

## Halifax has shiny new pound

Homeward Bound takes over city's animal shelter contract April 1  
By SHERRI BORDEN COLLEY Staff Reporter  
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Christine Graham and five-week-old pup Theodore tour the kennels of the Homeward Bound City Pound. Graham was dogsitting the puppy.

It's not exactly a four-star pet hotel, but it's comfy and clean.

On Monday, Homeward Bound City Pound, in conjunction with Halifax Regional Police, opened the doors to the media and public for the grand opening of the Halifax region's new animal shelter.

Starting Thursday, the spanking new facility in Dartmouth's Burnside Park will provide shelter for up to 21 dogs and 10 cats impounded by the municipality's animal services.

Public access to the inside of the shelter will not be permitted once animals are on-site. There is, however, a public waiting area.

"There's a mixture of animals in here that would be under seizure and not under seizure so, because of ongoing court cases in relation to that, we would normally create a lot of evidence and that kind of thing, and . . . that's what (the animals) are, they would in some cases be the evidence," said Supt. Bill Moore, the officer in charge of the Halifax Regional Police division that oversees animal services.

"Sometimes there will be animals in here that would be potentially dangerous, that's why we have them in custody. We just don't keep animals in custody just because we want to keep them. They're here because we feel there's a public safety issue."

Allison Dube, the shelter's animal care supervisor, also cited protection of the animals and the privacy of their owners as other reasons for not allowing the public into the shelter.

The pound includes one ward for pets available for adoption, a grooming room for the animals along with a shower for the staff, a play room for cats and small dogs, a cat ward with eight cages, 16 dog kennels, a food preparation room complete with a dishwasher, and an isolation ward for sick or badly injured animals.

The floor throughout the facility is totally scrubbable, and drains from each kennel prevent cross-contamination between the animals.

Behind the shelter, there's a small paved and gated area where the animals can run.

The municipality's animal control section brings in about 850 animals a year. Sixty-one per cent were adopted out last year, Hope Swinimer, Homeward Bound's owner and director, told reporters.

Swinimer is a certified veterinary hospital manager with 20 years of experience. Best known as an advocate for wildlife, she has run a sanctuary for injured and orphaned animals since 1997.

The shelter's other seven staff members also have extensive backgrounds in shelter management and animal caregiving.

"We have four main things we need to do and that is veterinary care, tender loving care for the animals, reuniting with the owners and, if that's not possible, then trying to find them a good home," Swinimer said.

On Jan. 26, Halifax regional council awarded a two-year contract to Homeward Bound, with the right to tack on three one-year extensions. The deal is worth about \$2.3 million.

Homeward Bound will take over this task from the Nova Scotia SPCA, whose contract with the municipality expires Wednesday. The SPCA had the contract for about 10 years.

Homeward Bound will also operate a backup site in an undisclosed rural area specifically for animals that may be at the pound for longer periods while their fates are determined

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**rhharley wrote:**

THANK GOD the SPCA is out of this. Let's start worrying about the animals and not about a popularity contest.

**imjustsayin wrote:**

Safe to say that Brindi the dogs gunna be at the undisclosed location.

**itsjustme wrote:**

Congrats on the new shelter. But why are they all in Dartmouth? I want to work with animals, I want to help, but it's all in Dartmouth.

**karmaqueen wrote:**

good news!

**Midnighter wrote:**

Bravo Halifax - You did something correct! Would you like a cookie? Glad the pups have found a new home.

**Keith P. wrote:**

Why are we paying police to be involved with stray animals? That is a totally inappropriate role for law enforcement officers. What's next, police accompanying garbage trucks to check for violations there?

**Sally8129 wrote:**

Great for orphaned animals BUT am I correct in reading this place shelters only 21 dogs and 10 cats. That's not many animals !!!! I'd like to hear more details as to how much this cost to open and more details on the operations of it. At least there will be 31 animals sheltered.

**Tank wrote:**

Good protection for those who cannot protect themselves. Animals, especially cats and dogs, give us unconditional love and affection, it is right and fitting we give them a "social service" they cannot provide for themselves. My hat is off to anyone who rescues and provides safe haven for our furry ones.

**David fm CH wrote:**

because if they'd have tried to build something like this in Halifax, even with the entire council on board, it would have taken 2.5 years at least to exhaust all of the protests and reviews by the NIMBYs.

**Newbec wrote:**

Yah...Halifax is finally doing something right by taking the contract away from the SPCA...thank God! Just maybe Brindi the (non dangerous) dog will be transferred here until someone makes the right decision and returns her home:) Good luck Hope with the pound...I'm sure you will run it well..all the best.

**Google wrote:**

Great news! I would love to go to it and find a new dog....Should I drive through Burnside and listen for barking? I wish the article mentioned how to find the pound because that would make adoption easier. 10 cats!!! The sounds like 1 day of strays? To "Just in time" Burnside is part of Halifax Regional Municipality. If your prized Halifax doesn't want chickens and got rid of their pound off Robie St. years ago they wouldn't want this building. I think it is Burnside because it is a business area and neighbours will not complain at night about the barking. The good news is they built a

bridge to cut the drive time down from Old Halifax.

**ihave2say... wrote:**

It's wonderful to see this new facility, and long overdue. Bravo to the Halifax Police Dept to caring so much (saw them on BT this am) :)

**PF wrote:**

Councilor David Hendsbee's and mayor Peter Kelly must be very sad, their proposed 10 million dollar cat euthanization facility will probably be put on hold indefinitely, after 2 years of councils time went into it. Looks like they will need to find something else to talk about in council...like maybe an important issue?

**hfxman wrote:**

Hooray for the new pound, glad to see its open :)

**another voice wrote:**

millions of dollars, large number of staff and the HPD. for 10 cats and 20 dogs, yeah ! money well spent ??

**CuriousCat wrote:**

I respect Hope and wish her well in this venture. I have a few questions I wish were answered in this article. When are adoption hours and what is the adoption process and fee? I was given the understanding by a staff member at the open house yesterday that a lot of the adoptables will be farmed out to local rescues as soon as possible. If this is the scenario most of those rescues are funded totally by public donation so is this sort of a passing off the costs situation? It would be interesting to know what professional behaviourist they have on board that will be assessing these animals especially if they were picked up as "a danger to the public". The reason is two fold as a professional behaviourist will be able to determine which animals are salvageable for retraining and adoption and which should not be released to the public again. It is imperative that staff have the appropriate training. At this point finding contact and basic information for the Pound is difficult. It is over on Brownlow Ave and is just several doors before the Emergency Vet Clinic. The SPCA never should have been an AC facility as it puts its voice for advocacy in jeopardy.

**danby wrote:**

Good for them if responsible ownership is given to animals by owners as should be they will only need a small area to hold small numbers. Good for Dartmouth it is about time HRM did not get ALL of these contracts especial with no expertise to do the job. HRM is not elected to do for animals and listen to constant special interest group complaints they can't resolve without expertise this lady has. We expect good things and less complaint on care of the animals but will monitor spending issues as taxpayers as is our right to do if we pay the way we have the say.

**brother728 wrote:**

Wow. Crazy. As much as I'm glad to see SPCA and these fine people in...isn't it a little strange that an animal shelter funded with tax dollars is "off limits" to the public? How do they adopt animals to people if you can't see them? And it's also pretty weird that tax dollars are funding an "undisclosed" location. Are you sure that wasn't Barney Fife they interviewed as the animal control officer? Dim.

**apanda wrote:**

21 dogs and 10 cats? That's not nearly enough room.

**boscobear wrote:**

Keith P... I believe you are confused as to how the police service is involved. There are not "police officers" going door to door dealing with animal calls. Both By-Law and Animal Control services fall under the management of police services as they often involve the laying of charges or ticketing. Police management oversees the process, however, for the most part the individuals performing the "door to door" work are civilians that have been given special statuses to perform their duties under certain provisions in law.

**RegReader wrote:**

Shelter for 31 animals??? This has waste of money written all over it!

**MeganFox wrote:**

Glad Hope got the contract. She is a real hero to so many people and animals. Would like to see \$\$\$ from the municipality go towards TNR also. There are many, many homeless cats and not enough homes. Spay and Neuter !

**dartguy1 wrote:**

People are confused. This is only animals impounded by animal control. Not a shelter per se. I believe the SPCA shelter is still available for adoptions but they don't have the contract anymore to look after animal control cases.

**mr\_smith wrote:**

I hope this report is wrong. Only space for 28 dogs and just 10 cats??? Are you joking? For that amount of money those numbers should be quadrupled or more. The main problem with the SPCA shelter was overcrowding and the SPCA handled more the three times the animals mentioned here. There should be space for 200 cats given the discard populations in HRM. If your reporting is true then someone is pulling a fast one to get tax dollars.

**rozee wrote:**

Don't forget folks the SPCA is not closing. <http://www.metro.spcans.ca/> It just no longer has the city pound contract. They are still going to take in cats, dogs etc.(from what I am told) The pound is taking in dangerous pets and pets on the loose that the city picks up. They are located in the old Metro Animal Emergency location on Brownlow

**JMW59 wrote:**

brother278, I guess you didn't read the entire article? it states "The pound includes one ward for pets available for adoption". With any business there are areas that are off limits to the public, so this is nothing new. A secure area for animals that are not adoptable at that time will be off limits.

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