

Cleveland Hedgehog Preservation Society Annual Report for 2014

Again I'm going to combine the hedgehog figures article with the end of year report. So here goes.

Numbers first. This year we received data from 9 carers compared to 12 last year, which isn't a good thing as we could do with more carers and not less, although I'm convinced that not everyone that cared for hedgehogs sent me their figures.

We cared for 406 hedgehogs during the year compared with 335 in 2013, which means that our fewer carers had to work a lot harder. Of the 3 main carers, 1 took over 50 and the other 2 took over 120 hedgehogs each.

As usual there were more males (53%) than females (46%), as I've mentioned before the percentages don't always add up as not everyone keeps detailed records and we have to do some estimations based on known figures to fill in the gaps. The busiest month of 2014 was August (71 hogs) compared to July (149) last year and there was almost double the 2013 amount brought in during the autumn and early winter months.

Of all the new arrivals, 73 (18%) were classed as babies (under 100 grams) which is a similar percentage to 2013 (64 hogs, 19%). We over wintered 51 hedgehogs (13%) compared to 57 hedgehogs (17%) in 2013.

There's always a sad bit, which is that we lost 143 (35%) patients that were either too far gone to save or had to be put to sleep by a vet due to their injuries, this compares with 121 (36%) in 2013. The good thing here is that without our intervention this would have been a great deal higher and a lot of animals were saved from certain death in the process.

To finish the figures on a high note, we released 251 (62%) hedgehogs back into the wild to continue what we hope is a long and healthy life, without the help of our carers and society members these prickly beasties might not be with us now.

And now for the rest of the news.

We've continued to spread the word of hedgehog care and have done several talks throughout the region including libraries, schools and youth groups. We now charge £10 to give a presentation but this doesn't seem to put people off and we already have requests to do more this summer. Well done to Briony and Marilyn for having the courage to do this, I know it's not easy.

Our finances have improved slightly, but not much, only a couple of hundred pounds. At the end of our financial year we had just over £4500 in the bank and we suspect the reason for our slight upturn is the increase in memberships to £10.

In the last annual report I mentioned a sponsorship deal, we were sponsored by 1st Kirklevington Scouts to the tune of £50 which we were presented with in March, they have promised to support next year as well which is great news for us.

Just a few facts and figures, our Facebook numbers have increased from 105 to 175 in the past year. It's good to see that when someone asks a hedgehog question on Facebook that there are normally a few replies quite quickly, all good news for hedgehogs in trouble. There's also a link on the Facebook page to our own website where you can make a donation, this has proved quite popular and several people that have asked for help have gone on to make a donation via PayPal. Every little helps, to quote Tesco.

Membership numbers are down from 96 last year to 85, this may be due to the increase in fees but it normally hovers around the 85 mark so I'm not worried.

Of the 85 members 41 people receive their newsletter by email. This represents a great saving to the society in photocopying, envelopes and postage so if you don't get your newsletter by email and you want to just let me know.

In last year's annual report I made a plea for sponsorship and help with supplies, sadly I have to say that we received no offers of help at all so I'm making the same appeal again. Do you work for a firm that would offer a local charity a sponsorship? We are a registered charity and can offer advertising on our web site and in our newsletter as well as photo opportunities with the odd hedgehog. If you can find a supportive boss, manager or director then please get in touch for a chat. We can also use certain supplies if your firm can help us in that department such as kitchen roll, cat or dog food, envelopes and wood to build release boxes.

I would again like to sum up by thanking everyone for their kind donations, both with membership renewals and on their own; we could not manage without you. On the donation theme I would again like to congratulate Yvonne for being awarded a donation from the Hawsker Dog Club for the sixth year in a row, and of course a big thanks to the dog club for their continued generosity.

Chris Firth
Chairman
Cleveland Hedgehog Preservation Society.