

Annual Report 2023

Working Together to
Give Animals a Voice





Our Vision

Our vision is that animals in New Brunswick will live free of abuse, neglect, abandonment and indifference and that society will value and treat animals with respect.



Our Mission

We exist to provide province-wide leadership in the humane treatment of animals, enforcement of relevant legislation, public education and advocacy, and to ensure shelter for neglected or abused animals.

Looking back at 2023:



4,000+ calls received

2,912 animal protection calls
(2,705 public complaints +
207 dog breeding kennel inspections)

1,200 animal control calls



600+ domestic animals removed from unsafe situations

19 agricultural animals removed from unsafe situations



\$1.8M in annual operating costs



266 pet establishment licences issued

- Dog breeders: **207**
- Boarding kennels: **41**
- Pet stores: **5**
- Animal shelters: **13**



15 field animal protection officer positions established across the province

Board of Directors

Scott Elliott, President

Dan Greene, Director

Norma McCarthy, Vice President

Rose St-Pierre, Director

Robert Hunt, Past President

Ginette Savoie, Director

Gordon Perry, Secretary

Angie Kelly, Director

Chris Bertin, Treasurer

Elizabeth Hale, Director/
NB Veterinary Medical
Association representative

Chris Pelkey, Director



Message from the President

I am pleased to introduce the NBSPCA's 2023 annual report, highlighting our organization's growth over the past year, while also sharing some of the challenges we continue to face.

I am very proud to announce the creation of the Happy Tails Fund to support increased access to veterinary care for low-income New Brunswickers. We are incredibly grateful to our generous donors and their ongoing support of the NBSPCA's vital work.

As the demand for animal protection services increases, the NBSPCA has evolved and sought out additional resources. In December 2022, we were grateful to receive a one-time funding grant from the provincial Department of Environment and Local Government, and a much-needed increase in annual funding for animal protection services from \$100,000 to \$600,000, for 2023.

Over the course of 2023, the NBSPCA worked to increase our social media presence to promote public awareness and education on animal welfare issues, share stories about strong partnerships with animal shelters across the province and highlight ongoing efforts to enforce animal protection legislation.

I would like to thank the rest of the Board, as well as the NBSPCA staff for their resilience, passion and dedication. I look forward to all that we will accomplish together in 2024.



Scott Elliott

President, Board of Directors



Message from the Executive Director

The NBSPCA had an extremely busy year in 2023 due to the continued increase in animal cruelty complaints, which have risen by 27 per cent since 2020. NBSPCA animal protection officers removed more than 600 domestic animals from unsafe situations due to abuse, neglect, lack of medical care or abandonment and ensured they received veterinary assessment and treatment.

Thanks to additional funding from the Government of New Brunswick, the NBSPCA signed comprehensive funding agreements with 11 licensed animal shelters, including payments for vaccination costs, enhanced boarding rates and a transfer fee. This ensures a safe space for animals in the care of the NBSPCA to recover and find their future fur-ever home.

I'm very pleased to share that the NBSPCA has taken the first step towards expanding our cruelty prevention efforts, in addition to ongoing public education efforts, through our new Happy Tails program, dedicated to expanding access to low-cost spay and neuter programs in under-served communities provincewide.

We are grateful for our veterinary partners, Stoneybrook Veterinary Hospital, Quispamsis Urgent Care, Moncton Urgent Care and Woodstock Veterinary Services, for stepping forward to participate in our initial pilot phase. These efforts would not have been possible without the dedicated support of the Oromocto SPCA and the People for Animal Well-being (PAW) in Moncton. The **P** in **NBSPCA** is for **Prevention**, and we look forward to developing new cruelty prevention initiatives going forward.

I am also proud of our dedicated and highly skilled animal protection team, who have successfully met the increasing demand for animal protection services and have dealt with some exceptionally difficult cases this year.

Finally, I am grateful to our supporters, partners, the Department of Environment and Local Government who worked closely with our dedicated team to support the welfare of animals in New Brunswick in 2023.



Lesley Rogers

Executive Director



Chief Animal Officer Report

In 2023, the NBSPCA recorded more than 4,000 calls, including 2,705 animal protection calls and 1,200 animal control calls. Animal welfare and animal control calls have increased steadily over the past five years – in 2023, we recorded the highest amount since 2017; 2024 is shaping up to be even busier!

The highest volume of types of calls received in 2023 included:

- 🐾 abuse, malnourishment, unsanitary conditions or inadequate food, water or shelter (1,143)
- 🐾 abandonment (365)
- 🐾 injury, illness or inadequate medical care (278)
- 🐾 dog left in a car (273)

Of particular concern is the continued increase in complaints regarding serious animal welfare issues, including abuse, inadequate food, water and/or shelter, as well as injured animals or those in need of medical care. These serious calls, where animals are at the highest risk, have increased by 62 per cent since 2020. This is also reflected in the increase of the NBSPCA's expenditures on Veterinary Care which have increased to over \$150,000 in 2023 from less than \$50,000 in 2020.

In 2023 there were 1,421 complaints concerning serious animal welfare issues which accounted for 52 per cent of all animal welfare complaints that year.

Our team of animal protection officers investigated several major cases involving agricultural animals, resulting in the seizure of horses that were in poor condition and were subsequently rehomed. Many of these animals required immediate medical care, so it was vital that our officers intervene quickly.

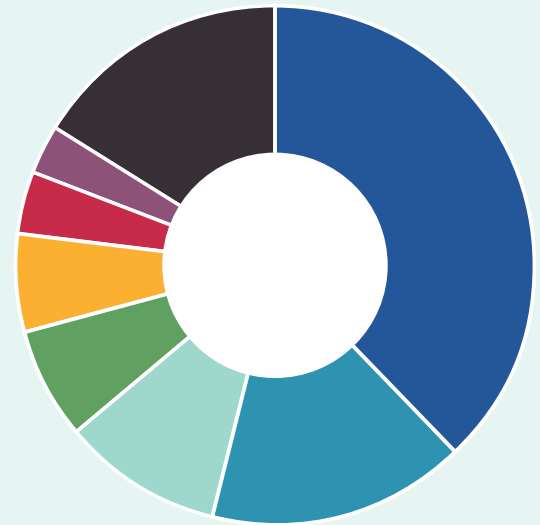
As a result of our officers' hard work, 25 files were sent for Crown review in 2023, including requests for 60 separate charge counts. These cases involved animal neglect and cruelty, including both provincial charges and Criminal Code charges, as well as dog control violations and violations involving pet establishments.

Of the 25 cases, 16 resulted in convictions and five are awaiting trials scheduled for later this year and into early 2025. Three of the cases didn't proceed to trial. Three of the cases account for 18 horses that were found deceased, and an additional nine horses that were seized due to severe neglect. These nine horses were all successfully rehabilitated and brought back to their normal healthy condition thanks to the tireless efforts and dedication of New Brunswick's horse community and provincial veterinarians.

I would like to thank our shelter partners, veterinarians, the provincial government and the NBSPCA Board of Directors for their support. I am especially grateful to our animal protection officers, who fight animal neglect and cruelty every day with professionalism, passion and commitment.

Tony Porter, Chief Animal Officer

Subjects of Animal Protection Calls



- 42% Inadequate food, water, shelter or care
- 10% Injured/need medical care
- 14% Locked in car
- 10% Abandoned
- 6% Tied up/tethered
- 2% Pet establishments
- 2% Deceased
- 14% Other





Five Horses Show Incredible Resiliency

In 2023, the NBSPCA investigated three cases involving horses in poor condition that resulted in criminal charges. The following is an update on one of those cases.

In early 2023, NBSPCA animal protection officers responded to a complaint regarding several dead horses. They found five horses that were alive but in extremely poor health – one was unable to stand. Numerous deceased horses were located nearby, ranging in age from newborn foals to adults.

During the initial investigation, the five living horses were assessed at the scene by provincial veterinarians before being removed from the property. During this process, it became clear that the horses were not socialized, and it took time to load them into trailers as they were not easily approachable.

Once they reached a safe location and began receiving proper care, the five horses were able to transition from their previously frail condition. They are now strong and healthy, living in their new forever homes.

By providing proper care, attention, food and water, animals can live a long and healthy life; they just need to have their basic needs met. Animals are resilient, and with intervention from organizations like the NBSPCA it's possible for them to bounce back. This is why it's so important to report cases of suspected neglect and abuse so an animal protection officer can investigate and intervene.

Support for Pets Impacted by Family Violence

Individuals looking for shelter from family violence in New Brunswick don't have to contemplate leaving a beloved pet behind while trying to escape from an abusive situation.

For the past 12 years, the NBSPCA has been a partner in the Safe for Pets Too (SFPT) program, providing temporary shelter and veterinary care for pets of victims who leave their homes due to domestic abuse.

The program ensures pets are fostered in a safe place for up to 30 days while their owner searches for pet-friendly housing. The program is supported by the NBSPCA, the New Brunswick Veterinary Medical Association, transition houses, family violence outreach, RCMP and municipal police, the Public Legal Education and Information Service of New Brunswick and others concerned about the welfare of people and animals.

The NBSPCA plays a vital role in supporting the SFPT program as animal protection officers transport the pets and ensure their whereabouts remain confidential. Participating veterinarians donate examinations as well as any vaccinations and parasite control needed before the pet is placed in their temporary foster care home.

If you are in an abusive relationship and want to know more about the SFPT program, please reach out to safeforpetstoo@gmail.com.



A New Life for Link

Link was chained up his whole life until the NBSPCA rescued him in 2022.

Following emergency surgery to remove the embedded chain in his neck, Link made a full recovery thanks to the loving care he received at the Bathurst SPCA. He was happily adopted after his recovery.

Link's former owners were charged under the New Brunswick SPCA Act for failing to provide food, water, shelter and medical care. They were found guilty on all charges and sentenced to 45 days in jail (to be served at home), fined \$500, ordered to pay restitution of \$821 and given a 20-year probation from owning animals.





Meet Norman: the NBSPCA's Cool Cat



Norman is a friendly feline who has become the unofficial greeter, guardian and morale booster for staff at the NBSPCA headquarters in Fredericton – a far cry from his previous plight as an abandoned pet in a vacant apartment.

“Everybody loves Norman,” says Lesley Rogers, NBSPCA executive director and Norman’s human assistant. “He keeps a close eye on all office activity and is friendly toward our two-legged visitors. But he does tend to be suspicious of any dogs that happen to visit our office.”



Support for Pet Owners

Unfortunately, Norman’s tale is a common one in New Brunswick. In 2023, the NBSPCA received 312 animal abandonment calls, an alarming 121 per cent increase over 2022. Due to issues such as changing housing situations, medical emergencies and other unforeseen circumstances, pet owners may find themselves unable to care for their pets. If you find yourself facing this situation, please seek assistance from a family member or reach out to your local animal shelter or rescue organization for support.

Many animal shelters offer programs to help pet owners during difficult financial times by providing pet food. Most shelters have policies on surrendering pets for rehoming and will provide help to ensure your pet is not left to fend for itself.



Happy Tails Improves Access to Vet Care

Thanks to the generous support of the estate of the late June Hooper and the financial contribution of the Government of New Brunswick, the NBSPCA has established a dedicated fund called Happy Tails to support low-income pet families with veterinary care.

The NBSPCA has a mandate to **Prevent** animal cruelty as well as enforce animal protection laws. Given the mounting economic pressures on pet families and the increased demand on the animal welfare sector provincewide, the NBSPCA has dedicated the initial sum of \$270,000 towards proactive animal cruelty prevention programs. Traditionally, NBSPCA efforts have focused on increased awareness and public education. However, increasingly, animal welfare organizations are moving to intervene early through targeted financial support to help loving pet families stay together and keep animals out of shelters.

The objectives of the program include:

- 🐾 Reduce the number of unwanted pets by improving access for low-income pet families to basic veterinary care such as spay and neuter, rabies shots and basic vaccines, and pest control.
- 🐾 Help keep low-income pet families together when faced with emergency or unexpected veterinary costs.

In 2023, the NBSPCA piloted initial efforts to provide low cost spay and neuter procedures for cats in the greater Saint John area through a partnership with Dr. Sara Pridham of Stoneybrook Veterinary Services and the Oromocto SPCA.

Since the initial clinic, the program has expanded to include four veterinary partnerships: Stoneybrook Veterinary Services, Quispamsis Urgent Care, Moncton Urgent Care and Woodstock Veterinary Clinic. So far, over 84 cats have been spayed or neutered with the help of this program.

The NBSPCA looks forward to connecting with additional veterinary clinics across New Brunswick to expand the Happy Tails program.

The organization will also be reaching out to the veterinary community and animal welfare stakeholders in 2024 to help develop an approach to support low-income pet families with emergency veterinary care, for launch later in 2024.



June Hooper's Legacy

The NBSPCA is grateful for the support from the estate of June Hooper, a lifelong animal lover, who passed away unexpectedly in 2022. June was always a devoted dog lover and had several dogs (and cats) at any one time. She became deeply involved in obedience training and competitions with her various dogs in the 1990s and was a lifelong advocate of positive reinforcement training. Over the years, June and her dogs titled in both Canadian and American Kennel Club competitions.

In 2011, she purchased a dog training school in Keswick Ridge and soon renamed it the Dog Clicker School. June loved the connection she gained not only with her own dogs through training but with the many dogs and handlers she mentored over the years. We are very grateful for the generous support of our donors like June!



Treasurer's Report

The financial statements (the “Statements”) of the NBSPCA (the “Society”) for the year ended December 31, 2023, were audited by Shannon and Buffet, LLP. Consistent with prior years, Shannon and Buffet has issued a qualified opinion on the financial statements which is common practice for charitable organizations. The qualification relates to the inability to obtain sufficient appropriate audit evidence supporting the completeness of donation revenues due to the nature of how such cash revenue is collected. With the exception of this qualification, Shannon and Buffet has provided their opinion that the financial statements, in all material respects, presents fairly the financial position of the Society.

The operating results included the following highlights:

- 🐾 Operating revenues for fiscal 2023 were \$2.2 million (2022 - \$1.3 million). The increase was mainly driven by the following:
 - An increase in government funding for enforcement by \$500,000.
 - The unrealized gain on the market value of investments was \$162,000 (2022 – a loss of \$427,000) due to improvements in equity markets in 2023 compared to 2022. Note that this amount is non-cash and driven by accounting rules, and that these long-term investments are still being held and any gains/losses remain unrealized.
 - A bequest for \$120,000 that was not received in the prior year.
- 🐾 Expenses for fiscal 2023 were \$1.81 million (2022 - \$1.78 million). This increase was mainly driven by the following:
 - An increase in wages expenses by \$218,000 given new staff members and increases in salaries.
 - An increase in animal care/veterinary expenses by \$75,000 due to more animals requiring care and veterinary attention compared to the prior year.
 - Other items of note include an increase in vehicle operating costs by \$39,000, an increase in training and uniforms by \$23,000, and an increase in professional services expense of \$44,000.
- 🐾 Excess revenues over expenses were \$391K (2022– expenses over revenues of \$485K). Once normalized for the unrealized gain on investments, excess revenues over expenses for 2023 were \$228K (2022 – expenses over revenues of \$58K). The Board earmarked \$120K of the \$228K surplus to support preventative programming in future years such as low-income spay and neuter and approved the purchase of two new vehicles (\$80K).





The Society's financial position as of December 31, 2023, results in total assets of \$4.1 million (2022 - \$3.8 million) and total liabilities of \$296,000 (2022 - \$420,000). The Society's cash is healthy on the balance sheet at \$522,000 (2022 - \$79,000) given the Society's prudent monitoring of cash spending. Any excess cash not needed for operations or to meet the society's mandate was transferred into investments after year end to prudently manage the funds.

To summarize, the Society's long-term financial position and liquidity is currently strong given the donations, bequests, and contributions in kind we have received in the recent past and current year. Without these amounts, we would not be able to increase our activity (and related expenditures) as we would be near break-even. As a charitable organization, we are fully committed to re-investing these donated funds back into the Society's mandate.

As we project into the future, the Society needs to continue to work towards implementing a more sustainable cost model in relation to animal enforcement and protection. Given the increased activity in animal control and protection in recent years, a more sustainable model will be needed to meet our mandate in the future. We have taken significant steps towards this in FY 2023 by obtaining additional government funding by proving the costs associated with enforcement.

The Society is also working to improve our fundraising efforts to assist in providing additional funds to further the mandate of the Society. The results of 2023 have provided us a base to continue investing in our mandate for years to come.

Chris Bertin, CPA
Board Treasurer





Summary of 2023 Revenues & Expenditures

Revenues		Expenses	
GNB Enforcement Grant	\$600,000.00	Enforcement (Salaries & equipment)	\$1,203,802.00
Donations, Bequests and Foundations	\$280,371.00	Animal Care/veterinary costs	\$225,739.00
Investment Income	\$106,362.00	Public Education & Prevention	\$105,456.00
Licenses, Tags & other	\$80,366.00	Administration	\$151,011.00
Rural Dog Control	\$615,971.00	Amortization	\$47,385.00
Local Dog Control	\$148,275.00	HST (non-recoverable)	\$82,925.00
Other	\$212,812.00	TOTAL	\$1,816,318.00
Change in market value*	\$162,505.00		
TOTAL	\$2,206,662.00		

Excess Revenues over Expenses		\$390,344.00
Pledged for 2024		
Dedicated to Preventive Programming	120,000	
Fleet Renewal	80,000	
	\$162,505.00	
* \$162,505 is an accounting entry that reflects a change in market value of investments at a given point in time.		
Excess Revenues over Expenses (free cash flow) for 2024		\$27,839

Audited financial statements are available at nbspca.ca.





Learn more about the NBSPCA:

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