

Tails to Tell



Some months ago, due to a police investigation in our Branch area, the RSPCA Inspectorate became involved to deal with the animals found on site. This included quite a number of cats and we were expecting we might be asked to take some of them into our care, as is normal procedure. However, after a few days of the Inspectors' assessments, we learned that all but one of the cats were feral, so our only involvement in the end was to take responsibility for the only non-feral cat found there. He moved directly into our cattery where he was named "Dusty" and this is his story:

Dusty was around 3-4 years old but looked like a really old cat with matted and dirty smoky grey fur. He was very thin; all skin and bones, and clearly not in a good state of health including, an upset tummy. Understandably he was quite subdued but in spite of all his woes, he was a very friendly and purry boy. He was taken straight away to see a vet who found large polyps inside both his ears; so large you could hear them rattle every time Dusty shook his head. He was given antibiotic ear drops to see if that would clear them up. The weeks passed and the polyps, deep in his ear canals, didn't improve so it was felt, with vet advice, the only option was a major operation to remove them.

Dusty had found a special corner in the hearts of the staff and all the Cat Cuddlers at the cattery because he was always a sweet natured boy and so we were all keeping our fingers crossed for him. Fortunately the operation was successful and Dusty went to the home of one of our

Cat Cuddlers, Amanda, to recover. Poor chap; he looked such a mess and very much like Yoda from Star Wars! His whole head had been shaved before the op, including some of his eyebrow whiskers. The operation caused temporary bruising to nerves around the eyes and ears – a common side effect – meaning in Dusty's case his eyelids didn't blink well and his ears were floppy. To keep his eyes moist he was given eye drops for regular use and the vet was hopeful that once the effects of the op had had a chance to heal his eyelids and ears would return to normal.

Whilst Amanda was looking after him she became really concerned as after a couple of days Dusty stopped going to the toilet. She quickly took him to the vets and they had to operate straight away to unblock his intestines and bladder. Poor sweetheart, after all that he'd been through and now this. After this second operation he still had an unsettled tummy so it was decided it was best to return him to the cattery so that his toileting instances could be monitored all the time by staff and he could easily be given all the medicines he'd been prescribed. Over the next 5 to 6 weeks, with lots of love and care from the cattery staff and Cat Cuddlers, and the medication, he slowly got better and started to put on some weight. His fur started to look healthier and shinier too.

Finally, after 3½ months, Geraldine, our Rehoming Manager, decided that Dusty was well enough to be put up for adoption. We do not know what it was about him, maybe the fact that he looked endearing with his wonky ears or because of his sweet character (or both) but it took only a few days for him to be chosen by a family. They were told of his medical history and the fact that, following the operation to remove the polyps, Dusty may be nearly completely deaf.

During the family's visit to the cattery, it so happened that the husband also fell in love with another cat we had called Taylor. As it turned out, Taylor and Dusty had got to know each other during the time they'd been at the cattery as their pens were almost opposite each other. So it was lovely for Dusty not to go to his new

home by himself and lovely for Taylor to have a new home and a buddy to go with!

The owners told us that during the first night in their new home they hid under a bed together; no doubt grateful for the reassurance of having each other. The current report from them is that Dusty has settled well but doesn't go very far through choice (never out of the garden). He also craves attention and asks for a lap as soon as you sit down! He is not completely deaf, he blinks well now; one ear is still droopy but his fur and whiskers are all back.

He and Taylor are living in a big house with a lovely garden and best of all, a family who adore them.



Stories like Dusty's are what make our job so satisfying and rewarding. We all love a fairy tale ending and our sweet Dusty surely gave us one!

10 Year Milestone

On 23rd April 2005, this Branch proudly opened its second charity shop in North Camp, after renting the premises and converting it in to a suitable charity shop. Here we are about to celebrate the shop's 10th Anniversary! During the 10 years it's served thousands of customers; taken in millions of donations AND raised many thousands of pounds for local animals.

So on Thursday 23rd April **exactly 10 years on**, visitors to the shop on the day will receive a complimentary glass of bubbly, or OJ; for every child there'll be a packet of sweets and we'll be selling a few special new products to mark the occasion.

Also of note, we have one Manager and two volunteers who have been working at the shop since **Day One** so they deserve a huge thank you and recognition for such a stalwart achievement for long service and dedication to this Branch.

We'd love to see you on the day – come along and enjoy a glass of bubbly

Pet Products on Sale Soon

Our as-yet-to-be completed Catalogue with a range of brand new, very competitively priced cat and dog products for sale, will soon be available from our website, by email or paper copy. Ordering will either be by completing an Order Form or by sending us an email. If the range of products prove popular and sell well, then we hope to be able to offer on-line ordering direct from our website later this year.

In order to keep prices as low as possible, orders will be available for collection from our North Camp shop



or if you live within 10 miles of Farnborough we will offer a delivery service, for which there will be a charge.

If you live more than 10 miles and cannot collect, then we can send via Royal Mail or courier service (dependent on size of order); for which we will charge.



We also hope to include a **Loyalty Scheme** whereby every time you spend more than £10 in one order you receive a "**Loyalty Paw-print Stamp**". When you have collected **Ten Paw-prints** you will receive a **Free Gift** for your pet. T&Cs apply.

Some of the stock for sale will include: **FOR CATS:** Cat Carriers, Scratching Posts, Play Centres, a Variety of Cat Beds inc. Igloo style & Radiator Beds, Self-heating Pads, Blankets, Feeding Bowls, Litter Trays, Toys.

FOR DOGS: A Variety of Beds, Blankets, Self-heating pads, Chews & Edible Treats, Feeding Bowls, Toys.

PET FOOD: The RSPCA National Society has developed its own range of quality DOG & CAT food. All food recipes have been devised in consultation with RSPCA animal experts and are used in RSPCA Animal Centres. Every life-stage is catered for: Puppy & Kitten, Adult, Senior and Light diets.

If you are interested in receiving the



Catalogue as soon as it is ready, you can request a copy by emailing sales@rspcahantsandsurreyborder.org.uk

In the Subject Line, please quote '**Ref: AM3/15**'. We need your full name, address, post code, best contact 'phone number, along with what you're interested in, ie DOG, CAT or FOOD products. Or you can call 07483 167 718.

NB: the profit from **every item sold** will help local animals in need. By buying these products/food from us you will help those pets that aren't as lucky as yours!

2014 Branch Performance

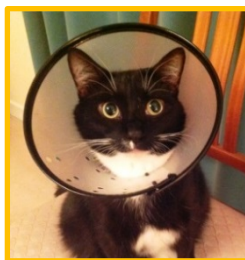
2014 was another successful and busy year for us, raising a sizeable amount in funds totalling

£297,000. As usual, most of that money was raised through our three charity



shops that between them earned a whopping £265,000! It takes a great deal of hard work to raise that level of funds and our staff and volunteers work diligently and with great enthusiasm to make as much money as possible from what's donated to us. Of great importance are our hundreds of generous supporters who collectively supply us with huge quantities of donations for us to sell. Then, of course, there are our customers who come to buy their bargains from us! We owe you all a massive thank you.

This amount of money, together with past savings, enabled us to spend large sums of money on local animals in need. In fact, such was the demand on our resources we spent £31,000 more than we earned, thus digging into our savings.



At a total cost of just over £56,000, our branch rescued 131 felines in 2014. These cats and kittens, either homeless, neglected or unwanted were cared for at our cattery or with our fosterers until ready for rehoming. During the latter part of the year we also teamed up with the Guildford Branch to help in the rehoming of rabbits.

Our Welfare Scheme; the other principal way we spend funds directly on animals, resulted in hundreds of local families (criteria dependent) receiving help towards the cost of vet bills for their sick or injured pets. In exceptional cases it can cost hundreds of pounds; BUT when it's about saving animals' lives, we'll do that whenever we can. We also neutered and microchipped hundreds of cats and dogs; for FREE, under the same Scheme; bringing our grand total on helping owned animals to £88,000.

In summary, 2014 was another year of positive results achieved by a great deal of

hard work from our dedicated staff and many volunteers, on whom we rely so heavily; along with all our supporters. Let's hope 2015 will follow suit!

'For the Love of Animals'...

"Can you spare a couple of hours, or maybe even three?"

To help in the village charity shop?" my friend said to me.

"We're really short of volunteers at the RSPCA",

So that is where I found myself, at nine-thirty the next day!

As volunteers we work together in teams of two or three,

Our Manager works alongside us and even makes the tea!

Donations come in thick and fast, in boxes and in sacks,

It is our job to sort them out and arrange on rails and racks.

First, every item's labelled with the date, the size and price,

We hope that when we've done our job the stock looks very nice.

Anything and everything like clothes, books, toys, jewellery, plates and cups,

There's always a bargain to be had, by children and grown-ups.

Supporters who donate their things are pleased to give for free,

They hope the items we can sell will help this charity.

Before they leave our premises we hope that they will find,

Something nice to buy so say; "That's just what I had in mind!"

From whacky one-off items to the ladies clothes galore,

It's really quite amazing what each day brings through the door.

Not all that's given we can sell, and some we cannot save,

But one thing is for sure, each shop is 'An Aladdin's Cave'!

Volunteering is a way to make friends and have some fun,

We chat, we laugh, the time flies by and soon our shift is done.

So home we go, until the next time, knowing we've done some good,

As we think of poor pets in need of help in our neighbourhood.

So if like us you care about the pets abandoned and abused,

When the thought of cruelty cases make you think; "I am not amused..."

Have you got some time to spare or fancy something new to do?

Then go on please, pick up the phone, we would love to hear from you!