Lowton Hedgehog Rescue

Registered charity no. 1212569

Annual Report and Accounts for the year ending 31st December 2025

25th September 2026

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Administrative details

About the Charity

The charity is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation, registered with the Charity Commission for England and Wales and governed by its foundation model Constitution dated 17th March 2025. Prior to this date Lowton Hedgehog Rescue was operating as an unregistered small charity. On 17th March 2025 all prior charity's assets, liabilities and funds were transferred to the new CIO and all activities ceased within the unregistered charity.

The charity's registration number is 1212569.

The registered address is 2 Rowan Avenue, Lowton, Warrington WA3 2DD.

Trustees

The Charity's Trustees during the year were:

Miss Irene Thomson	Trustee, Chair and CEO
Mr Ken Shorrock	Trustee
Mrs Lynda Louise Stubbs	Trustee and DCEO
Mr Stuart Stubbs	Trustee
Mrs Claire Elizabeth Byrne	Trustee and CFO

The Trustees were appointed on 17th March 2025 for 3 years, and will be eligible for reappointment.
Appointment of Trustees is by a resolution passed at a properly convened meeting of the charity trustees.

Governance

The Trustees meet at least annually, and as often as necessitated by official business, or as any individual Trustee deems a formal meeting to be necessary.

One of the Trustees is designated Chief Executive Officer, with Primary responsibility for all day to day operations of the Charity.

One of the Trustees is designated Deputy Chief Executive Officer, with the responsibility and authority to assume all duties of the CEO when necessary.

One of the Trustees is designated Chief Financial Officer, with primary responsibility for the charity's financial oversight, reporting and compliance.

The CFO produces monthly management accounts which are made available to all Trustees, together with a brief report on the Charity's financial position.

The non-Executive Trustees are involved in the work of the Charity and in regular contact with the Executive Trustees to keep up-to-date with the Charity's activities.

Objectives, Activities and Achievements

Objects

The objects of the Rescue are:

For the benefit of the public to relieve the suffering of sick, injured or orphaned hedgehogs and, in particular, to provide and maintain rescue facilities for the reception, care and treatment of such animals prior to their release to the wild; and to educate the public in matters pertaining to hedgehog welfare in general, the prevention of cruelty and suffering among hedgehogs and when rescue is required.

Statutory declaration

The Rescue has paid due regard to the guidance issued by the Charity Commission on public benefit in deciding what activities the charity should undertake.

Hedgehog care and rehabilitation

The Rescue runs from a main hub which is operated by the founder Irene Thomson. There are 3 satellite units run by medically trained volunteers which are supported by the Rescue. There are over 50 foster carers who help with the care of hedgehogs once their treatment is complete but they need to put more weight on before release – or they are kept for overwintering until Spring for releases.

The Rescue provides first aid, treatment, and rehabilitation to hundreds of hedgehogs, with the principle aim of releasing them back into the wild population once deemed fit and well once more. Some cases are beyond our help, or that of our vets, so part of our ethos is to ensure that no hedgehog suffers unnecessarily. A few cases result in a hedgehog that can not be fully released back to the wild e.g. blind, but the Rescue is fortunate enough to have access to safe locations which are fully enclosed and the landowner ensures that food/water and hogboxes are available for that hedgehog. We do not mix sexes as captive breeding as a conservation strategy at this time is not deemed necessary or ethical despite the declining numbers of hedgehogs in the wild.

In 2025, 676 hedgehogs were admitted for treatment/rehabilitation; 477 via the main hub and 199 via the satellite units. This is a decrease in the overall number admitted compared to 2024 (771).

Other Activities

During 2025, the Rescue:

- Opened a new satellite unit, based in St Helens
- Raised funds for, and awareness of, its work through events and local media.
- Engaged with local organisations concerned with the care of hedgehogs to coordinate efforts and ensure best practice.
- Attended 20 events and gave 5 talks to adult groups/organisations and 4 talks to school groups, plus engaged on social media about hedgehogs and the work of the rescue to raise awareness and funds.

- One unique presentation was to a Natural History Group which was entitled 'A Hedgehog Rehabber's Typical Day'. Therefore it had to contain all the daily tasks that are undertaken to give the audience a feeling of 'exhaustion', 'achievement', 'purpose' , etc.

- Hosted the Vale Wildlife Hospital for their one-day course of First Aid, Care and Rehabilitation of Hedgehogs. This is the 5th year that Lowton Hedgehog Rescue has hosted this course. Always fully booked by members of public and vet nurses who wish to increase their knowledge.

- Each year the Rescue accommodates one young person who has enrolled for the Duke of Edinburgh Award. Depending on the level of the Award i.e. Bronze, Silver or Gold, the young person volunteers for either 3 months or 6 months at the weekends so that their schooling is not interrupted. The young person together with their parents visit the premises and are shown the varied tasks that are involved – this helps to give a clear understanding of how the volunteering sessions can assist the young person in achieving their goal. The knowledge they gain through that time period is also a great way to spread awareness to a younger generation of how hedgehogs are rescued, rehabilitated and released.

The Rescue would like to thank all those people who volunteer their time and effort in so many different ways. We would also like to thank the many individuals and local organisations who donate cash, goods and services so generously. Without your contributions our work would not be possible.

Achievements

- The Charity has leveraged the registration with the Charity Commission to improve governance, formalise existing practices through the production of written Policies and Procedures, register with HMRC to benefit from Gift Aid and take advantage of free or discounted services available only to registered non-profits.

- The Charity has a well-established Facebook Group, providing information and advice to members. This year it extended that reach beyond Facebook users by setting up a website, which has already provided a first point of contact with the Charity by users ranging from students looking for volunteering placements to schools seeking educational talks and organisations looking to collaborate on longer term projects.

- The Wildlife Care Badge was awarded to Lowton Hedgehog Rescue in June 2022. This scheme is a 'continual assessment' and was successfully renewed in January 2025.The scheme includes Knowledge Assessment exams which have been passed by the Supervisor of each operating Unit. The rescue has annual 'vet visit/inspection' from the main vets used by the rescue (My Pets Vets) which is to ensure all hedgehogs are being well cared for whilst having treatment and rehabilitation, and that standards are high with policies and procedures to support them, plus evidence submitted of record keeping and foster carers' setup. This is a scheme put together by wildlife hospitals/rescues and specialist vets across the nation as a way to show that rehabilitators maintain high standards in caring for the animals.

- The Founder of Lowton Hedgehog Rescue celebrated her 15 years of rehabbing in August 2025 and was awarded the opportunity to display the rescue's work at Leigh Town Hall in one of the building's Information Windows which face the High Street. The display needed careful consideration as it would be 'seen' by the public for 6 months and in the 'hedgehog world' that covers 2 seasons. Information needed to be carefully displayed so that it was relevant to that timing, plus it gave the rescue an opportunity to enhance its presence in the area and gave the information that the public needed in case they needed help.

- THE HERDS was a public art project and climate action on an unprecedented scale – an ambitious coming together of culture and climate. From April to August 2025, life-size puppet animals stormed through a 20,000km route from the Congo Basin to the Arctic Circle, symbolizing their flight from climate disaster. THE HERDS united leading artists and organisations committed to driving change. Key stops included Kinshasa, Lagos, Dakar, Marrakesh, Casablanca, Madrid, Barcelona, Marseille, Arles, Paris, Venice, Manchester, London, Aarhus, Copenhagen, Stockholm, and Trondheim, culminating in a final moment in the Arctic Circle. Lowton Hedgehog Rescue was asked to help Norton Priory Museum & Gardens with a two-day event which was inspired by the project and choose hedgehogs as the 'conservation animal' and the dates coincided with The HERDS journey through Manchester.

Signed on behalf of the Trustees by:



Irene Thomson

Chair and CEO

Date: 25th September 2026



Claire Byrne

Trustee and CFO

Date: 25th September 2026

Independent Examiner's Report

Independent examiner's report to the trustees of LOWTON HEDGEHOG RESCUE (Charity number 1212569)

I report on the accounts of LOWTON HEDGEHOG RESCUE for the period ended 31 December 2025, which comprise the statement of financial activities, the balance sheet and the related notes.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

The charity trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the Charities Act 2011;

- the Charitable Incorporated Organisations General Regulations; and
- the Charities SORP applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with FRS 102.

The trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the CIO and enable them to ensure that the accounts comply with the above requirements.

The trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under the Charities Act 2011 and that an independent examination is required.

It is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts under the Charities Act 2011;
- follow the procedures laid down in the Charities Act 2011 and the Charity Commission's guidance for independent examiners; and
- state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of independent examiner's report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the Charity Commission's guidance "The independent examination of charity accounts: guidance for trustees (CC31)".

An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the CIO and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records.

It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts and seeking explanations from the trustees concerning any such matters.

The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit and, consequently, I do not express an audit opinion on the accounts.

Independent examiner's statement

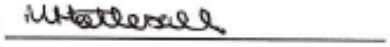
In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

- which gives me reasonable cause to believe that, in any material respect, the requirements:
  - to keep accounting records in accordance with the Charities Act 2011; and
  - to prepare accounts which are consistent with the accounting records and comply with the Charities Act 2011, the Charitable Incorporated Organisations General Regulations and the Charities SORP applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with FRS 102,

have not been met; or

- to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Examiner's signature

Signed: 

Name: Matthew Hothersall FCA

Relevant professional qualification or body if any: ICAEW

Membership number: 8653173

Address: Beech House, 23 Ladies Lane, Hindley. WN2 2QA

Date: 24 September 2026

Financial Statements

Accounting basis

The accounts have been prepared on a Receipts and Payments basis, which has been determined by the Trustees as the most appropriate to demonstrate the Charity's financial activities.

Sources of income

The Charity's principal source of funds is private donations and fundraising efforts.

Volunteers

The Charity has no paid employees, but is staffed by volunteers who work entirely without financial compensation.

Reserves

The Trustees regularly review reserves, using the Reserves Policy to ensure that normal operations can be maintained in the event of a material unplanned event impacting the Charity's financial position. A risk-based approach is used to calculate an optimal amount of reserves that looks at reliability of income, and costs for the replacement of essential premises and equipment in the event of catastrophic loss.

The trustees have set optimal reserves at £7000 which equates to approximately 6 months normal expenditure. As at 31 December 2025, the Rescue's total unrestricted funds were £17,900 (2024: £5400), thereby exceeding the Reserve level by £10,900 and leaving adequate working capital to cover any expansion of operations or facilities.

Receipts and Payments

	From Registration 17/03/25			To 16/03/25	Full year	Prior year
	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total funds £	Total funds £	2025 Total funds £	2024 Total funds £
Cash funds last year end	4,813	0	**4,813**	4,813	**5,470**	**7,471**
Receipts						
Donations	7,366	1,090	**8,456**	1,530	**9,986**	**9,881**
Legacies	10,550		**10,550**		**10,550**	**-**
Grants		150	**150**	100	**250**	**-**
Events	4,131		**4,131**	128	**4,259**	**1,944**
Fundraising activities	3,655		**3,655**	132	**3,787**	**2,409**
Interest on deposit account	52		**52**		**52**	**-**
Gift Aid	302		**302**		**302**	**-**
Total receipts	**26,056**	**1,240**	**27,296**	**1,890**	**29,186**	**14,234**
Payments						
Food & consumables	4,200	140	**4,340**	818	**5,158**	**5,487**
Veterinary costs & medications	4,282		**4,282**	727	**5,009**	**5,734**
Equipment costs	1,477	150	**1,627**	15	**1,642**	**973**
Event costs	718		**718**	985	**1,703**	**1,102**
Fundraising costs	72		**72**		**72**	**-**
Financial fees and charges	193		**193**		**193**	**-**
Administrative costs	731		**731**	2	**733**	**-**
Waste services	309		**309**		**309**	**-**
Volunteers	803		**803**		**803**	**730**
Insurance	102		**102**		**102**	**107**
Donations paid	50		**50**		**50**	**222**
Premises repairs & maintenance		950	**950**		**950**	**1,880**
Total payments	**12,937**	**1,240**	**14,177**	**2,547**	**16,724**	**16,235**
Net of receipts/(payments)	**13,119**	**0**	**13,119**	**-657**	**12,462**	**-2,001**
Cash funds this year end	**17,932**	**0**	**17,932**	**4,155**	**17,932**	**5,470**

Statement of assets and liabilities at the end of the period

Cash funds
Cash funds at year end £17,932

Other monetary assets
Gift Aid claimable £655

Other assets
Hutches and other equipment for care & treatment of hogs
Gazebo, banner, tables, etc for events
Laptop and projector for presentations
Food, consumable items and medications
Gifts in kind for fundraising purposes

Liabilities
There were no creditors, loans, leases or other liabilities.

Notes

The Charity receives regular Gifts in Kind of food, consumables and items for use in fundraising activities.

The charity benefits from a number of free services, including Google Workspace, Box cloud storage, Kualo web hosting and Adobe Express.

No expenses have been paid to any of the Trustees during the year.

The Charity received a single legacy during the year, with no restrictions placed on the use of those funds.

The restricted funds received and used within the period relate to a GoFundMe appeal for replacement of a leaking roof and some of the water-damaged goods stored in that location, and small grants from WCB to replace a nebulizer and a microwave oven.

Signed on behalf of the Trustees by:



Irene Thomson

Chair and CEO

Date: 25th September 2026



Claire Byrne

Trustee and CFO

Date: 25th September 2026