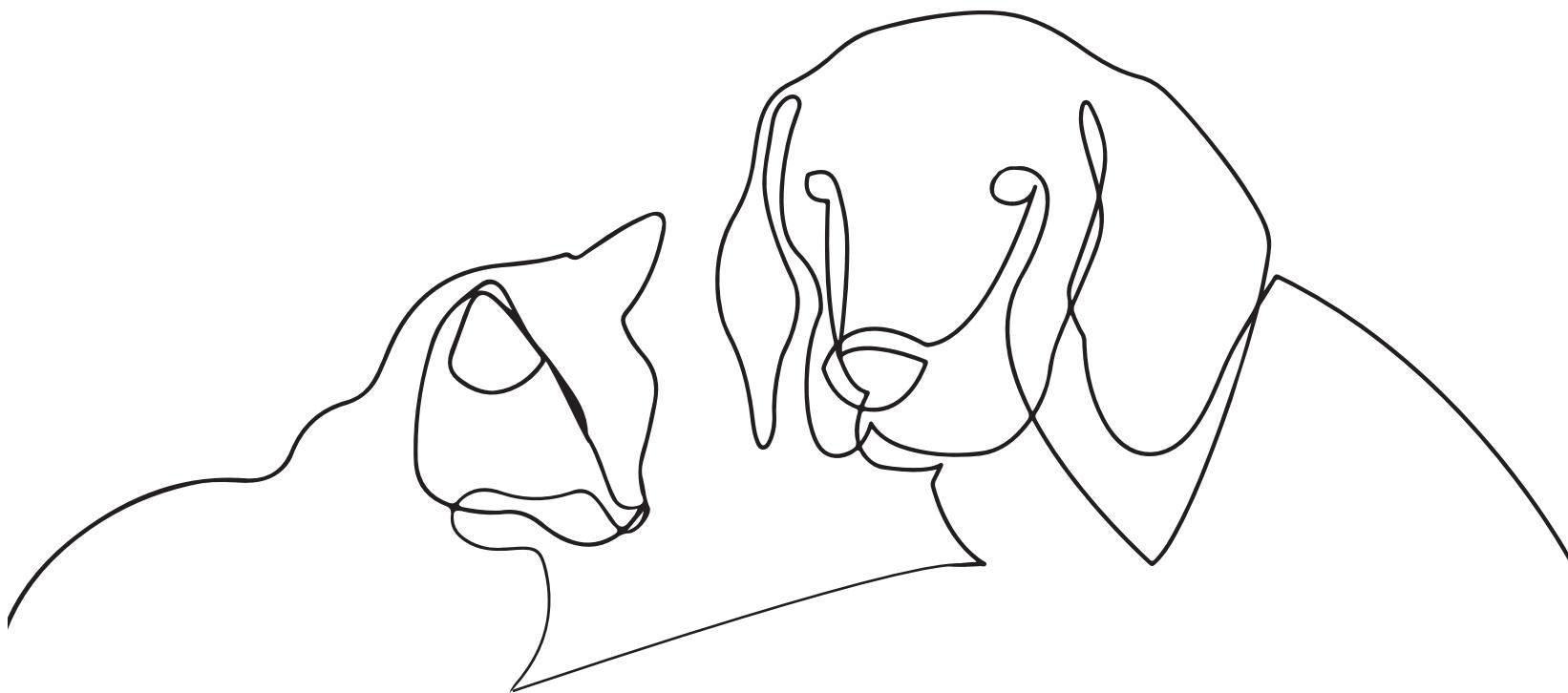




*together for
dogs + cats*



Strategic Plan

2020 - 2024

www.adch.org.uk



Welcome

CHAIR'S WELCOME

As we move into 2020 and ADCH's second formal Strategic Plan, we can look back over the past five years and celebrate what we have achieved together.

The focus of the next five years for ADCH is very much going to be on responding to and managing major sector change that will, without a doubt, affect us all. Recognising that ADCH has members across the UK, Ireland, Isle of Man and the Channel Islands, we will seek to ensure we are there to support all our colleagues over the coming years. With the promise of licensing and regulation for the rescue and rehoming sector on the horizon, a ban on Third Party sales in some of our jurisdictions and likely changes to pet travel, ADCH will be working with Governments and members to try and help rescues prepare for changes ahead. Meeting set Welfare Standards will be a requirement for those working in our sector, and so we will be ensuring that throughout the coming years ADCH will be reinforcing its commitment to helping and supporting rescue and rehoming organisations meet our Minimum Operational & Welfare Standards and pressing hard to secure those Standards as the preferred and/or recognised model of respective Governments.

The coming period will be a busy one for ADCH as we address the varying jurisdictional and legislative changes, but we will not be distracted from our other exciting growth and development plans and we remain committed to ensuring ADCH continues to deliver exceptional services to support our members in their vital work with animals. Three key Strategic threads form the basis of this:

(1) ANIMAL WELFARE AND STANDARDS: As always, our primary focus remains on improved standards of care for our animals and supporting new and existing members to meet the provision requirements and grow their own services and rescues, to be the best they can be with the resources they have.

We will be promoting ADCH, and therefore our members, in local communities across jurisdictions with a "Your Local Rescue" approach, cementing the Association as the formal, recognised voice of dog and cat welfare. We want to influence the public to make good decisions and choices when looking for a new pet or giving up an existing animal; we want to drive "Rescue is Best" and "Adopt Don't Shop" messages; and we want to ensure that the sector speaks with one voice, to showcase our members and their work across local communities, with ADCH becoming a Kitemark for excellence in dog and cat rescue and rehoming.

(2) MEMBER ENGAGEMENT: Engaging and supporting our members is why we are here. This Strategic thread focusses on developing stronger communication links and offerings for members. It seeks to build on our online platform 'ADCH Know-How' and facilitate access to other learning and networking opportunities, which we know from our members' feedback is most important to them.

(3) FINANCE, GOVERNANCE AND RISK: Ongoing robust and efficient financial, governance and risk management is a necessity for all organisations and ADCH is no different. With ever-increasing compliance and governance requirements, ADCH must ensure we have appropriate formal processes and policies in place and that our finances and operations remain legal, well-managed and that the Association is delivering value for our members.



ENABLERS

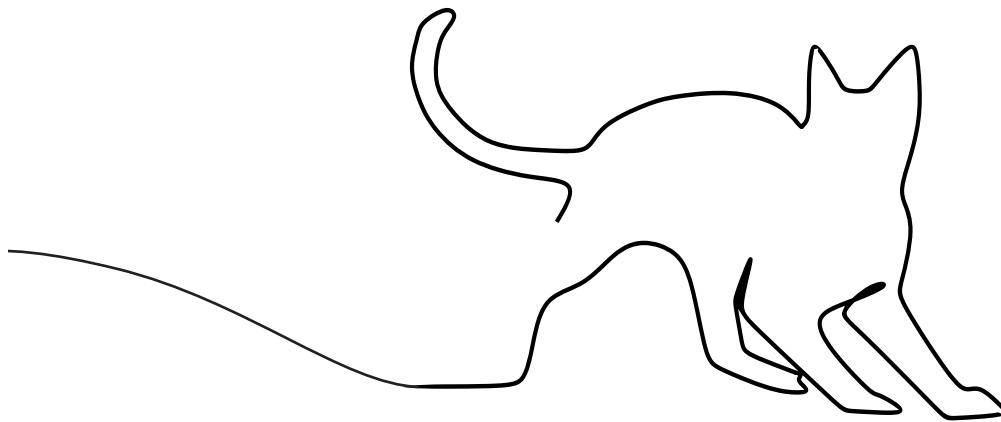
If we are to achieve any of our Strategic objectives we must invest in our people, technology and infrastructure or we will fall at the first hurdle.

We will therefore be replacing our very old and inadequate website, we will be acquiring a CRM system (that will manage much of our day-to-day activity), and we will be refreshing our Forum and Events and Conference booking systems to remove waste, duplication and masses of manual transactions that lose us so much time every week.

We will be employing two full-time members of staff, and this extra capacity will enable us to manage the heavy workload and allow our teams to deliver much greater value through improved systems.

ADCH's extensive geographical reach and unique mix of both large and small organisations provides the capacity and the ability to truly make a direct or indirect difference, not just for the animals that come into our care but to those millions of animals we will never see but who need us just as badly.

**CLAIRE HORTON
CHAIR**



VISION, MISSION, VALUES

VISION

Where dogs and cats are free from abuse, neglect and abandonment, and where people recognise the joy that giving a rescue animal a second chance of a happy life and a new home can bring.

MISSION

To improve the lives of dogs and cats by creating a welfare sector that rescues and rehomes to high standards, giving every lost, abandoned and unwanted dog and cat the care they deserve and the chance of a happy life.

OUR VALUES

ADCH is committed to being:

COLLABORATIVE

Sharing knowledge for excellence

RESPECTFUL

Of animals and people

SUPPORTIVE

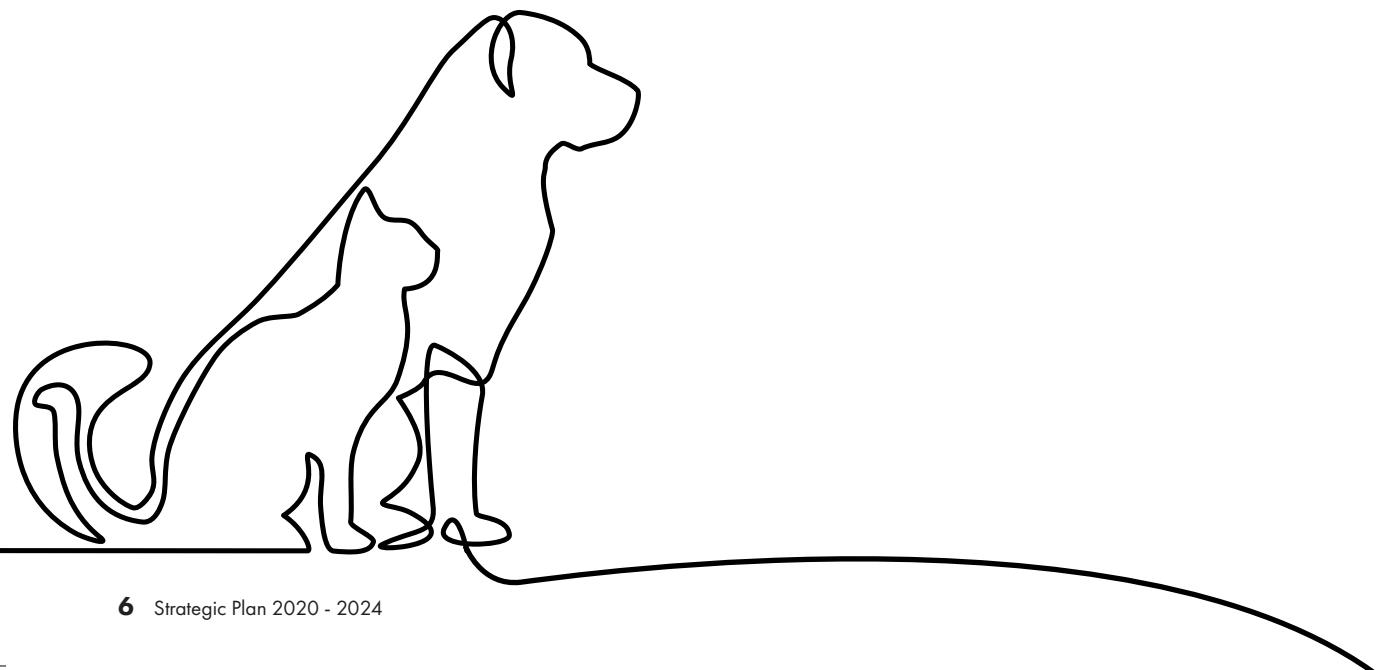
Helping members to grow and develop

INCLUSIVE

Together for dogs, cats and people too

PROACTIVE

Tackling issues, facilitating solutions



VALUE	INTERNAL		EXTERNAL
	for our members and their animals	for public benefit and all animals	
COLLABORATIVE	'Sharing knowledge for excellence'	We will work together, sharing good practice, exchanging knowledge and improving standards.	As champions for animals, we push hard for welfare reforms and educate widely on the joys and responsibilities of owning and caring appropriately for dogs and cats.
RESPECTFUL	'Of animals and people'	We treat all animals and people with dignity and respect.	We respect the people who seek our help and treat everyone we work with through our community endeavours with honesty and consideration.
INCLUSIVE	'Together for dogs, cats and people too'	Our members are the heart of our organisation, we help and engage them in all we do to become a stronger and better Association.	We work with partners, colleagues, communities and the wider public to help everyone contribute to improving the lives of dogs, cats and the people who they touch.
SUPPORTIVE	'Helping members to grow and develop'.	We exchange information and provide mutual support, share development initiatives to help make us better at what we do.	We encourage the public to visit ADCH rescue and rehoming centres first when looking for a new dog or cat.
PROACTIVE	'Tackling issues, facilitating solutions'.	We focus on the issues which impact on our members and which we can tackle together to achieve sustainable solutions/ economies of scale.	We tackle animal welfare issues at source and work with partners and other stakeholders to facilitate solutions.

ADCH STRATEGIC PLAN 2020 - 2024

THREE STRATEGIC PILLARS

ANIMAL WELFARE AND STANDARDS

Changing Legislation

Work with relevant Governments/Devolved Administrations to create guidance, engage sectors and convey accurate and measured messaging in the event of compulsory licensing.

Remain forward-looking through scenario planning for future impact on ADCH of changing face of sector, including exploring UKAS Accreditation for the Standards.

Retain our commitment to ensure our members receive regular updates on changing legislation and wider welfare challenges affecting our sector and its activities.

Minimum Standards Compliance

Ongoing rollout and review of Minimum Standards.

Ensure robust Standards Assessment and Compliance including developing sanctions.

Scope and plan upscaling and capacity-building in all Minimum Standards management activities, to facilitate smooth growth and member support and engagement.

ADCH as a Voice for Change

Position ourselves as the key voice of the wider rescue sector, able to comment authoritatively on changing welfare issues, trends and challenges, to a multitude of stakeholders.

Secure and collate member animal data through the Annual Member Return, to enable the Association to present credible, important, evidence-based input and advice to Governments, the media and other key stakeholders on the state of the sector and the biggest issues affecting it.

MEMBER ENGAGEMENT

Communications Programme

Develop and implement a communications programme to:

- effectively communicate with members
- enable members to promote themselves and ADCH with their local communities
- promote ADCH as the sector-leading organisation and an authority on welfare issues.

Member Benefits

Develop and implement a range of member benefits that retains existing members and attracts new members.

This includes:

- supplier benefits and a directory
- access to sector and non-sector experts
- ADCH Know-How
- a more user-friendly and engaging Forum
- workshops and webinars
- increased collaboration.

Member Recruitment and Retention

Develop and roll out a membership recruitment campaign, mindful of the impact of increased membership on the ADCH support infrastructure and taking account of the potential impact of mandatory licensing.

Develop a new member Welcome Pack to help newcomers understand ADCH and how we work

Member Engagement

Research how members want to engage with ADCH and seek to provide opportunities for all members of all sizes and locations to come together.

ENABLERS: to build capacity and support the delivery of the strategic objectives

Technology

- New Website
- New CRM system
- New Conference system
- Robust Minimum Standards Auditing System

People

- Ensure we attract and retain the very best staff to enable the smooth and efficient running of the Association.

FINANCE, GOVERNANCE AND RISK

Legal/Governance

Complete changes from Unincorporated to CIO:
all necessary policies/procedures put in place.

Full Governance Framework and legal, sector and regulators
compliance requirements to be met.

GDPR compliance and all data management requirements
to be in place with secure systems and storage.

Ensure a balanced and multi-skilled Board of Trustees
is in place to deliver oversight, strategic direction and
service delivery.

Appoint Trustee sub-committees and working groups to
include, as necessary, co-opted members with key skills to
deliver areas of organisational strategy.

Finance and Risk

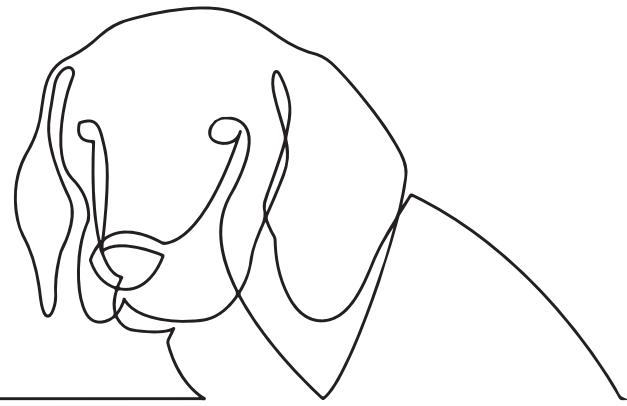
Identify risks to charity, mitigate and manage.

Establish and maintain a financial planning model for a
sustainable future, keeping membership fees at an appropriate
level. Explore funding sources and growth opportunities.

Ensure that our financial control is underpinned by
comprehensive and up-to-date Standard Operating
Procedures and robust controls.

Finance & Sustainability

- Develop a long-term fundraising strategy
- Identify new funding and income streams



STRATEGIC AIM 1 - ANIMAL WELFARE AND STANDARDS

RAISE AND IMPROVE ANIMAL STANDARDS TO MEET SELF OR STATUTORY REGULATION

Whatever our individual intake policies, it is vital that dogs and cats coming into our centres receive the necessary health and veterinary attention, are housed in facilities that meet their welfare needs, comply with the ADCH's Minimum Operational & Welfare Standards, and are cared for and enriched in a manner that works to current best practice and recognises that different animals require different things. There is no one-size-fits-all way to manage the needs of every dog or cat.

ADCH members, regardless of whether they are a large, nationally-recognised charity with multiple sites and services, a small to medium-sized organisation with perhaps one or two sites, or a smaller volunteer-run establishment working from a single site or multiple foster homes, all face similar resource and people challenges. The issue of income affects us all regardless of size. We each seek to manage increasing numbers of calls for help, whilst balancing our intake numbers to ensure we can give every animal we take the best opportunity of a successful and happy outcome.

ADCH's overarching aim, both individually and collectively, is to raise the standards of animal welfare across the sector whilst rescuing, reuniting, rehabilitating and rehoming as many lost, abandoned, unwanted and neglected dogs and cats in need as we are responsibly able to, within each member's capability and resource.

Changing Legislation, Implications and ADCH Member Support

Governments in Scotland and Ireland have announced they will be introducing a system of regulation of rescue centres and shelters by 2021. England and Wales are also looking at ways to improve standards in rescues such as licensing. This has key advantages and challenges for ADCH in that ADCH members could be considered a lower risk for licensing which in turn could drive up membership of ADCH. We will ensure ADCH Minimum Standards remain robustly audited for members, so preserving ADCH as the recognised standard.

ADCH has a key role to ensure that all existing members continue to meet these Standards and to ensure new members can meet the Standards. At the commencement of this Plan in January 2020, current ADCH members have all been self or independently audited, giving us a solid base from which to build.

A Third-Party Sales ban will come into effect in England, Wales and possibly Scotland in 2020. In addition, the UK and Ireland will be faced with the continuing fallout from Brexit, including agreeing the UK's withdrawal and a new EU-UK Free Trade Agreement - this may well see changes in the way pets are transported across borders. Whilst the details are not yet clear as to the potential impact of such changes, ADCH expects that we will see a sudden rush for new members joining due both to the new licensing conditions and Third-Party bans resulting in potentially large numbers of dogs being abandoned by those breeders who do not wish to deliver high welfare standards and for too long have hidden behind the cloak of unscrupulous dealers and Third-Party sellers.

Our systems and processes must be robust enough to accommodate the additional, potential sharp and rapid rise in member applications that may result from legislative changes and our resources for dealing with this, including finances and people, needs to be secured and sustained. We will therefore conduct ongoing scenario planning to assess our readiness for changes in the law and build long-term financial plans to underpin their delivery.

Working in conjunction with the UK Government and Devolved Administrations, we will assess the necessity, cost and opportunity of seeking UKAS Accreditation for our Minimum Standards to ensure that in the event of Licensing of Rescues coming into force, ADCH's Standards and assessment model offer sufficient reassurance to Local Authorities for our members to be rated as low risk. The right UKAS Accreditation can cover all our member jurisdictions.

ADCH is of a size and level now that we must agree policy positions on various key welfare questions. A number of these questions include, for example, a position on the importation of dogs from abroad, the illegal importation and trade in dogs and cats and, as such, we will be discussing and working with members to define our position. This may further be complicated by changes to the Pet Travel Regulations (PETS) or the changing disease status of the UK in respect of the likely arrival of hitherto non-endemic diseases.

The Sector's greatest Dataset working for all of us

The data that we obtain through our Member Annual Return is now regularly used to disseminate to our members any trends, opportunities and threats and to utilise in proactive media and Government communications. The Annual Return has become such an important sector dataset that the Association has made it a mandatory requirement of membership, and we are very much aware of the fact of how holding such information centrally not only allows us to keep members informed of changing trends but positions ADCH as the formal sector recognised expert on dog and cat welfare issues. Perhaps, for the first time too, it now gives those members managing small and medium-sized rescues a much stronger presence, a direct understanding and connection to wider sector issues affecting all of us and, importantly, a voice in influencing major change. As part of a new CRM and website system due during 2020, we will be seeking to automate the Annual Return process, to make it swifter and easier than ever for our members to complete and submit.

STRATEGIC AIM 1 – ANIMAL WELFARE AND STANDARDS – outcomes by the end of 2024

We will have:

- Ensured any statutory or non-statutory regime for rescues, rehoming centres and sanctuaries acknowledges the role of ADCH, ideally by reducing the level of risk for ADCH members.
- Explored the need, risk and benefits of bringing in UKAS Accreditation for ADCH Minimum Standards model and processes and implemented actions accordingly.
- Reviewed the situation in Scotland and Ireland, the two UK countries that will bring in licensing in the next two years and made provision accordingly.
- Actively promoted ADCH as the membership organisation to join once licensing is announced.
- Ensured our Standards and assessments are robust and embedded to make sure welfare standards are maintained and reached.
- Ensured we have sufficient experienced and trained assessors to manage any surge in new member applications.
- Conducted ongoing scenario planning exercises to ensure that any changes in legislation and regulation are robustly planned for and resourced.
- Assessed the impact of licensing in Jersey, the only country to currently have a managed system.
- Worked with and supported Local Authorities post-licensing to reduce and redirect their inspection and enforcement workload.
- Secured access to ongoing training and development tools, particularly through 'ADCH Know-How' and learning providers, to support members in acquiring and uplifting skills and expertise across multiple areas of operations, charity management, Governance and Risk.
- Agreed policy positions on key sector welfare issues affecting dogs and cats.
- Built on our existing "Major Incident Protocol" to agree contingency plans should large-scale abandonment of breeding stock occur when a ban on Third-Party Sales becomes Law in some of our member jurisdictions.

STRATEGIC AIM 2 – MEMBER ENGAGEMENT

DELIVER AN ONGOING AND GROWING RANGE OF MEMBER SERVICES WITH INCREASED SUPPORT AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR NETWORKING, LEARNING AND COLLABORATING IN A COST-EFFECTIVE AND EFFICIENT WAY

At the commencement of this Plan, ADCH has 150 members. Mandatory licensing could see this double or triple in the next strategic period. If we are to sustain a good ongoing service to members and ensure the highest standards of welfare are delivered in rescues across the sector, such growth will need to be managed strategically and sustainably.

The more members we see joining the Association, the better the sector and the welfare of animals becomes. Together we are better for animals and therefore the more people that know about us and the range of mutually-supportive benefits we bring each other, the more new members will join and ultimately, the more animals we will all be able to help.

Supporting each other and ADCH to grow

One of the key moral responsibilities of ADCH as a body, and its members as individual welfare practitioners, is to promote the benefits of joining the Association to other rescue and rehoming groups and organisations that may currently be unaware of our existence and therefore the benefits they could get for themselves and their animals by joining.

2020 will see the start of an ongoing concerted recruitment drive aimed at bringing as many new members into the ADCH fold as possible. We will utilise a variety of methods including an incentivised 'Member Get Member' model to encourage current members to bring in other rescues.

Across the membership levels of expertise, the ability to access the latest learning and opportunities to share issues, challenges, ideas and discussions with colleagues from other organisations, can be limited depending on people, time, money and facilities available and so one of the primary objectives of this ADCH Strategic Plan over the next five years is to bring members even closer together, deliver opportunities to access courses and learning nearer to home and to create forums, perhaps regional groupings, where members can meet more frequently, get closer and better support one another.

The Association can regularly bring together large numbers of people working in the same sphere and hence this enables stakeholders working in complementary sectors, providers of services and suppliers of goods to meet their users, their audiences and their target markets easily and openly.

We have built up some excellent relationships with the veterinary world, behaviourists, and corporate suppliers over the years and many of these contacts have become almost as big a part of the fabric of ADCH as our members. These relationships are much valued as we all gain from them.

As such, ADCH will continue working closely with these and other potential partners to develop stronger and more far-reaching relationships to explore ways to create more value for members, more learning opportunities from these partnerships and ways to work differently with supporters, affiliates and suppliers. We will create a new category of Affiliate Member that enables like-minded and relevant people and organisations to join ADCH.

Our website is now hopelessly out of date. If we are to work more efficiently and ensure we can interact with visitors to our site, as well as members looking for information or Forum access, we must upgrade and replace it. The current manual Conference booking system is inefficient and loses us hundreds of hours a year in wasted time and duplication. Investment in a new website, CRM system and events booking system will be prioritised through 2020 and will deliver significant benefits, not least a better experience for members and visitors. An IT project group will oversee its delivery and members with experience in these areas are welcome to help.

STRATEGIC AIM 2 – MEMBER ENGAGEMENT

– outcomes by the end of 2024

We will have:

- Developed and delivered a new website allowing more interactive communication and content.
- Implemented a new CRM and a new integrated event booking system.
- Created a voice for ADCH members to Government, the media and other bodies or consultations as required.
- Promoted “Your Local Rescue” to the wider public through campaigns and/or the website, raising the profile of ADCH members within their local areas.
- Developed a strong programme of communications to members, uplifting the Forum, website and Newsletters.
- Increased member access to sector experts, suppliers and sponsors at meetings, Workshops and Conference.
- An annual Conference that delivers increasingly strong and high-impact content, including the best in new practices and techniques from experts across the UK and around the world.
- Regional Workshops on subjects of significant interest to be offered to members.
- Worked to enable relevant, regional events to be opened up/promoted to members.
- Built relationships with funders and sought grant opportunities for members.
- Continued to seek additional value and offerings to add to the package of member benefits to support continued growth and development.
- Worked to create member benefits that can assist our entire membership in the countries they are based.
- Developed a supplier’s catalogue/directory to enable members to access multiple suppliers to our sector.
- Worked with members to secure opportunities for involvement in wider sector activities or have a voice or a profile in large-scale media campaigns.
- Encouraged collaboration and partnership-working between members, being a conduit for creating and connecting groups as necessary.
- Increased membership year-on-year to capture at least 25% of the rescue and rehoming sector (c250 organisations) by 2024.
- Launched and rolled out an ongoing ‘Member Get Member’ recruitment drive.
- Provided access to networking events and training opportunities including training and information days put on by the major charity members, ADCH itself, or ADCH corporate partners.
- Further developed ‘ADCH Know-How’ to offer access to online training, Conference and Open Meeting sessions and content.
- Built a strong and open communications line to members to ensure everyone is kept abreast of the latest ADCH news and sector activities.
- Worked directly through our staff team with members to seek feedback, develop our services, understand member needs and wants and provide support where required.
- Created and built a tier of like-minded Values, aligned Affiliate members to join us at our events and meetings, and work collaboratively to create a better world for animals in achieving our Vision and Mission.

STRATEGIC AIM 3 – FINANCE, GOVERNANCE AND RISK

DELIVER A SUSTAINABLE AND THRIVING ORGANISATION, WITH GOOD AND DIVERSIFIED INCOME STREAMS. ENSURE LEGAL COMPLIANCE, RISK AND GOOD GOVERNANCE OF THE ASSOCIATION REMAIN AT THE FOREFRONT OF TRUSTEE CONSIDERATION

Sustainable Income

ADCH income, whilst being managed sustainably, has been restricted to the annual fees paid by members plus sponsorship and exhibitor income from the annual Conferences. Membership fees are now set at the size of each member organisation, giving a much better foundation and bringing us in line with other membership bodies. However, ADCH remains vulnerable to economic downturns and needs to diversify its income streams. Therefore other sources of new revenue will be explored such as developing our own fundraising activities including seeking grants to support ADCH's ongoing development. We will continue identifying corporate partners and other funding bodies who may wish to work in partnership with ADCH in new and innovative initiatives that provide funding streams to member organisations that can be awarded through a grant application process. In particular, we are seeking to identify partners who will join with us to develop a "Centre Improvement Fund", a fund dedicated to assisting members in their journeys towards meeting the Standards required in the Minimum Standards.

We will establish and maintain a financial planning model for a sustainable future, keeping membership fees at an appropriate level, making sure that at all times our financial controls are underpinned by comprehensive and up-to-date Standard Operating Procedures.

The Impact of New Regulation

Given the very significant legal and regulatory changes likely to affect the sector over the coming years, we must look seriously at what the possible future scenarios for ADCH in this new regulated world look like. With the potential for a surge of membership applications all coming at once, the risk exists that either ADCH cannot manage the large volume quickly enough, or our processes fail and applicants wishing to join are left waiting for backlogs to clear.

Governance and Risk Management

We must ensure that all our risks are highlighted, understood and mitigated. Having strong, competent and representative Trustees and sub-committees to oversee the running and financial well-being of the charity is essential. We will therefore ensure we operate to a robust and appropriate Governance Code, that our Trustees are transparently recruited, appropriately-skilled and fully-informed about their legal and fiduciary responsibilities. We will ensure our staff are supported, trained and highly-experienced and aware of their duties and responsibilities. We will put in place a strong and robust set of policies and procedures for all our key activities.

We will ensure we have compliant GDPR/data handling and management policies and protocols in place, that our Trustees regularly review our Governance and Board effectiveness.

Our small staff team is constantly busy and often very stretched and therefore we will take time to ensure we are supporting them with the necessary resource and assistance to do their jobs well whilst still maintaining high levels of contact with members.

Finally, we must be conscious that this next Strategic period is going to require considerable capacity-building and we must not shy away from addressing our income and fundraising challenges whilst continuing to serve our members with increasing and improved services and opportunities. It is essential that ADCH invests in its future, its infrastructure, its long-term sustainability and income generation and its people.

STRATEGIC AIM 3 – FINANCE, GOVERNANCE AND RISK

– outcomes by the end of 2024

We will have:

- Created and be working to a robust Governance Code, adopted protocols and procedures that ensure the effective running of the charity and we will ensure our Trustees and staff are transparently recruited, appropriately-skilled, trained and supported.
- Developed and be working to a long-term financial plan that includes fundraising and income derived for a range of new and existing activities and potential funders, and that secures long-term and sustainable funding to support the continued growth of ADCH and its members.
- Kept members informed and updated of the financial position of the Association through financial reports to Open Meetings and the Annual General Meeting.
- Built reserves in line with our published Reserves Policy through effective budget planning and monitoring.
- Ensured we met the goals and objectives of our Strategic Plan 2020-2024 and reported back on progress regularly to members.
- At all times, reminded ourselves why we are here and what and who we are here for.

Amazing things are borne out of hard work and the commitment and determination of exceptional people who come together, to work for a better world.

Our world is the community of ADCH, our world is about giving second chances to animals that someone else didn't want or couldn't keep.
We are their last chance and often their only hope.

We do this by working proactively together, sharing information, guiding, coaching, supporting and collaborating.

BETTER TOGETHER FOR DOGS AND CATS

together for dogs and cats



ADCH

Association of Dogs and Cats Homes