

New Organization Emerges to Champion Animal Welfare across Ontario

ONTARIO: A group of several humane societies has formalized their partnership as the **Ontario Animal Welfare Network (OAWN)**, *A Collaboration of Leading Community SPCAs & Humane Societies*. The OAWN formed after years of informal collaboration between the humane societies to share best practices, lend support and help individual organizations grow — all with the goal of helping animals.

The group consists of 11 humane societies and SPCAs who together serve more than 30% of Ontario's population:

Guelph Humane Society
Hamilton/Burlington SPCA
Humane Society of Kawartha Lakes
Humane Society of Kitchener Waterloo & Stratford Perth
Humane Society London & Middlesex
Lincoln County Humane Society
Oakville & Milton Humane Society
Ottawa Humane Society
Sarnia & District Humane Society
Sault Ste. Marie Humane Society
Windsor/Essex County Humane Society

"This collaboration has been tremendous," says OAWN member Steve Ryall. "When I joined Humane Society London & Middlesex as Executive Director, it was hugely helpful to be able to draw on the experience of other leaders across the province."

The group provides leadership on animal welfare matters, advocates for animals and works to bring humane societies and SPCA's in Ontario together collaboratively. Since 2016, OAWN has unofficially partnered to strengthen individual organizations in the interests of animal welfare. "This has been an amazing partnership that was missing in Ontario," says Windsor/Essex County Humane Society Executive Director Melanie Coulter. "If I need to run an idea past someone, if I need a policy or a recommendation for a supplier, I have colleagues across the province to turn to."

Beginning with just 5 members, OAWN has grown to 11 members and continues to advocate, educate and collaborate.

Those interested in learning more about the **Ontario Animal Welfare Network** are invited to visit www.oawn.ca.

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The Humane Society of Kitchener Waterloo & Stratford Perth is a leader in Animal Welfare in our communities, focusing on what is in the best interest of the pets. We do this through community education, advocacy, care, and compliance. We are a registered charity and receive no government funding for our programs. Charitable BIN 11898 3550 RR0001

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