

Cleveland Hedgehog Preservation Society Annual Report for 2015

Welcome to this year's annual report and collation of hedgehog figures for 2015.

Last year we took in and looked after 347 hedgehogs which is a drop from the 406 taken in the year before, this is to be expected (but not welcomed) due to the continuing decrease in hedgehogs in the UK. Our figures are compiled from data gathered from 11 people which is 2 more than last year, the greatest number of hedgehogs being 148 taken in by Briony. Thank you all for your help and for providing your data for me to work with.

We released 239 (69%) of these hedgehogs back into the wild which is a slight rise on last year's 62%. We had 61 (18%) babies, 149 (57%) males and 111 (43%) females. Slightly more males this year but the same percentage of babies as last year. I know the figures don't quite add up but not everyone manages to check the sex of their charges and I just have to work with what I've got. With us having such a mild winter we only overwintered 18 hogs (5%) compared with 51 (13%) last year, these have all now been released into the wild.

Sadly we lost 78 (22%) of our casualties but that is an improvement on the 35% last year, sometimes there is nothing that can be done as we get the poor little beasties too late or their injuries are just too great.

Our busiest month was August as usual with 59 arrivals and the quietest was February with just 4, we took in hedgehogs every month of the year.

And now for the rest of the news. We've started taking membership payments over the Internet via PayPal and, although PayPal sting us for commission, we think this is a good method as people can do it without the hassle of writing a cheque and having to post it. So far the idea is proving popular.

As usual we did several presentations last year at libraries, schools, local WI and even Whitby naturalist society. These all proved popular and although we've started charging for our services we still keep getting asked.

Sadly 2 of our longest serving members left us last year. Joyce Kaiser has been taking hedgehogs for over 25 years and has decided it's time to retire although she's still happy to receive phone calls asking for advice, I would like thank Joyce for all her caring over the years. Dave Henderson has also left us, Dave has been our treasurer since the society was

formed back in 1992 and has steadfastly managed our accounts over the years, I would also like to thank Dave for his service and hard work.

I would like to formally welcome Jill Ewan who has taken over the role of treasurer, Jill joined the society in 1993 and has fitted into the committee very well since taking over from Dave.

I think most people are aware of Jacqui Patersons vets who have a specialist wildlife unit on Preston Farm, I would like to thank Jacque for their kind donation of supplies and all of their help during 2015.

We also received 30 blankets for hedgehogs from 'The all in one' company last year, this was done with a flourish of publicity and stories appearing in some of the local papers, a big thank you to "The all in one company".

A few facts and figures, our current members = 88 (up from 85 last year) of which 46 receive newsletters by email which is a massive saving on postage. If you're not receiving your emailed newsletter (or you're not sure if you should have had one) please get in touch. We have 225 Facebook members which is fast becoming a good source of knowledge and a lot of peoples first line of help when they find poorly hedgehogs.

This last year saw "The day of the hedgehog" which was organised by BHPS and the Peoples Trust for Endangered Species. Our very own Jill Ewan attended and we bought a set of DVD's as a record of all the discussions and presentations from the day (let me know if you want to watch these). One of the things to come out of the day was that studies show it's good to release hogs in different places to where they were found to mix up the gene pool. So if you bring us a hedgehog you may not get the same one back - which is officially a good thing.

I would like to sum up as usual by thanking everyone for their kind donations, both with membership renewals and on their own; we couldn't manage without you. On the donation theme I would again like to congratulate Yvonne for being awarded a donation of £60 from the Hawsker Dog Club for the seventh 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.