LAPA™

HELPING ANIMALS IN RUSSIA

ANNUAL REPORT

April 2015 – March 2016

Overview

In the year where **LAPA** turned **3 years old** we are very pleased to provide an update on our positive acheivements, both in terms of our increased output and reach, but also of some developments in Russia.

Russia

Russia continues to be a very challenging enviremant for us and for animal welfare charities generally. There is no doubt that the problem with animal abuse and poor animal welfare standards in Russia is wide-spread and is on a large scale. In particular, the problem with stray over population and bandonment of pets remains very wide spread. Our work on the ground in the last year has found that there are **2 positive developments at a country-wide level in the Russian society** regarding stray overpopulation problem.

1

The increase in recognition of the stray overpopulation problem is measurable. It is evident from the increased publicity (**from nothing to something**) about the work of private and municipal shelters on national and local TV as well as in the press and on social media. Some information is very encouraging, some deeply disturbing.

The **positive** is that there is **recognition** that a problem with overpopulation exists.

The **view of the press** largely appers to be that the **formation** of **good animal shelters** and animal rescue work should be **encouraged** in Russia.

2

The **growth** in the number of volunteer groups and registered charities **working on the ground** in Russia, primarily in Moscow and big regional cities and the **growth** in the number of individuals working in the rescue/re-homing of animals.

There is also a **growing acknowledgment** among experienced animal rescue groups and shelters of the **importance of education in the strategic resolution of the stray overpopulation** problem. Funding remains a huge challenge for animal welfare groups and charities which means that there is shortage of time and resources.

Sterilisation programme

During the year 2015-2016, we sponsored the sterilisation of **592 animals** which comprises of **316 dogs** and **282 cats**. We are really pleased with this number as it represents **more than a ten times (or a 100%) increase compared to the previous financial year**. Most of the animals sterilised are females and there is high percentage of those who were pregnant.

This means that we have helped and saved **592 live animals** and approximately **592,000 unborn animals**.

You can see how quickly stray populations can get out of control:

		Number of births **(e.g. 10)**		**Number of births** **(e.g. 12)**
Year 1	1 cat will produce 10 to 15 kittens per year	1 x 10 = **10 cats** (*e.g. 5 female and 5 male*)	1 dog will produce 12 – 24 puppies per year	1 x 12 = **12 dogs** (*e.g. 6 female and 6 male*)
Year 2	5 female cats from year 1, have litters (plus cat from year 1)	6 x 10 = **60 cats** (*e.g. 30 female and 30 male*)	6 female dogs from year 1, have litters (plus dog from year 1)	7 x 10 = **70 dogs** (*e.g. 35 female and 35 male*)
Year 3	30 female cats from year 2 (plus cats from year 1)	36 x 10 = **360 cats** (*e.g. 180 female and 180 male*)	35 female dogs from year 2 (plus dogs from year 1)	41 x 10 = **410 dogs** (*e.g. 205 female and 205 male*)
Year 4	180 female cats (plus cats from years 1 and 2)	216 x 10 = **2,160 cats** (*e.g. 1,080 female and 1,080 male*)	205 female dogs (plus dogs from years 1 and 2)	246 x 10 = **2,460 dogs** (*e.g. 1,230 female and 1,230 male*)
Year 5	1080 female cats (plus cats from years 1, 2 and 3)	1,296 x 10 = **12,960 cats** (*e.g. 6,480 female and 6,480 male*)	1,230 female dogs (plus dogs from years 1, 2 and 3)	1,476 x 10 = **14,760 dogs** (*e.g. 7,380 female and 7,380 male*)

Sterilisation programme

The animals we sterilise fall into the following criteria:

Over **90%** of the animals that we sterilise are rescued, sterilised and are not returned to the streets, instead they are placed in private shelters, foster homes or are re-homed.

This is a typical private shelter in the Moscow region, it is summer.

The remaining **10%** are caught, sterilised and after a suitable recovery period, put back into their original environment. These animals are either **feral cats** (who live in the basements of residential block of flats) or **community animals** (individual cats and dogs living in a specific location (such as a shop or bus shelter office or security guard's quarters at a private underground car park, etc).

Feral cats

In the case of feral cats, there is no chance of taming or re-homing them but sterilising them prevents further unwanted births and the suffering and deaths of future litters of kittens.

Therefore, sterilising and then returning them to their environment is the most humane thing to do in our opinion. The animals we help have dedicated rescue workers allocated to them locally who regularly check on the cats' well being and feed them.

Community animals

In the case of community animals, in some circumstances sterilising them and them returning them into their original environment is the only available option or the best option available. This is because the influx of abandoned animals into the streets is far greater than the capacity for rescuing them and them finding foster facilities for them or re-homing them.

Sterilisation helps to reduce the numbers, reduces the suffering of females because they do not have to give girth and look after the endless litters of kittens or puppies and it eliminates the unnecessary deaths of the litters or the future suffering of those few who manage to survive. In some circumstances, the animals are well looked after by the local community and returning the sterilised animal to their environment carries no more risk of uncertainty for that animal than re-homing (where we see prevalent difficulties). Again, the animals we help have dedicated local rescue workers allocated to them who regularly check on them.

Sterilisation programme

Our sterilisation programme achieves the following:

- It allows local rescue groups to rescue and re-home more animals thereby saving lives – it is not safe to re-home unsterilized animals so unless we help them, the animals remain in the shelter or in the street because the rescue groups do not have the funds to sterilise them.
- It is an important tool in educating adults and raising awareness about the importance of sterilisation. It is simply not possible in Russia to preach about the importance of sterilisation without offering a facility for it.
- It serves as an effective spring board for launching our educational programmes in the areas where we help with sterilisation on the basis of the relationships we have formed we local rescue groups/shelters.

LAPA's Sterilisation Programme reach

Just some of the animals we have helped this year

Educational programme

Our bespoke interactive educational programme for school children continues to be a success. The programme currently consists of one lesson entitled "**People and Animals**" and is **targeted at children aged 7 – 12** although we have **tailored** and trialled this on **other age groups**. The programme is focused on:

Encouraging children to think about what makes animals happy and unhappy	How animals end up being strays?
What is responsible pet ownership?	What can be done to prevent animals from ending up in the street?

Our lessons take the form of a debate about selected photographs and animated images and charts. It is **interactive**, **non-dogmatic** and whilst there is sound structure to the lesson, the children have a chance to ask questions and share their own experiences.

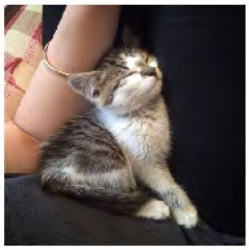
Educational programme

The programmes help children develop their **cognitive skills**, **logical thinking** and **debating skills**.

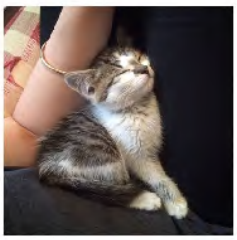
The programme is also offered in **Russian** or **English** or an appropriate mixture of the two depending on the children's level of English. **This hugely appeals to parents and teachers**.

Our lessons are conducted by **bi-lingual individuals** with appropriate skills and **direct knowledge** and experience of animal welfare issues in **Russia** and **LAPA's sterilisation** work in particular.

Веселый или грустный? Почему?



Happy or sad? Why?



Счастливые истории

Джим до..

п о с л е

Happy ending stories

Jim before..

A F T E R

Educational programme

The financial year 2015/2016 we have **conducted lessons** for **270 children** most of which were in **Moscow schools**. This is approximately the same number of children as last year. The lessons are conducted by volunteers who need to take time off work in order to come to school and there is a natural restriction on their ability to do that, speciality during school hours.

There is a clear demand for implementing the programme on a full time basis by hiring specialist individuals to do this.

There is also a clear demand from the schools for follow up lessons and we now conduct lessons on "**Safety around animals**". This lesson is to teach some essential basic skills of appropriate and **safe behaviour with cats and dogs** to **prevent children from being bitten**, **scratched** and as a result animals being abused or abandoned through the lack of understanding about their behaviour by humans. We successfully launched this lesson in April 2016 and we hope to be able to report it's success in next year's report.

Our programme is now being offered in the regions. We offer training of local volunteer groups by Skype by providing our materials, by training them by video on Skype, by sharing our two years of conducting our programmes and by providing regular feedback and monitoring the local groups' progress after they have launched our programme. On this basis we have successfully trained a group of volunteers in Biysk (Altai region, Siberia) and a group of volunteers in Tomsk (Siberia). The group in Tomsk has successfully implemented our programme for approximately 80 children. The challenge for all groups is to find volunteers who have suitable skills, field knowledge and availability to conduct such programmes on a regular basis.

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Educational programme