

Q & A

How is haws managed?

H.A.W.S. is administered by a Management Committee, which in the past was elected by the local community but is now elected by the members of H.A.W.S. It consists of a Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer, Fundraiser and ordinary members.

Our full-time staff includes a Kennel Manager and two assistants, plus a casual worker, helped by a dedicated group of volunteers.

What do we do?

We operate a rented kennel and cattery in the Rietfontein area where we provide a home for up to 80 dogs and 45 cats, veterinary treatment for sick or injured animals with our main focus being on re-homing these animals. We only allow the animals in our care to go to good, loving homes after a thorough property check and every animal is vaccinated and sterilized before leaving our kennels.

Where do all our animals come from?

The animals that are admitted to haws are strays, abandoned or unwanted and in limited cases confiscated because of abuse or neglect.

Why do people give their animals away?

For a number of reasons: owners moving to a property that is too small or does not allow animals, owners are immigrating, owners cannot afford to keep them, or because of an animal's behavioural problems.

How long do we keep an animal for?

It depends largely on the animal. If an animal is adoptable, healthy and adjusted to life in a kennel/cattery every effort is made to find it a home. We prefer not to have animals in a shelter for longer than 6 months. Once 6 months has elapsed we try to find an animal a foster home to prevent kennel stress due to prolonged kennel stay.

Why do you do property checks?

Haws always insists on doing property inspections to ensure our animals are going to safe homes. One of the items inspected is how the property is enclosed. A number of our dogs are strays for the very reason that their properties were not fully enclosed. We would only be contributing to the problem if we allowed animals being homed to a property where they are at risk of escaping.

We realize it lengthens the time between finding the animal you love and being able to take it home, but it is only because we love the animals in our care want the very best for them!

What do you look for when doing a property check?

1. Property must be well secured so as not to provide the animal with an opportunity to escape.
2. When driving in or out of property the animal must not be at risk of running out into the road.
3. Is there sufficient space for the specific breed of dog?
4. Is there a swimming pool? Is there a barrier preventing the dog from reaching the pool? Especially important with regards to puppies.
5. There must be shade for the animal in the yard as well as shelter from wind and rain.
6. Where will the animal sleep? A kennel, outside room or such is needed that will provide the animal with protection from heat, cold, wind and rain. Bedding is also a good indication of how well they will look after the animal.

7. Where will they feed the animal? Bowls should be kept in such a place that it would not go off from direct sunlight or wet from being in the rain.
8. There must be fresh water provided throughout the day.
9. Do they have other animals? Are they in good condition (Healthy, well fed, free of parasites)? Do they appear to be well socialized with people and other animals? Are the animals sterilized and inoculated?
10. Do they have children?
11. How much time do they have to spend with the animal?
12. Where is the closest vet?

What do you look for when doing a post-home property check?

1. Is the animal in good health? If needed, did the animal have its booster inoculation?
2. Is the animal free of any parasites?
3. Does the animal appear to be content? Any behavioral problems that have arisen?
4. Is the property still acceptable?

Why must an animal be vaccinated?

An animal must be vaccinated to protect it from serious diseases such as:

Canine distemper

Symptoms include coughing, diarrhea, high temperature, vomiting, sore eyes and a runny nose. Sometimes the nose and foot pads can become hard and cracked and, in severe cases there can be fits, muscle spasms or paralysis. The disease can be fatal.

Canine Parvovirus

This is a highly contagious disease characterized by bloody diarrhea. Other symptoms include vomiting, lack of energy, depression and a high temperature. Puppies under 6 months old are particularly susceptible to the Parvo virus which can be fatal.

Canine hepatitis

Symptoms of this include coughing, abdominal pain, seizures, vomiting and diarrhea. Eyes may appear blueish (hepatitis blue eye). Puppies under twelve months old are most susceptible to this serious and potentially life threatening liver condition.

Leptospirosis

This is a bacterial disease that can be picked up from contact with the urine of infected animals. One form of Lepto can be picked up from the urine of other dogs, another, also known as Weil's disease, is picked up from rat urine. Symptoms include depression, high temperature, severe thirst, lethargy, increased urination, abdominal pain, vomiting, bloody diarrhoea and jaundice. If your puppy becomes jaundiced you may notice that his skin is yellow – this also be identified in the white of his eyes or inside his cheek. In severe cases, this disease can prove fatal within a few hours. This form of Lepto can be transmitted to humans too.

Canine parainfluenza virus

This is a highly infectious disease that causes kennel cough. This is a dry, hacking cough that can be so severe that it may sound as if the dog is choking

(<http://www.myhillspet.com/Puppy/Health/Health%20problems.aspx>)

Why must an animal be sterilized?

Neutering

Neutering is by far the best thing you can do for your puppy. Here's why:

Neutered puppies grow up healthier and happier

Did you know that neutering has health benefits?

If you're the proud owner of a female puppy, you'll be interested to hear that spaying can reduce her chances of developing breast cancer, uterine cancer and ovarian cancer. It also lessens the likelihood of uterine infection. All that, plus avoiding the risks associated with an unplanned pregnancy. Some vets prefer to neuter bitches before their first season, but others don't, so talk to your vet about timing.

If you have a male puppy, you should know that neutering will prevent testicular tumours and may prevent prostate problems. It also reduces the possibility of perineal tumours and hernias.

The benefits to you

The obvious benefit to you and your family of having your puppy neutered is that you'll never have to deal with unwanted litters. But there are other advantages too. Males neutered early in life are less aggressive, less distracted by females in heat, less likely to mark their territory with urine and less likely to mount the furniture or your leg!

Spaying a female puppy will stop stray males camping in your garden and decrease her desire to roam and breed.

Of course, if your puppy is a purebred, you may be thinking you could get good money out of selling any offspring. Bear in mind though, that even for experienced breeders, most of the 'profits' is eaten up with stud fees, vaccinations and other healthcare costs. Breeding also requires hard work and specialist knowledge so, all in all, it's something best left to the professionals.

The benefits to society

Tragically, every year millions of dogs are put to sleep in this country. Most of them are the result of accidental breeding by free-roaming un-neutered dogs. Neutering your puppy means that you won't be adding to this problem.

Worries you may have about neutering

Despite all the strong evidence in favour of neutering, you may have some concerns. Let's tackle a few common ones:

Worries about your puppy having an operation

Nobody takes their puppy having an operation lightly but it's important you realize that neutering is a routine procedure that's statistically very safe. The medical benefits far outweigh any risks.

Will my puppy get fat?

There's absolutely no need for a neutered puppy to gain weight. Just remember to adjust how much you feed him in line with his activity level. Or, you could consider switching to a lower calorie food such as Hill's™ Science Plan™ Light when he reaches one year old.

My puppy's personality will change

Only for the better! He'll be less aggressive, less likely to wander and less likely to spray (mark his territory with urine).

What's involved?

Your pet will be required to have a general anesthetic for this procedure to be carried out. For

males, the operation involves the removal of both testicles; for females, the removal of the womb and the ovaries or just the ovaries.

Normally your vet will ask you not to give your puppy anything to eat or drink for twelve hours before the operation.

You'll probably be able to bring your puppy home on the same day, although he may have to stay a little longer if he's very sleepy.

Your vet will recommend, and may provide, a light meal to be fed to your puppy that evening. Once your puppy is back home he'll need a few days of rest and TLC. Don't let him jump around or bite his sutures. Any exercise should be 'lead exercise only' and accompanied by you. Your vet will give you further advice on caring for him and let you know when to take your puppy for his post-op check. Usually you will be asked to come back to have the stitches checked and if necessary removed 10 days post surgery.

<http://www.myhillspet.com/Puppy/Health/Neutering.aspx>

If you need to find these animals good homes, why don't you give them away for free?

The animal is free, the adoption fee covers the expense haws incurs when sterilizing, vaccinating and de-worming the animal before it is homed.

What must I do if I see a dog running in the street?

Many of the dogs you see roaming the streets are dogs that often get out of their property and are very much streetwise and should not be picked up. If the owner of the dog is known you can report the matter to the kennel manager that will organise a visit to the owners and discuss the situation with them. It is a city by-law that animals should be contained in a property and should only be allowed outside of the property when being walked on a lead.

However, if a dog looks bewildered, in poor condition and whose actions are a danger to itself or others the dog can be picked up and brought into haws. This is preferred as by the time someone from haws arrives at the scene the animal is in most circumstances not there. If picking up the dog is not an option haws can be contacted on 076 455 0322.

Are barking dogs a valid complaint?

No, barking is normal dog behaviour. A noise complaint can be lodged with the Police.

What is considered a valid complaint?

Always consider the "five freedoms"

- freedom from hunger, thirst and malnutrition;
- freedom from fear and distress;
- freedom from physical and thermal discomfort;
- freedom from pain, injury and disease; and
- freedom to express normal patterns of behaviour

Who do I report a case of cruelty to?

Bring a case of cruelty to the attention of the Kennel Manager who will investigate the case. In severe cases of cruelty where confiscation may be needed the Kennel Manager will contact the volunteer Inspector.

Why doesn't haws confiscate all animals that are being abused?

EDUCATION, EDUCATION, EDUCATION! With the exception of severe cases of cruelty we choose to work with the owners, educating them on the correct way to care for animals. This

contributes to the end of the cycle of abuse whereas removing the animal only opens a space for another to be abused.

Does haws sterilize, vaccinate and treat animals that belong to members of the community?

Unfortunately, haws does not have a vet on staff and all haws animals go to a local vet for sterilizations, vaccinations and treatment.

Do the local Vets help?

The local vets assist haws by providing a discount on surgeries, vaccinations and treatments of haws animals on the condition that haws does not abuse this discount by allowing private individuals (i.e. animals that are not in haws care) to use our account.

How does haws help disadvantaged people that own animals?

Haws implements the South African Veterinary Council's means test to determine whether an individual qualifies for welfare assistance. Should an individual qualify for such assistance haws will allow treatment, sterilization or vaccination of the individual's animal, however the degree of assistance is dependent on HAWS's financial status.

An individual that passes the means test will be liable for the payment of the veterinary account or will have to volunteer 1 hour for every R50 that cannot be paid.

How does haws afford to operate financially?

Our operations are funded entirely by voluntary donations and fundraising, with no government assistance.

How can I help?

- HELPING AT THE KENNELS:
- HELPING WITH MAINTENANCE AT THE KENNELS
- HELPING AT THE BOOKSHOP WHICH IS OPEN WED, THU, SAT
- HELP MANNING TABLES AT FETES, SHOPPING MALLS, MAINLY OVER THE WEEKENDS
- HELPING WITH FUNDRAISING EVENTS
- DRIVING TO COLLECT DONATIONS/ANIMALS
- SQUATTER CAMP MASS VACCINATION DAYS
- FOSTERING
- EDUCATIONAL TALKS
- MAKING FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTIONS OR DONATIONS IN KIND

If I'd like to make a financial contribution how would I go about it?

You can make a once-off donation or a monthly stop order and soon to be implemented a debit/credit card order.

Our banking Details are:

Standard Bank

Branch - Brits

Branch Code - 052546,

Account Number - 033183074

Account Name - Hartbeespoort Animal Welfare Society

Please use the ref: "donation and then your name". We would love to know who you are so please email proof of payment to treasurer@haws.co.za.

Otherwise a cash/cheque donation can be made to the Kennel Manager at the haws shelter.