

20  
23

# ANNUAL REPORT



## Our Vision

To be a model of excellence in the advancement of animal welfare.



## Our Mission

The Edmonton Humane Society enriches the lives of people and companion animals through animal sheltering, programs and services, and community engagement.





# Message from Our Board Chair

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As I look back on my third and final year as Board Chair for the Edmonton Humane Society (EHS), I am inspired by our continued momentum, our dedicated employees and the support given to us by the community.

As you will see in the pages of this 2023 Annual Report, EHS has accomplished a great deal.

In 2023, we welcomed the community into the shelter and we ventured out into the community, connecting with people through our humane education programs, community outreach and various philanthropic events.

Our adoption numbers were strong again this year, with 3,471 animals finding new homes. This is the most animals that have been adopted from EHS since 2019. In the spring, we worked with various governments and organizations to assist those displaced by wildfires in northern Alberta, British Columbia and the Northwest Territories. You can read all about Leica, Groggu, Luke and Boo – homeless cats who were affected by the fires – here in this report.

We continued to progress our strategic plan and began to create the foundation for a new strategic plan that will propel us into 2025 and beyond. You will hear more on our new plan later this year.

On behalf of the Board of Directors of EHS, I want to thank our employees, our volunteers, our donors, and those individuals and families who have adopted animals from EHS. Your dedication and support makes EHS possible.

**Jennifer Fisk**, *Board Chair*

# 2023 Board of Directors

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**Jennifer Fisk**

*Board Chair*

**Allison Radford**

*Vice Chair*

**Dale Wispinski**

*Secretary*

**Darren Lunt**

*Treasurer*

**Barbara Bruce**

*Director*

**Sheri Cameron**

*Director*

**Gord Gilroy**

*Director*

**Karen Leibovici**

*Director*

**Patricia Misutka**

*Director*

**Robert Parks**

*Director*

**Lorenzo Pasutto**

*Director*

**Amanda Pechousek**

*Director*

**Dr. Ted Purcell**

*Director*

**Sumeet Saroya**

*Director*



# Message from Our CEO

In 2023, the Edmonton Humane Society (EHS) celebrated a year of notable achievements. Throughout the year, our dedication was directed toward establishing a strong foundation, exemplifying our commitment to best practices in animal sheltering, enhancing programs and expanding services. We actively engaged with our community, fostering meaningful connections that were integral to our success. Your unwavering dedication and support played a pivotal role in making all of this possible.

Throughout 2023, we worked hard to further our 2020-24 strategic plan, and as a leadership team, are excited to bring our learnings to create a bold new strategic plan that will propel us forward in the years to come.

Some of the notable highlights from the past year include hosting our two signature events with our 31st annual Pets in the Park festival, and our MADE for Pets: Winter Market. We expanded our Trap Neuter Return (TNR) program, which included hosting our first-ever independent TNR clinic after being supported by the Canadian Animal Task Force, and we completed another year of the Mobile Prevent Another Litter Subsidy (PALS) program. Our Humane Education team hosted excited campers at our seasonal youth camps and our amazing volunteers continued to help us year-round.

Since becoming CEO of EHS five years ago, one of my biggest priorities has been to make EHS an employer of choice. Another important highlight for me in 2023 was learning EHS was a recipient of the 2023 Nonprofit Employer of Choice Awards for the third year in a row. We are extremely proud of this accomplishment and acknowledge that there is still more work to be done; however, this award is a sign of the great work that has been accomplished together, supporting the welfare of animals while also valuing our staff.

I am deeply grateful for your unwavering support, which has been instrumental in bringing about these achievements. Your commitment to enriching the lives of both people and pets within our community has made a profound impact. Your steadfast support holds immense value for us, and we sincerely appreciate it. Thank you.

**Liza Sunley, CEO**

**3962**  
ANIMALS ADMITTED

**2840**

Shelter Animals  
Spayed/Neutered

**361**

Specialty Surgeries

**2407**

Animals Microchipped

## Advancing Animal Welfare



**At the core of our endeavours lies a commitment to animal welfare.**

Over the past year, we have undertaken various initiatives aimed at surpassing industry best practices, ensuring that the well-being of both animals and humans remain paramount in all our endeavours.

### **Evaluated Our Resource Guides**

At the core of our endeavours lies a commitment to animal welfare. Over the past year, we have undertaken various initiatives aimed at surpassing industry best practices, ensuring that the well-being of both animals and humans remain paramount in all our endeavours.

# Updated & Created New Position Statements

In 2023, we reinforced our commitment to proactive advocacy by updating our position statements on important topics. We updated our position statement on dangerous dog laws and breed restrictions, recognizing the need for balanced approaches that prioritize safety while avoiding breed-specific discrimination. Additionally, we refined our position on vertebrate pest management to promote humane methods of control that minimize animal suffering. Acknowledging the significance of responsible pet ownership, we strengthened our position on the sterilization of companion animals to address overpopulation and promote the health and well-being of pets. We also created a new position statement on live feeding, emphasizing our stance against practices that subject animals to unnecessary harm and suffering. These updates reflect our ongoing commitment to education, policies and practices that prioritize the welfare of all animals in our care and community.

## Enhanced Our Medical Care

In 2023, EHS's Animal Health team continued to grow with the recruitment of a veterinarian with a special interest in Orthopedics. Our veterinarians also hosted a lab with a local surgeon to refine a surgical technique called Femoral Head Ostectomy. Registered Veterinary Technicians and Veterinary Medical Assistants also enrolled in the Low Stress Handling®- Silver certification program to enhance skills in handling animals with care and minimize stress during examinations and procedures.

## Proactive Engagement to Decrease Length of Stay

Always endeavouring to inform and educate our staff, update our processes and keep our facility state of the art, we brought in two experts in animal welfare in 2023. With their expertise and feedback on capacity for care, as well as animal flow through EHS into new homes, we had a decrease in average length of stay in shelter in 2023 compared to previous years.

## Developed Programs to Support Intake Alternatives

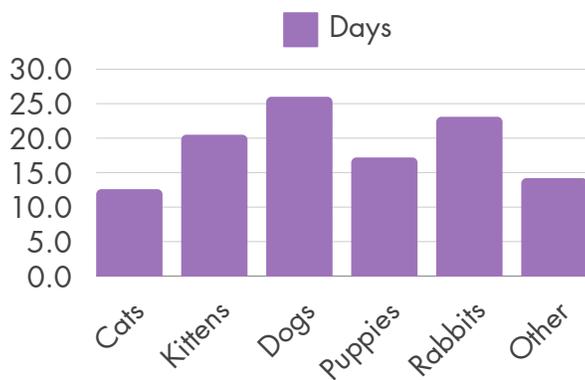
We launched our Pet Pantry program in 2023, which helps pet owners facing financial barriers access food and supplies for their companion animals.



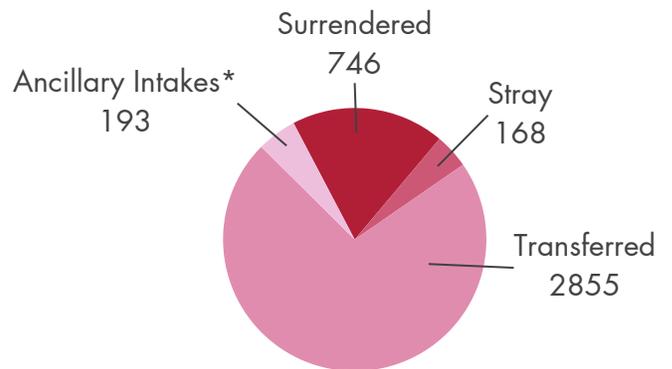
## ? DID YOU KNOW...

We used **31,088 pounds** of food to feed all the dogs in our care last year. We also distributed **104,370 pounds** of food for our Pet Pantry program. To support wildfire evacuees, we distributed **20,640 pounds** of food!

### Average Length of Stay



### Intake Methods



\*Ancillary intakes include animals born in care.

**693**

Spay/Neuters Through PALS Program

**670**

Animals Microchipped Through PALS Program

**790**

Dogs Enrolled in Training Classes at EHS

**2928**

People Reached Through Humane Education



# ALFIE, ALMOND, CASHEW AND NICO

From Motherless Puppies to Thriving Chihuahuas



For Alfie, Almond, Cashew and Nico, it began as a story of loss. Two weeks after birth, the puppies tragically lost their mother. With the puppies being so young, they needed to receive urgent care to survive.

Sadly, the survival rate for a newborn pup who loses their mother is only one in two. EHS was determined to prevent these puppies from becoming that statistic. EHS staff took them in, and generous donors paid for the food and healthcare the puppies needed to survive.

The puppies also found a guardian angel at EHS. An extraordinary volunteer stepped forward, opening her home and heart to help them. She rarely slept, so that she could feed each one by hand, every two to three hours around the clock for weeks. She gave them the love and care their mother would have.

The puppies have now grown into adorable, loving companions, who are all now thriving in their new homes, all thanks to the love and care of Edmonton Humane Society staff, donors and their foster guardian angel.

# Supporting Animals in Care

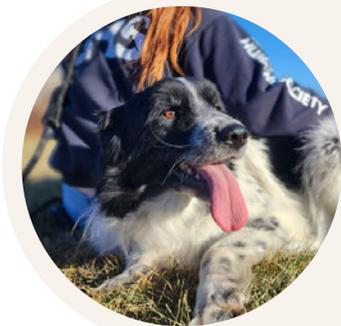


## Helping animals find loving homes.

Our entire EHS team strived to increase overall adoption numbers, and in 2023, we saw 3,471 animals adopted to new homes, the highest number since pre-COVID adoption levels in 2019. We hosted six adoption events throughout the year, which contributed to seeing more animals adopted than previous years.

## Tested **New Initiatives** to Support Adoptions

In 2023, our foster department started testing on a new initiative where the foster parent would bring dogs into the shelter to spend time in a Meet and Greet pen. This created additional exposure opportunities with no appointment required for potential adopters to spend time with animals in foster. Another initiative introduced in 2023 was a Touch Tank in Bingo's Pet Shop, where adopters could interact with small animals. We also partnered with the Edmonton Journal on a weekly feature, allowing us to highlight up to 15 animals in both print and digital advertising.



### ? DID YOU KNOW...

We have a dedicated Pet Behaviour Hotline! Our trainers are available to offer advice and to provide more insight into the various training services we offer. For anyone experiencing challenges with their pet's behaviour, or simply have a general question about pet behaviour, our professionals are happy to help! In 2023, our Ask the Specialist free hotline received over **3,200 questions!**

## Enabled New Donation Pathways

We enabled a pathway for the public to be able to directly sponsor EHS animals, either fully or partially. This helps to bring added attention to the animals and helps to offset adoption fees for families. This is done through a feature on the selected pet's profile that the public can click on and choose how much they would like to sponsor the animal for. The animal's portfolio is also then updated with a graphic to indicate the sponsorship. In 2023, donors who had a specific EHS adoptable touch their heart supported this new pathway and sponsored a total of \$6,776 towards adoption fees for animals in our care.

## Implemented Adoption Waitlist

Some of our small animals such as hedgehogs, ferrets, chinchillas and birds have a limited but very passionate audience of adopters. We initiated a waitlist for these small animals where we can reach out directly to interested adopters when they are available. This has sped up the adoption process for these animals and decreases overall length of stay.

**1845**  
ANIMALS FOSTERED

**276**

Foster Families

Our amazing foster department took in 417 more animals compared to 2022! Even with the increased numbers, the average waiting period for an animal going to a foster family was only two days.



### ? DID YOU KNOW...

Rabbits can be litterbox trained! In 2023, we launched a project encouraging adopters to adopt long-stay rabbits by providing a rabbit starter kit; this take-home package includes hay, x-pen, enrichment toys and a corner litter box!

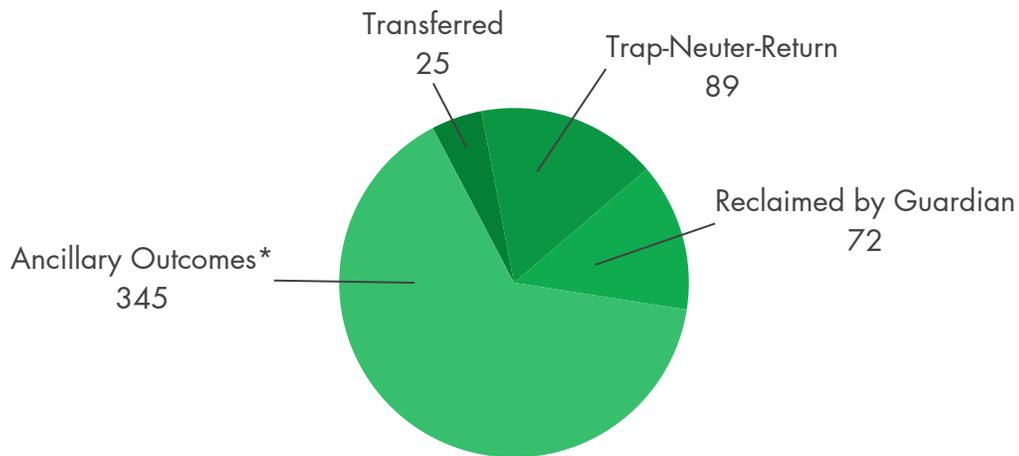
# Creating a Better Adoption Experience

**3471**  
ANIMALS ADOPTED



**97%**  
Live Release Rate

## Other Outcomes



\* Ancillary outcomes include deceased on arrival, humane euthanasia, unassisted deaths, and animals continuing in care at the end of December 2023.

# LEIA, GROGU, LUKE AND BOO

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## Surviving Trying Times



During the 2023 wildfire season, the Edmonton Humane Society worked tirelessly with our partners to ensure families and their beloved pets were taken care of; however, homeless pets affected by the wildfires needed care and attention too.

In May, EHS received a distressing call from the Alberta SPCA. Their officers had found a litter of four orphaned kittens, scared and starving. The seven-week-old kittens were frightened and unable to fend for themselves.

Upon arriving at EHS after a long journey, the dedicated team of caregivers, medical staff and volunteers rallied around these kittens, providing them with immediate medical attention, nourishment and a loving foster home where they could recover and grow.

After days and weeks, each kitten began to thrive and was ready to find new homes. By June, each kitten had found a happy and loving home. They are now thriving in their new environments after they struggled for survival.

# Our Community



As we strive to guide and motivate compassionate initiatives, EHS proactively pursued fresh avenues, actively collaborating with and forging connections with community allies, all aimed at positively impacting animals beyond our shelter and strengthening the relationship between people and their pets.

## Empowered Compassion with Humane Education Programs

2023 saw promising growth and new beginnings for Humane Education. Our highly requested Pet-Sitters Course was heavily refreshed and relaunched. We successfully held both Summer and Fall Camps with more participant spaces available. We hosted our 6th annual 'Be Kind to Animals Week' offering free lesson plans to teachers and we participated in Read-In Week, connecting with a total of 1,358 students over five days and over 10 more classrooms compared to 2022. Overall, Humane Education reached 2,825 youth, a 15 percent increase compared to the prior year.



### ? DID YOU KNOW...

Approximately **40,000** dog poop bags were used at EHS in 2023!

# Cultivated Partnerships and Collaboration Within the **Animal Welfare Community**

EHS has been a longstanding member of Humane Canada, an organization that serves as Canada's federation of SPCAs and humane societies, advancing the welfare of animals, with a strong national voice promoting animal welfare interests and concerns to government, policy makers, industry and the public. In 2023, our CEO joined the Humane Canada Board of Directors. EHS also continued our work with the Animal Welfare Coalition of Alberta. Being a part of these two groups serves to strengthen our ties in the animal welfare community and add our voice to these important conversations.

## **Supported Community During Wildfire Season**

We collaborated with numerous partners including the RCMP, City of Edmonton's Animal Care and Control Centre, Alberta SPCA and numerous rescue organizations to support wildfire evacuees, primarily through the collection and distribution of donated supplies. EHS served as a direct pick-up location for those in need. We also took in animals for Emergency Boarding to assist during the devastating wildfire season. Our community really stepped up to help families and pets impacted by wildfires, providing over \$65,000 in cash donations as well as over 30,000 pounds of pet supplies. Donations were distributed at EHS as well as by partner agencies to those in need.

## **Advanced Our Prevent Another Litter Subsidy (PALS) Program**

Through the PALS program, 693 cats and dogs were spayed/neutered in 2023. This includes 170 surgeries performed on the Edmonton Humane Society Mobile Unit at various locations across Edmonton, including Alberta Helping Animals Society, Inglewood Community League, Bissell Thrift Shop and AARCS North Haven.

## **Expanded Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR) Program**

In 2023, the Canadian Animal Task Force (CATF) completed their mentorship program at EHS, allowing us to hold independent clinics for the first time. Our ongoing partnership with CATF led to one large-scale clinic in 2023, and then we conducted two clinics independently.

# Strengthened Relationships with **Community Partners**

Our numerous community partners play a vital role in enforcing animal welfare laws, regulations and sharing of resources. Together, we build stronger and more compassionate communities. Throughout 2023, we worked alongside many community partner organizations, including numerous Bylaw officers, the RCMP, Alberta SPCA, and additional rescue and community partners. In addition, four of our medical staff, including our Director of Animal Health, embarked on an outreach trip to Fort McKay, and performed 21 spay/neuter surgeries in a single day. The Fort McMurray SPCA hosted and partnered with our EHS medical team for this outreach initiative.

**445**  
VOLUNTEERS

**20,782**  
Hours Volunteered

**10**  
Full-time Staff Equivalency

## Our People



Our team lies at the heart of our mission: enriching the lives of people and companion animals. They are indispensable in our efforts to provide care for the animals who rely on us the most. We are dedicated to being an employer of choice and the best place to volunteer in Edmonton.

## **Developed Initiatives to Engage Staff and Volunteers**

This past year, we continued to host ongoing training for our team. Our Behavior team provided classes on loose leash dog walking for both staff and volunteers, enabling them to have more confidence in handling dogs. We also hosted a canine aggression specialist, who provided in-person training for staff about dog body language, including how to properly break up a dog fight. Members of the City of Edmonton Animal Care and Control Centre also joined this educational session. Members of our staff, including our Senior Leadership team and our Animal Welfare Advisor, participated in the City of Edmonton Animal Licencing and Control by-law renewal project and engagement sessions in order to provide our feedback and voice to the process. We held over 20 additional staff learning sessions covering a wide variety of topics including noise and felines, dog body language and the Jane Goodall act – just to name a few!

### **Enhanced Engagement for Volunteers**

We launched EHS's Volunteer Advisory Committee, a group of 10 volunteers from across EHS who provide recommendations on specific volunteer-related projects, events, policies and procedures. The committee meets quarterly to provide valuable feedback to enhance the volunteer experience at EHS. We established a new behaviour volunteer liaison. This role is held by a member of the EHS behaviour team and supports volunteers providing enrichment for dogs in the shelter, provides valuable guidance on volunteer training and education sessions and is the link between the Community Engagement and Behaviour Teams and our volunteers.

### **Promoted Open and Transparent Staff Communication**

To encourage conversation amongst all departments and provide employees with insight into all various areas of EHS, we continued to hold monthly staff meetings throughout 2023. In addition, we implemented a dual safety moment into these meetings featuring workplace safety and animal behaviour. These monthly staff meetings fostered a team environment by creating a sense of unity and camaraderie while allowing learning opportunities to take place. Additionally, we continued sending Pulse Surveys throughout the year to collect feedback and shout-outs from staff.



# Launched a **Service Recognition Program**

This past year, we continued to host ongoing training for our team. Our Behavior team provided classes on loose leash dog walking for both staff and volunteers, enabling them to have more confidence in handling dogs. We also hosted a canine aggression specialist, who provided in-person training for staff about dog body language, including how to properly break up a dog fight. Members of the City of Edmonton Animal Care and Control Centre also joined this educational session. Members of our staff, including our Senior Leadership team and our Animal Welfare Advisor, participated in the City of Edmonton Animal Licencing and Control by-law renewal project and engagement sessions in order to provide our feedback and voice to the process. We held over 20 additional staff learning sessions covering a wide variety of topics including noise and felines, dog body language and the Jane Goodall act – just to name a few!

## A Nonprofit **Employer of Choice**

EHS was proud to be named a Nonprofit Employer of Choice (NEOC) for 2023, for a third year in a row. The two-step assessment included an organization profile evaluating the nonprofit leadership attributes and human resources policies, practices and procedures, in addition to a comprehensive employee commitment survey. EHS, along with 21 other organizations across Canada, were recognized with this distinction.

**46,241**

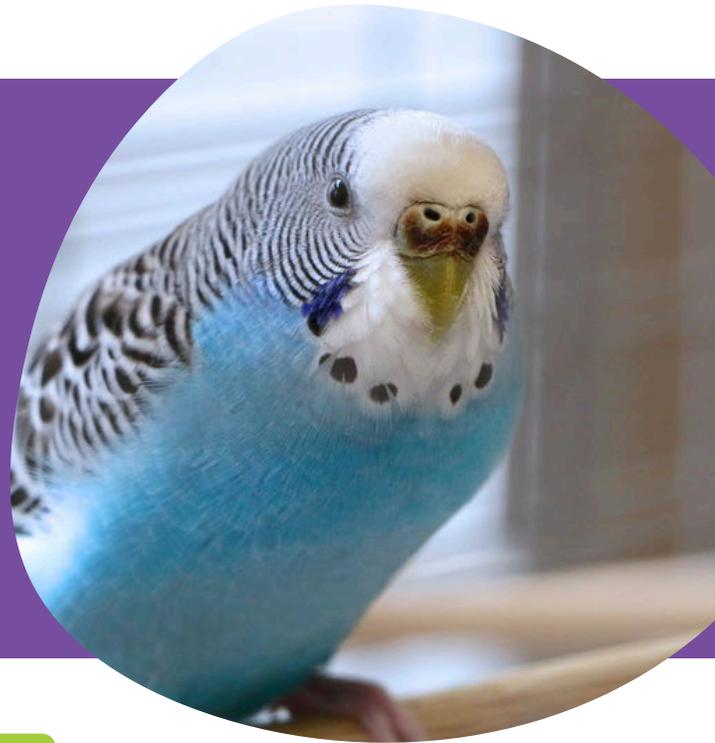
Gifts

**\$6,279,961**

Total Donations Given

**\$136**

Average Gift Amount



**6.3M+**

People Reached on Social

**3000**

Mentions in Media Stories



# Our Supporters



Without you — our supporters — EHS cannot provide our critical programs and services to the community. That's why we're focused on cultivating the resources to achieve our vision and mission.



We were thrilled to host our 31st annual Pets in the Park festival, this time in a new location at Buena Vista Park. This event brought together over 6,000 guests and pets to celebrate the incredible impact animals have on our lives, while giving back to animals in need. As a free family event, it offered a variety of fun for the whole family. Pets in the Park and our Run/Walk was a roaring success and exceeded our funding goals, raising over \$25,000 from peer-to-peer fundraising!



Hosted by the generous group from Lloyd Sadd Insurance, the 6th annual Puttin' Fore Paws: Drive, Dine and Dogs, once again raised funds to support the Edmonton Humane Society. Including the silent auction, this event raised over \$18,000 for the daily care, behavioural and medical support of the animals in need at EHS. Fun was had by all — both two and four-legged attendees!



2023 started off with a huge boost from the Edmonton Oilers Community Foundation 50/50 on January 19. We were the lucky recipients of their 50/50 proceeds from that night and although it was a cold evening, the warmth we received from the organizers and community supporters was overwhelming! We were even able to bring some of our furry friends to experience the thrill of the game! We had 30 volunteers at the game selling tickets and we also set up an information booth on the concourse, plus EHS was featured both in-game and on broadcast.



Our MADE for PETS: Winter Market took place in November, just in time for holiday shopping. This annual event supports local makers and is hosted in partnership with our friends at the City of Edmonton's Animal Care and Control Centre. This year, we added maple syrup taffy, a photo booth and an ice sculpture to the free family event to enhance the experience. A special thank you to our generous partners that donated pet goodies for our ever-popular Pet Parcels – which almost sold out!



Each year for the National Philanthropy Day event, EHS nominates a few incredible partners that help promote our mission. This year, we were honoured to recognize Champion Petfoods, Lloyd Sadd Insurance and Pet Valu for all the work they do to improve the lives of companion animals in our community.



We celebrated our 13th Annual Paws & Claws Gala in 2023, hosted by Coventry Homes. With almost 400 attendees from the business and industry community, as well as EHS donors and stakeholders, including EHS' Board of Directors, the gala was a tremendous success! Gala attendees stepped up to support EHS, while learning more about the valuable work we do to enrich the lives of people and companion animals.



Our popular Pet Pics with Santa event sold out almost as quickly as tickets launched! Over 300 pets, including many of our shelter animals, met Santa himself and posed for the purr-fect holiday photo. For the first time, we added a Shelter Animal Toy Drive with the goal of 1,000 gifts in 10 days for shelter animals – and the results surpassed our hopes with over 2,750 toys donated!

## **Special Shout-outs**

### **PAWS/Monthly Donors**

Monthly donors provide secure and reliable funding to support shelter operations, giving EHS the ability to deliver high-quality, compassionate care for shelter animals every day of the year. Each month, these heroic donors provide an incredible \$63,000. In 2023, monthly donors supported the care of approximately 50 cats and 50 dogs every single month! This includes housing, feeding and medical costs.

### **New Ultrasound Machine**

Thanks to a generous donation from an individual donor, we acquired two new pieces of medical equipment to our hospital. A new x-ray machine, which provides enhanced medical imaging compared to our older x-ray, and a new ultrasound machine, which allows our medical team to perform diagnostics more easily prior to surgery, were added. This donation supports our hospital in providing best in class medical care to EHS animals.

# Our Foundation



As we embark on another year of progress and achievements, it is essential to reflect on the solid foundation upon which our organization stands. Our fundamental strategies and frameworks, policies and procedures, fiscal responsibility and governance excellence guide our actions and shape our impact.

## Continued Shelter Facility Improvements

Our facility directly contributes to the health and welfare of our animals and our people. In 2023, we painted and refreshed several areas throughout the shelter, installed LED retrofits, replaced a second aging boiler system, repaired fences and walking path landscaping, had an arborist do general tree and shrub maintenance, and installed noise dampening measures throughout the shelter.

## Launched New IT Provider

In early 2023, we moved to a new IT provider, allowing for quicker helpdesk times, enhanced support and staff training around cyber security.

## Increased Charity Intelligence Score

In 2023, we worked hard to increase our Charity Intelligence Score from a 3 to 4 out of 5 stars. This included an increase in our results reporting from a B- to an A-.

# Reviewed Risk Management Framework

In 2020, EHS developed its first framework for identifying and rating risks we face and cataloging risk mitigation strategies in place. This information was used to calculate residual risks and determine priorities for further mitigation. Our risk management policy mandates the review of our risk register every two years. This work was completed in early 2023 and involved the participation of a wide variety of staff, including senior leaders, department managers and supervisors. A number of updates were made, including the addition of new risks, refining language around existing risks, re-rating scores, re-documenting existing mitigation strategies and calculating residual risk scores. The resulting priority list guides our risk mitigation work to ensure EHS remains strong and sustainable.

## Imagine Canada Accreditation

We are very excited to be in the process of receiving our Imagine Canada Accreditation, Canada's most widely recognized nonprofit standards accreditation. In 2023, we prepared for our accreditation and submitted our application, which was accepted by Imagine Canada in Q4. We are now eagerly awaiting our accreditation to be finalized.

## Started Our Next Strategic Plan

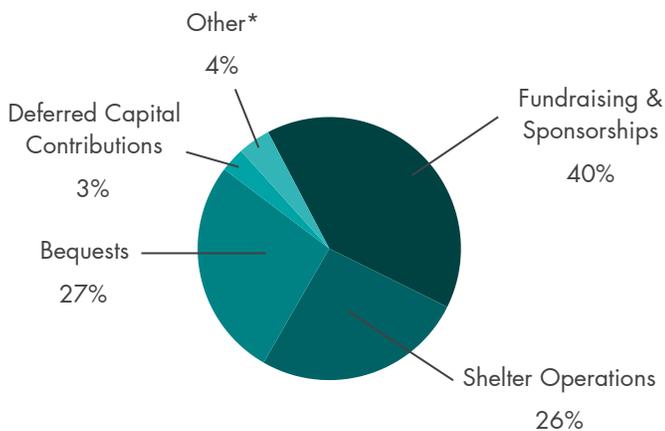
Throughout 2023, work continued to be guided by our 2020-2024 strategic plan – a plan that focused on creating a strong foundation for future success. As we worked through the second half of this plan, we also set our sights on what is next for EHS. This led to the initial phases of our next strategic plan being developed, which will propel us to new heights. We began work by engaging consultants to help us in shaping internal and external conversations about what the next strategic plan should include.





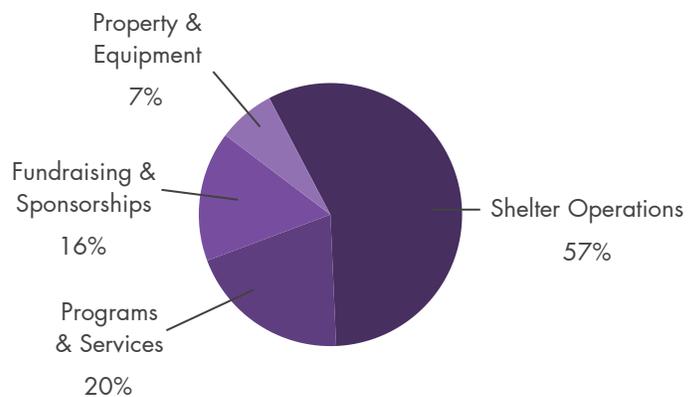
# Overview of 2023 Financials

## Areas of Revenue (in Percent)



\*Other areas of revenue include investment income and donated shares.

## Expenses (in Percent)



**\$9,260,546**

Total Revenue

**\$8,737,334**

Total Expenses

[Click Here to Download the Full 2023 Financial Statements](#)