

The GSA was shocked and saddened to recently learn of the financial crisis facing the Animal Health Trust [AHT] and understand that if an emergency rescue fund is not secured, the Trust will close. This is devastating news for the employees at the animal hospital, cancer centre and the genetic testing and research centre, as well as the many who have benefited from these expertise over the years.

The Gordon community has forged strong links with the AHT since 2009 when PRA in the breed became a concern. Funds were raised and we were delighted when the AHT launched a DNA test for PRA rcd-4 in March 2011. This gave breeders greater freedom to make informed decisions when breeding, no dog needed to be taken out of the gene pool once its genetic status was known and most importantly it meant that we no longer would breed dogs affected by rcd-4. Although this test is now available at other laboratories, many remained loyal to the AHT.

Gordon setters were also part of the Genome project and it was hoped this could be beneficial to future research. Likewise, there were discussions about starting a breed DNA bank with them so both these projects are now in jeopardy.

There are already some DNA samples from Gordons stored there and it is unclear what will happen to these if the AHT does cease. I have made enquiries about this in the hope they can be saved.

We all hope that a solution can be found and that the world of dogs is able to continue benefiting from the great work the AHT has done for so many animals.

Kathryne Wrigley Health Co Ordinator      March 2020