

Friends of GAWT News Update

April 2007



The News From The Shelter

Sometimes you just have to grit your teeth and start over again. And that's what has happened with our long-awaited completion of purchase for the property we were planning to convert to a new animal welfare shelter. Many of you have written to know how our plans are going and I wanted to bring everyone up to date, because we have been coping with a crisis.

To start at the beginning. Our leasehold in the present premises runs out in June this year, and about ten months ago we found a site just outside Margao complete with a house in good condition, which could be converted. We approached the owner and a sale was agreed. However, through circumstances completely outside our control, the completion of purchase of this property still looks to be a long way away. This means that we are faced with urgently finding alternative premises, to rent temporarily, to which we can move when our lease is up in June. (We have to move animals, staff, equipment etc. before the rains begin).

Meanwhile we have taken a decision, since the purchase of the original site is not proceeding quickly enough for us to see a completion date in the near future, that we must go back to square one and find another property as a matter of urgency.

Once that decision was taken, and we had faced the worst, everybody's minds focussed on the problem, and we have found another property, which meets our needs. The plot is 3,350 sq. metres, so significantly larger than the original, and the land is all usable. There is an old house on the property with a bad roof that would need to be replaced urgently. That is the biggest problem because not only do we

have to have the money to purchase the place, we also need to raise funds for repairs, removal and set-up.

Inevitably, because there is more land, and because of the extraordinary appreciation in real estate prices, the cost is higher. For this purchase alone we need to find a further 5 lakhs,* (approximately £6000 depending on rate of exchange). Although we get some money from central government towards the costs of building, there is, of course, no funding for this side of things.

Right now, the Trustees in Goa are contacting all possible sources of money and goodwill. Hopefully we will be able to find somewhere to rent in the short term, and raise enough funds to meet at least some of the shortfall on the purchase price and set-up costs.

This crisis has taken over everyone's lives, but the good news is that we have still managed to meet our annual target for sterilisations of 1500 stray dogs over the last twelve months. And the work continues at the camps and at the Shelter as usual. If you want to know more please contact us either through our website at info@gawt.org or me at friendsofgawt@gawt.org.

Thank you everyone for your enquiries and concerns about our future. I hope the above helps.

*A lakh is Rs. 100,000/-

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