



### **Anglo-Italian Society for the Protection of Animals (AISPA)**

In the 1890's in his early 20's, Leonard Hawksley set off like so many of his countrymen on a tour of Italy unaware that he was to become a pioneer of animal protection in the country. Hawksley's first focus was on the horrendous and widespread cruelty he witnessed in Naples. Horses and mules were fitted with spiked reins, jagged-edged halters and bits studded with sharp nails and regularly lashed with wire whips. It was in Naples that Hawksley took action, reforming and renaming the former Naples Anti-Cruelty Society and turning it into the Naples Society for the Protection of Animals. He personally led the group until 1909 while also successfully setting up a group with 40 inspectors in Rome in 1901. Up and down Italy, Hawksley increasingly "stirred up trouble". He challenged organized crime and cruel practices in Campania and eventually paid dearly for the consequences of his mission to the point that being ambushed in retaliation for his inspections, he lost the use of one eye.

Hawksley was not merely an activist though; he was in fact a reformer and advocated the introduction of legal measures. In 1912 he saw cruel sports being recognised as punishable by law and with the outbreak of WWI he played a key role in forming the Italian Blue Cross and a number of veterinary hospitals, working in the field to save the lives of thousands of horses and mules. The long years of struggle took their toll and in 1931, aged 58, Hawksley returned to England in ill health where he later died in 1948. He left behind 22 animal protection societies in Italy either founded directly by him or with his assistance. Over the years, in response to critics who asked why a foreigner was meddling in the animal welfare of a country that was not his own, he would always snap back:

**"Because animals have no nationality"**

In 1952, the Hawksley Society for the Protection of Animals and Birds in Italy became The Anglo-Italian Society for the Protection of Animal. His words are our words today and the spirit of his pioneering work lives on through the Anglo-Italian Society for the Protection of Animals.

For over 60 years AISPA has been the voice of those who do not have a voice. Our work speaks louder than words: It is our long established involvement in the field that defines our values and identity. Throughout the years we have expressed our passion, determination and commitment in different operational areas and in the year ahead, we will be supporting over 30 Projects across Italy through:

- Continued financial support of local/regional shelters
- Outreach spay and neuter programs and emergency field work

- Provision of medicines, veterinary supplies, surgical equipment and rescue vehicles
- Training for animal welfare professionals and volunteers
- Educational programs and awareness raising campaigns in schools
- Environmental conservation projects for the benefit of birds and wild fauna

While the Charity is based in the UK, our advisors and voluntary veterinary representatives are based in Italy and work closely with our projects offering advice and support. They also liaise with local authorities and government agencies, to try and bring about lasting improvements in animal welfare.

### How we operate

We believe that the key for long-term sustainable animal welfare improvements lies in the empowerment of local organizations and stakeholders. For this reason we fund projects in which we see potential for growth and improvement. We guide our partners to ensure they grow and prosper, enabling them to stand on their own two feet and progress independently. This is why all the projects supported by AISPA are encouraged to pursue independent fundraising and to gain support from within their local communities. It does not matter how big your project is, or where in Italy it is located. AISPA welcomes the most diverse array of projects and will always evaluate requests for support with an open mind.

Our projects are often referred to us by AISPA representatives, advisors and supporters or the project managers themselves. We consider their needs and context and proceed with a careful field evaluation of their requests assisted by our veterinary representatives. It is only after making sure that such projects comply with our aims, values and good-practice requirements, that our Executive Committee makes a decision on forwarding financial support. Continued funding is conditional upon regular monitoring and evaluation that animal welfare standards are respected and maintained. We believe that this is necessary for the welfare of the animals, it is only fair for our donors and supporters who can trust us to use their money wisely and it is crucial for the ethical conduct of the Society.

Website: [aispa.org.uk](http://aispa.org.uk)  
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