



 THE KENNEL CLUB

Annual Report

2023

Contents

Our purpose

Our purpose, clearly outlined as part of our strategic review in 2022, is 'to make a positive difference for dogs and their owners'. Underpinning our purpose are six strategic aims – which collectively help to ensure that we remain recognised, relevant and respected. We reflect here on our activities and highlights in each of these areas in 2023.



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Chairman's welcome

We marked a monumental milestone in 2023, reaching 150 years since we were founded and we were honoured to celebrate with a wonderful Royal Garden party in Buckingham Palace. We were also privileged to be awarded the Royal Prefix by HM The King – a singular honour that cements our pride in being part of an organisation that helps to improve the lives of dogs. There is no doubt that both challenges and opportunities lie ahead, and we are fully aware of the significance of being awarded this honour in the year that we have been stepping up the pace on our strategy work, so that in 2024 we can begin the process of delivering and implementing our plans, to ensure that we offer services that are relevant in the 21st century. It has made us more determined than ever to find the right answers, so that we can achieve great things for dogs and their owners for the next 150 years and beyond.

It is the combination of our heritage and future focus that enables us to deliver world-class events, such as Crufts 2023. With impressive visitor figures, record TV hours on Channel 4 and More4 and stratospheric engagement on YouTube, social media and in the press, it has continued to be a remarkable platform to celebrate dogs and, importantly, inform and educate about dog breeding and ownership.

It is also, as the highlight of our dog activities calendar, a reminder as to why our strategy work has been such an important area of focus for us this year – because we want to secure the future of The Kennel Club and the activities we represent. Beyond planning the long-term path ahead, we have put in

place some new measures this year, from continuing with our benching suspension in recognition of the financial pressures show societies are facing to introducing new measures to ensure that exhibitors – existing and new – see and experience our activities in the most positive way.

Welcoming a broader range of people into The Kennel Club family extends to our membership, which is at the heart of who we are as an organisation. We have focused on providing an exciting service for existing members this year, with well-attended calendar events in the Club room and the library and gallery, and improved member communications online and in person – but we continue to look at how we diversify our membership in the future, with the next 150 years in mind.

Finally, we are truly humbled by the support and dedication of all of those who are committed to our mission of improving lives for dogs and dog owners. So, we give thanks to all those within our community – from our members to our breeders, judges and volunteers – for your knowledge, passion and support.



Tony Allcock OBE

Chairman
The Kennel Club



We were also privileged to be awarded the Royal Prefix by HM The King – a singular honour that cements our pride in being part of an organisation that helps to improve the lives of dogs.



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A focus of our planning this year has been to ensure that we are set up to deliver excellent, relevant customer focused services across everything that we do.



Chief Executive's welcome

2023 has been a landmark year for us.

We have not only had the pleasure of celebrating our 150th anniversary, which gave us the opportunity to reflect on our proud heritage and what we are achieving today but we have also taken very real strides towards becoming the organisation that we need to be in the future. One that can survive and thrive in the modern world and deliver on our all-important mission, to make a positive difference for dogs and their owners.

Last year we talked about how we were listening to what breeders, puppy buyers and members think of and want from us and this has been a busy year in terms of using these insights to plan and design a better way forward, for 2024 and beyond.

A focus of our planning this year has been to ensure that we are set up to deliver excellent, relevant, customer-focused services across everything that we do – but with a priority on ensuring that Kennel Club registration has value and meaning. We have also examined our organisational design, reviewing our internal governance and systems – work that will enable us to swiftly respond and adapt in the modern world.

In addition to celebrating the past and looking to the future, 2023 has also been a year of intense focus on the here and now. We have kept our eye firmly on improving our processes, so that we can maintain the excellent customer service levels that we are delighted to see reflected in consistently top consumer feedback scores. We continue to face an extremely challenging financial situation and have taken bold and vital steps to try to mitigate the impact – but we cannot be complacent, and we must now focus on our medium and long-term plans, as we do not have the luxury of merely maintaining the status quo. We will continue to make brave and progressive

decisions, led by data and research, to ensure that we can continue to invest in our purpose and mission.

At the heart of that mission – making a difference for dogs and their owners – is our health work. We have had to make some difficult but essential decisions about how we direct our research funding to get the best outcomes in the future, but we have continued our ambitious programme of research and health testing innovations, including the expansion of our new DNA Testing Services, to make health testing more affordable and accessible for all. This, alongside our vital campaigns and initiatives – which includes the agenda-setting Be Puppywise public awareness campaign and the launch of a brachycephalic report in Westminster and the Scottish parliament – help to ensure that our mission, to improve dogs' lives, remains firmly rooted in the collective consciousness.


And on the topic of teamwork, we thank everybody who – by a combination of sharing their experiences and helping to shape our vision, designing our future plans and implementing changes on the ground – have made this year's ambitious programme of work possible. Whether breeders, exhibitors, members, volunteers, board directors or colleagues, we thank you sincerely, from the bottom of our hearts, for your dedication and all you do for our canine friends.




Mark Beazley
Chief Executive & Secretary
The Kennel Club




2023 at a glance

Helped to reunite over 
9,000
lost pets with their owners through **Petlog**

Helped 
1.4 million
people who were looking to buy a puppy

The Kennel Club was featured in the media over 
20,000 times


Reached 
13,000
dog owners with information and advice, through our new series of **health webinars**

Supported 
333 breed rescues and
1,000 volunteers to find forever homes for **6,000+** rescue dogs

Helped over 
30,000 owners train their dogs through the Good Citizen Dog Training Scheme


227,273
puppies registered

Our Customer Service teams answered over 
75,000 calls and average call wait times were under two minutes 

Organised Crufts

The greatest dog show in the world with **155,000** visitors and **8.7 million** viewers on **Channel 4** and **More4**

Safeguarding and enhancing the future of pedigree dogs



We aim to inform and support breeders and owners of pedigree dogs, helping them to make responsible choices and address breed-associated health issues.


The first step in the journey of safeguarding pedigree health is to use our expert knowledge and to work with our breeding community to understand and tackle breed-related health issues, with a view to minimising and eradicating inherited diseases.

We offer the guidance, support and resources breeders need to produce the healthiest dogs possible, through our breed health and conservation plans for each pedigree breed registered by The Kennel Club. These plans have been developed as a result of reviewing more than 4,000 research papers, making this project the most comprehensive review of pedigree dog health data anywhere in the world and we work together with the breeds clubs to review and track progress.

Alongside ensuring that the health issues in pedigree breeds are fully understood, and having action plans in place to help breeders tackle those issues, we also have a suite of health testing tools that breeders can use. We relaunched our DNA Testing Services in November 2022, providing owners and breeders with cost effective access to health testing for their dogs. A single DNA sample is collected via a cheek swab and checked against markers for multiple relevant inherited breed disorders, helping to reduce the risk of these conditions in future generations. We've expanded our services during 2023 and now offer 166 different DNA testing options for more than 90 breeds.

As well as developing the resources to assist breeders in making responsible choices, we also provide health information for puppy buyers, which has this year included a successful webinar series.

Informing existing and would-be dog owners about health matters is a priority and in 2023:

13,000 viewers 

primarily dog owners, attended our eight-part 2023 health webinar series, both live and on YouTube, across a range of health topics

98% said they would recommend our webinars to others

99% want more content in this format on health topics

We secured 1,992 pieces of press coverage 

highlighting our health advice and raising awareness of our research and health schemes

Brachycephalic breeds

We continue to be at the forefront of addressing health issues in brachycephalic breeds. The profile of our 'breathing scheme' for Pugs, Bulldogs and French Bulldogs – The Kennel Club/University of Cambridge Respiratory Function Grading scheme – has increased worldwide and is now licensed and used in 15 countries.

We recruited 57 more vets to the scheme in 2023, giving dog owners access to a wider regional network of approved veterinary assessors. Furthermore, in order to increase uptake of and accessibility to the scheme, we provided free testing for dogs taking part in Crufts 2023.

Finding the perfect puppy

We make it a priority that puppy owners have at their fingertips our advice and expertise, not just about pedigree health but about pedigree ownership generally, so that they can make the right choice about the companion that best suits their lifestyle. In this way we can do our part to safeguard the future of every pedigree dog, ensuring they have a loving home for life.



We make it a priority that puppy owners have at their fingertips our advice and expertise, not just about pedigree health but about pedigree ownership.

Throughout the year we ran our Vulnerable Native Breeds campaign, urging would-be owners to do their research and remember that there are 223 breeds of dog recognised by The Kennel Club, each with their own unique characteristics. The campaign, which highlights the rise and fall of less popular and well-known breeds, resulted in more than 1,000 pieces of high impact coverage, across national and regional media. This is supported by our Discover Dogs area at Crufts, which gives visitors a unique chance to find their perfect match.

The Kennel Club website is another invaluable resource for everyone interested in dogs and in 2023 our health results pages



Looking forward...

- **As part of our mission to help puppy buyers** get the information they need to make the best possible choices, we will be improving the search and navigation of The Kennel Club website, particularly our Find a Puppy service, and will continue to expand our health webinar series.
- **In order to encourage the best breeding choices** we will improve the focus on health and wellbeing across our registrations system and launch a digital puppy pack.
- **We will continue to deepen our understanding** about pedigree health with research projects, including into population sizes.
- **We are reviewing our registration model and processes** to find ways to improve the health and welfare of even more of the puppies that we register.

were viewed more than 3.5 million times and we assisted 1.4 million people who were looking to find litters of puppies.

For owners looking to rehome a pedigree dog, The Kennel Club supports 333 Breed Rescue organisations, with over 1,000 UK-wide volunteers who, with their specialist knowledge, are on hand to offer advice on the type of environment, care and support required to ensure the right dog is rehomed with the right family. Last year Kennel Club Breed Rescue organisations rehomed over 6,000 dogs and our rescue pages online were viewed more than 330,000 times.



Protecting the future of dog activities together with our grassroots network



Our mission is to attract the next generation of dog owners into canine activities, at the same time as providing a framework and structure that is supportive, flexible and responsive to the needs of those organising events on the ground.

Crufts 2023 was a huge success – with over 19,000 dog entries and over 155,000 visitors to the event from all over the world – a happy return to numbers seen before the pandemic and a great way to start our 150th celebrations.

And as our flagship event which provides an opportunity to showcase all of our canine activities as fun, inclusive and accessible, and the loving relationships between competing dogs and their owners, we saw over 11,500 positive articles about Crufts 2023 in the media.

There was huge interest around the Young Kennel Club, Kennel Club Good Citizen Dog Training scheme and Dog Activities rings throughout the event. These areas showcase the benefits of training and taking part in activities with your dog, as well as the bond between our young people and dogs, and how we develop and encourage these young competitors to be the future of our sports.

Another popular part of Crufts – particularly with the general dog-owning public – is Scrufts, a family crossbreed competition where pets are judged on temperament, health and their relationship with their owners. Approximately 600 dogs entered the six heats from spring to autumn in 2023, with the final being judged at Crufts.

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Crufts provides an opportunity to showcase all of our canine activities as fun, inclusive and accessible.

As well as promoting and showcasing all the activities anyone can do with their dog – and the benefits of these activities to both owners and pets – Crufts saw a better-than-forecast profitability which helped to produce a stronger than anticipated financial performance in 2023.

Elsewhere, some of our highlights in the world of dog activities from 2023 include:

Junior Open World Agility Championships were hosted in the UK, with Team GB gaining more podium finishes than any other country.

The International Agility Festival is open to any dog, making it one of the few world-class agility competitions to be open to pedigrees, rescue dogs and crossbreeds alike. In 2023, over 2,500 dogs were entered by over 1,500 handlers.

The Kennel Club Agility Stakes is one of the top agility events and took place at London ExCeL as part of the London International Horse Show in December 2023. 70 dogs took part in the five-day event and we saw 1,700 pieces of media coverage promoting agility, those who take part, and its benefits, in 2023.

The prestigious Kennel Club Working Trials Championships, hosted by Surrey Dog Training Society in 2023, featured the most successful dogs from trials across the country, over the previous 12 months.

‘Have a go’ dog showing was held at all nine Breed Championship shows across the country, for those people who have never shown their pedigree dogs before, with a fun and informal final held at Crufts.

Young Kennel Club camp in August 2023 saw more than 80 young people gather for a week of training in all dog activities, with many achieving a Kennel Club Good Citizen Dog Training scheme award.

Protecting our sports and growing our grassroots

2023 saw ongoing financial pressures and a continued decline across some dog activities. To help understand the challenges, The Kennel Club conducted a survey of over 10,000 people involved in dog activities and has been evaluating this data and feeding in opinions and ideas to our transformation programme.

In addition to taking behind the scenes steps to understand the future and protect our dog activities, in 2023 we also took some immediate action to help improve the experience of those organising and taking part in these activities, including:

- Trialling for a second year the suspension of benching requirements in order to help dog show organisers in testing financial times;
- Introducing a red and yellow card system to deal with undesirable behaviour at Kennel Club licensed events or on social media – behaviour which will not help us retain or attract new people to our sports;
- Introducing changes to the way dogs become a Champion/Show Champion and changes to partnership show regulations.



‘Have a go’ dog showing is an opportunity for people who have never shown their pedigree dogs before to give the hobby a try.

Feedback from our members, staff, and dog activities and grassroots networks also indicated our organisation and governance around shows and committees can be hard to navigate. During 2023, we worked to address these concerns, and developed a new Regional Support Network of staff who will support our clubs and societies across the UK, due to be launched in 2024. And through our strategy work we are continuing to look at our governance around shows and committees to make improvements in this area, as well as further exploring and implementing suggestions fed through from our liaison councils, which represents the voice of those delivering dog activities on the ground.



Looking forward...

- Help those organising shows by launching a **Regional Support Network** in 2024 and continuing to improve our governance, so that we can support and be responsive to the needs of those organising and running activities, on the ground.
- Launch our **Judges Education Programme (Breed Shows) online platform** in 2024, to provide high quality and accessible training for judges, tasked with ensuring that shows are judged consistently and with health in mind.
- Use our insights to support the next generation of leaders in the world of dog activities and review **Young Kennel Club qualifications** and our offering for young people.

Building a relationship with more dog owners



We have been continuing to improve the knowledge and skills of our front-line customer service team.

One of our aims is to become relevant to more dog owners to increase our impact.

Building a relationship with dog owners begins with ensuring that those who use our information, products and services, have an excellent and seamless customer experience – so that they return to us time and again and recommend us to their friends. Over the past year, we have continued to review our internal and digital processes and identified the areas that were causing customers difficulty in puppy litter and change of ownership applications, and made the changes needed. As a result of this process improvement work, our application times to process registrations and change of ownership are at 3.5 days, our telephone waiting times are under two minutes and we have continued to maintain consistently top consumer feedback scores on Trustpilot, for both The Kennel Club and Petlog, over the past 12 months.

We are not complacent, and we have been continuing to improve the knowledge and skills of our front-line customer service team – enabling them to support our customers with a broad range of services and queries over the phone and now, for Petlog, through webchat.

A lifetime of support

After the first positive interaction with us – registering a puppy or transferring ownership – we increasingly provide a lifetime of invaluable services to enhance dogs' and dog owners' lives.

This includes services to ensure that dogs are microchipped and their details up to date, increasing the chances of them being returned to loving homes, should the worst happen. In addition to now having 14 million pets registered on Petlog – our animal microchip database service – we were instrumental in ensuring over 9,000 lost pets were able to get back home and be reunited with their owners. We are also preparing for compulsory cat microchipping, which becomes law in June 2024, and saw a 28% uplift in cat chips registered on our database in 2023 compared to 2021.

Furthermore, after the challenges that lockdown brought to people's ability to train and socialise their dogs, we were able to help approximately 30,000 dogs through

Last year our press campaigns resulted in more than **20,000 pieces of press coverage online**, in newspapers and on TV and radio, with an advertising value equivalent of **£85 million**. Online we continued to reach new audiences, achieving a cumulative total of **more than 2.4 million supporters** across all of our channels.

Of course, all external activity in the media aims to drive people to our website, our shop window to the world, and in 2023 more than **6.4 million people visited our website**. Our most visited pages were **Find a Puppy**, visited more than **11 million** times by more than **1.4 million people**, and our **health test results** page.



we want to increase our reach, through tailored communications, so that we can have a much broader positive impact on dogs' and owners' lives.

to guide national conversations about responsible breeding and buying choices – areas we are uniquely placed to advise on. As a result, we saw over 130 high-impact pieces of coverage in a variety of media, which positioned The Kennel Club as the first port of call for those thinking about getting a puppy from a responsible breeder.

Furthermore, record TV coverage of Crufts on Channel 4 and More 4 – 16 and a half hours in total, watched by 8.7 million viewers – highlighted a vast range of topics and issues that are important to the nation's dogs and their owners. This included conversations tackling health concerns and how to responsibly buy brachycephalic breeds, or choose the right dog for different lifestyles, through to exploring the training and activities that people and their dogs can get involved with.

our Good Citizen Dog Training scheme in 2023, the UK's largest dog training programme. The scheme teaches owners to train their dogs for everyday life situations to keep them and others, safe and happy. There are currently over 1,600 dog training clubs across the UK and overseas registered to take part and offer scheme courses, including 42 new clubs registered in 2023. In addition, 323 certificates were awarded to dog owners at selected dog shows throughout the UK – and more than 100 Good Citizen Dog Training scheme examiners were accredited, through 19 examiner assessment courses.

Spreading the word about what we offer to dog owners

As well as strengthening and securing our relationship with dog owners and providing a lifetime of relevant services, we want to increase our reach, through tailored communications, so that we can have a much broader positive impact on dogs' and owners' lives.

For example, through our 2023 Be Puppywise campaign, for which we annually gather industry-benchmarking data about people's puppy buying and owning experiences, we were able



Looking forward...

- **Make improvements** to the navigation of our website, enhancing our ability to service the needs of our customers with our full range of information, products and services.
- **Develop our dog training offering**, creating additional resources to support Kennel Club dog trainers and training clubs, and ensure all our training clubs offer a top-quality service that is continually compliant with changing legislation.
- **Change our processes and improve how we respond to our customers** right across the organisation so that we can grow the number of customers that we help and support.

Enhancing the experience of our members



Over the last two years we have been listening to our membership about what they want from their Club and exploring ways to improve and diversify the Club and member experience.

We know through our surveys that our members wanted an increased regional presence and better communication, which we have started to address through;

- New 'members round up' monthly email;
- Making better use of our Facebook members' zone and creating conversations;
- Talking to our members and other canine enthusiasts, and hearing your views face-to-face in our members' lounges. This started at Crufts and has since rolled-out to Championship shows across the country, and will continue in 2024.



In 2023, we celebrated our 150th anniversary with a memorable Garden Party at Buckingham Palace.

Highlights for our members during our 150th year

- In 2023, we celebrated our **150th anniversary** with a memorable Garden Party at Buckingham Palace. The event was well attended, with nearly **2,000 attendees**, which included members, those that have been influential to The Kennel Club and staff. We also hosted special themed lunches at Clarges Street in celebration of the Club's 150th anniversary.
- The most popular time for members to visit the Club remains Christmas, with over **1,200 members** and their guests visiting during this period.
- 2023 saw visitor numbers at our Club facilities in London match those of pre-pandemic levels. We served **over 7,500 lunches** in our restaurant.
- **Breed lunches:** We welcomed **over 1,100 guests** for 40 breed-themed lunches. These highly popular events will continue in 2024 with over 45 lunches already arranged.
- 2023 also saw the return of the popular **Chairman's cocktail party**.



Our Kennel Club Library

We have the largest canine library in the world, which deals with thousands of research requests each year. External researchers include journalists, authors, TV and radio researchers, breed historians, university academics and students, as well as ordinary dog owners – often with touching family stories about the dogs in their lives. Internally, library staff support the Kennel Gazette, and the press, health and education teams on their projects. 2023 saw 552 in-depth research in person visits and 430 external in-depth research requests.

Networking events

Our Club facilities, with the support of our Club Committee, ensure that our social events and gatherings largely support a greater ‘common sense of purpose’ within our dog world through interactions and networking opportunities.

The Kennel Club Art Gallery

Our art gallery holds the largest collection of dog art in Europe and contains artefacts spanning over two thousand years. The permanent collection features works by a number of noted dog artists and includes the famous Crufts Best in Show trophy.

In 2023, the gallery held the following number of tours and welcomed a total of over 2,500 visitors.

- Breed tours: 40
- Tours for external organisations: 27
- Tours for small personal groups and VIPs: 143

Alongside the successful 150th anniversary exhibition curated last year, we also held separate exhibitions in the foyer of the gallery, including a capsule display of loaned ceramics from Royal Crown Derby.



We have the largest canine library in the world, which deals with thousands of research requests each year.



Our art gallery holds the largest collection of dog art in Europe.

Looking forward...

- **Continue to expand our themed events for 2024**, to provide opportunities for all our members, whatever their areas of special interest, including offering events outside of London, closer to where some of our members live.
- **Explore ways to ensure that our excellent Club facilities** are fully utilised in order to generate much needed income to subsidise our other grassroots and membership services.
- **Make the best possible use of our Clarges Street premises**, freeing up office space for appropriate tenants to provide revenue, and continue to explore options for the Emblehope Estate, bringing back any decisions to our members as promised.
- **Four exciting exhibitions are planned for 2024 in our gallery:** Dogs in Advertising and Drawings of Dogs in the main exhibition space, plus capsule displays on the donations of the late Mrs Valerie Foss and the work of contemporary artist Deirdre Ashdown.

Championing the wellbeing of dogs



Our mission is to improve the lives of dogs and their owners, but we cannot achieve this in a silo. We need to stimulate conversations at a national level to ensure the subjects that matter are firmly engrained in the collective consciousness of all of those who make decisions that affect dogs' lives. In 2023, we launched reports in Parliament and held round tables and events with politicians, and underpinned these with supportive communications campaigns on topics that help to improve the general wellbeing of all dogs. Those topics range from responsible dog buying and ownership, to access for dogs and owners, shock collars and breeding. Here are just a few of the activities we led on in 2023:

Brachycephalic dog health

Addressing the specific brachycephalic dog health concerns has long been a priority for The Kennel Club. In 2023 we held events in the Westminster and Scottish parliaments to launch our report *Play Your Part: Breeding, buying and bringing up brachycephalic dogs better*. It detailed the collaborative measures that need to be taken by the puppy buying public, breeders, vets, the government and The Kennel Club to protect and improve the health of current and future generations of brachycephalic dogs.

Westminster and Holyrood Dog of the Year

We were delighted to welcome dog-loving politicians, from across the political spectrum, to our annual Dog of the Year events in Westminster and Edinburgh. Held in collaboration with Dogs Trust, 16 MPs and 13 MSPs took part in the 2023 competitions with their own dogs, or rescue dogs from Dogs Trust.



In 2023, we launched reports in Parliament and held round tables and events with politicians.



XL Bully dogs

We are strongly opposed to breed specific legislation and working alongside fellow members of the Dog Control Coalition, extensively lobbied administrations across the UK in relation to both the ban of XL Bully type dogs and its implementation. We did however welcome the Government’s confirmation, following our lobbying efforts, that the ban didn’t extend to breeds recognised by The Kennel Club.

Animal licensing consultations

The Scottish and Welsh Governments both launched consultations about extending animal activity licensing which could see the likes of dog walking or grooming, boarding and rescue and rehoming activities come into scope, across the respective administrations. We have provided detailed responses to both consultations highlighting the flaws to the proposal, which include the lack of benefit it would bring to animal welfare and the costs that would be added to services, as a result of the additional bureaucracy licensing would bring.

Access for dog walkers

Protecting dog owners’ rights to responsibly access our parks, beaches and open countryside continued to be a key plank of our activity. In 2023, we responded to a large number of local authorities who were introducing new, or extending existing, restrictions on dog walkers. We also worked with other land managers and interest groups to develop dog-friendly ways of managing access for dogs. We were particularly pleased to see Dorset Council ease walking restrictions on local beaches, having for a number of years supported local campaigning dog walkers in Lyme Regis.



Protecting dog owners’ rights to responsibly access our parks, beaches and open countryside continued to be a key plank of our activity.

Seasonal dangers

We continue to remind dog owners of seasonal dangers and give safety tips and advice, whether this be around fireworks – and the importance, in the event of a dog fleeing, of keeping microchip details up to date – Christmas and Easter dietary dangers, or the risks of blue/green algae in the summer months. In 2023, we alerted thousands of dog owners to these issues and the action to take to protect their pet through over 350 pieces of high impact press coverage, which was also amplified on our social media channels.

Looking forward...

- **Work to move forward the actions recommended in our *Play your Part* report in order to improve and protect brachycephalic dog health.**
- **Continue to champion the views of breeders and influence the Local Licensing of Activities Involving Animals Regulations (LAIAR).**
- **Launch a manifesto representing our priority action points for Government in time for the next election.**



Ensuring financial security and sustainability

The Kennel Club continues to strive to be a profit-for-purpose business, which enables us to reinvest any surplus (net of operating costs) into the services we provide and helps us to do more to achieve our strategic aims.

Our profits are reinvested to support our six strategic aims and our provision of excellent, relevant services and support for members, breeders, puppy buyers and those organising dog training and activities.

However, some services require substantial investment, and The Kennel Club is not immune to the challenges of operating in a difficult financial environment. The cost of running events in particular, has increased significantly in recent years, with most operating at a loss. Most of our products and services have not had a price increase for several years, whilst costs have continued to grow. We are currently spending considerably more than we earn – we have made an operating loss in the past two financial years – and this is depleting our reserves, something that cannot continue.

Our goal is to fund further projects to enhance the health and well-being of dogs, and to retain our commitment to the events that we run, however this cannot be at the expense of our sustainability as an operating entity – making it crucial that we stabilise our financial position. Without implementing transformational and real change now, and reviewing our pricing policies, we are in danger of exhausting our cash reserves in the short-to medium-term outlook.

2023: a financial overview

Last year we spent more than we generated, finishing the year with a net operating loss of £1.2 million, after all staff, operating costs and depreciation were considered. We recognise this is not sustainable and we have to take prompt action to reverse this situation.

Whilst the overall outlook remains cautious, we enjoyed a successful Crufts in 2023 – not only in terms of the experience, press coverage and atmosphere, but we also saw a better-than-forecast profitability – which contributed to a stronger than anticipated financial performance. We built on this for Crufts 2024.

An illustration of our income flow is on the next page.



Our goal is to fund further projects to enhance the health and well-being of dogs, and to retain our commitment to the events that we run.

How The Kennel Club made and invested income in 2023

To ensure that we are **financially secure and sustainable in the future**, it's important to understand where our income comes from.

This is a high-level view of how we generated income in **green**, and where we spent our money in **red**, during 2023.

Registrations

£5.5m

We registered over **227,000** puppies, as well as change of Kennel Club registered ownership and imports, and issued pedigree certificates. After covering staff and operating costs, we made **£5.5 million**.

Petlog

£0.6m

With over **14 million** pets now on our Petlog database, we helped over **9,000** pets find their way back home and made **£0.6 million**.

Shows, events and activities

-£5.0m

In **2023** we subsidised licensing, awards, training and canine activities by **£3.9 million**. We also subsidised **£1.1 million** supporting our events including Crufts. (In 2023, Crufts made a profit of **£0.4 million**.)

Crufts

Best in Show 2023

Partnerships and Find a Puppy

£4.3m

Our Find a Puppy service helped over **1.4 million** people search for the right puppy for them. That income, together with our commercial partnerships generated **£4.3 million**.

Health and welfare

-£2.4m

In **2023** we subsidised providing and supporting our health and welfare activities, our newly launched DNA Testing Services and our Assured Breeders scheme with **£2.4 million**.

Our membership services

-£2.8m

We subsidised providing a great membership experience with **£2.8 million**; including **£1.1 million** on club management, **£1.1 million** on print, production and publications and **£0.6 million** on the library and gallery.

In 2023 in total we generated **£10.8 million** of net income including **£0.4 million** investment income but we subsidised £12 million of activities including £1.8 million depreciation, which meant we made a loss last year of **£1.2 million**.

We are developing both short-term and long-term plans to ensure we are financially secure and sustainable for the future.

All figures above are summary figures and are not yet audited. All sums include operating costs and apportioned staff costs.

Ensuring financial security and sustainability (continued)



To continue our vital work for dogs and their owners, we need to protect and maximise our existing revenue streams.

Current outlook

To continue our vital work for dogs and their owners, we need to protect and maximise our existing revenue streams by making our range of products and services more relevant and valued by existing customers and look at ways of attracting more customers to The Kennel Club. **Our core focus is of course the registration system.** It sits at the heart of what we do financially, but also has implications in terms of how we demonstrate our commitment to safeguarding dog health. It is these twin aims which must both guide and anchor its evolution.

To ensure the right finances are in place heading into 2024, we have:

- Built secure foundations for our longer-term transformational plans to ensure continued financial success, and we have headed into 2024 with the insights and plans that we need to deliver change with a clear focus on growth and enhanced support to our grassroots;
- Renewed our important Agria partnership with an enhanced financial and wider benefit package;
- Created greater financial stability for Petlog, which has included renewing a large vet contract;
- Agreed a registrations price increase, which was vital to our ongoing sustainability;
- Developed plans for the management of the Clarges Street office floors, which will lead to leasing out two floors;
- Managed our Aylesbury space, leasing out one floor;
- Have actively been exploring options for Emblehope;
- Partnered with a sponsorship sales agency to activate more sponsorship and partnership opportunities;
- Created new licensed products including Crufts and Kennel Club branded commemorative coins, stamps, a calendar and book.



Looking ahead



we must ensure we are anchored by our health and welfare aims, in order to improve dog and owner lives for the better.



We will continue to streamline our governance structure to improve efficiency and decision implementation.

We have a lot to achieve and a lot to look forward to in 2024, and our eyes are firmly fixed on taking the steps needed to ensure that we remain financially secure and sustainable. To help us to do this, in 2024 we will be implementing changes at Clarges Street to move staff onto a single floor, freeing-up space for rental to an appropriate third party, generating valuable income. Alongside this we will be improving the members' entrance to enhance the Club experience. We'll be looking at options for Emblehope and our Aylesbury offices to ensure we are making the most of these assets. We will continue to review all our prices to ensure we are keeping in line with inflation and therefore managing the ongoing financial stability of the organisation, bringing decisions to our members for approval as appropriate.

In addition to aiding financial growth through a review of our assets, we must ensure that we have a service and product offering that is relevant and valuable to those who

use, or might in the future, turn to The Kennel Club. At the same time, we must ensure we are anchored by our health and welfare aims, in order to improve dog and owner lives for the better. Next year, to help us achieve these joint aims, we will be rolling out improvements to the search and navigation of The Kennel Club website, including our Find a Puppy service, launching a Puppy Pack to help our breeders give the right information to puppy buyers, and improving the focus on health and wellbeing across our registrations system.

In line with our strategic objective to support our grassroots, we will continue to improve the support we provide to local clubs and shows, including improvements to the Judges Education Programme and the online platform that supports it, and we will introduce a regional support network of expert staff to help organisers of all canine activities.

And finally, we will continue to streamline our governance structure to improve efficiency and decision implementation. As part of this we will set up a Business Committee with Directors and volunteers sitting alongside various members of the executive team.

Of course, alongside these improvements we will continue to deliver all our usual core activities, including Crufts, our programme of Club events and all the work we do to make a positive difference to dogs and their owners.

150 years of The Kennel Club

2023 was a milestone in The Kennel Club's history as we celebrated our 150th anniversary.

The Kennel Club was founded on 4 April 1873, by Mr Sewallis Evelyn Shirley, MP, and 12 other members, as dogs were growing increasingly popular as pets instead of working animals. Today, we're one of the largest organisations in the UK devoted to dog health, welfare and training, and our journey over the last century and a half maps the evolution of the unbreakable bond between dogs and humans that has developed over time, to today, where millions enjoy owning a four-legged friend.

Celebrations took centre-stage at Crufts

Celebrating our 150th year began at Crufts, where we launched a special video showcasing who we are, our history and our exciting aspirations for the future. This was played on screens in the main arena throughout the event and the Channel 4 programme did a special feature with Clare Balding about the founding and history of The Kennel Club, as well as the future for our organisation.

A special anniversary stakes class was held for all Best in Show and Reserve Best in Show winners of dog shows in 2022, and was won by Jake, Ch Huffish Rewrite The Stars with Atastar (Imp Swe) a four-year-old Standard Poodle from Bristol, owned by Philip Landon.

Marking 150 with our members

A 150th anniversary exhibition was held within the The Kennel Club Art Gallery. It told the history of The Kennel Club, showcasing its devotion to dog health, welfare and training with a collection of original paintings, historical artefacts and vintage photographs highlighting the bond between dogs and owners. A commemorative anniversary edition of The Kennel Gazette was produced which supplemented the exhibition and was also available at both Crufts and via The Kennel Club online shop.

In the first week of April, ahead of our official anniversary date, four special lunches were held in the Club, enjoyed by over 200 members. On 4 April, our founding date, an announcement was made to members that The Kennel Club had received the honour of a Royal prefix, granted kindly by His Majesty The King.

The Kennel Club was deeply privileged to be granted permission by His Majesty The King to hold a Garden Party at Buckingham Palace in May. This once-in-a-lifetime event was attended by over 2,000 guests – members, staff and supporters from round the world – who joined in celebrating The Kennel Club's milestone anniversary.



Other 150 years celebration highlights

- A 150th Kennel Club anniversary event took place on the first day of the Gundog Working Test in June.
- A tribute to the anniversary at the International Agility Festival in August.
- The Young Kennel Club's Artist of the Year competition celebrated our 150 years by featuring the winning artwork within the gallery's 150th exhibition.
- A special lunch was also held at The Kennel Club for ex-KCJO/YKC members.
- A licensed anniversary coin was produced.
- Licensed anniversary Guernsey stamps were launched.

Watch our video

celebrating 150 years of making a positive difference for dogs, scan the QR code or visit [thekennelclub.org.uk/150years](https://www.thekennelclub.org.uk/150years)



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