

## Tails to Tell Cameos

Here are just a few of the many animals we, as a branch, have helped during the past year.



Seven month old Reuben was suffering from some health issues that were going to be costly and his owners, who live in this branch area, took the advice of one of our Inspectors and decided to give him up. As a branch we do not very often take in dogs for rehabilitation due to a lack of appropriate facilities, so we contacted Guildford & District Staffordshire Bull Terrier Rescue to see if they would be able to help. Thankfully, they were willing to take Reuben in and give him the care he needed. Along with demodectic mange and a skin lesion that needed treatment, it transpired Reuben had a benign tumour on the bone above one eye that was going to require a specialist orthopaedic operation. This branch agreed to make a significant contribution to his veterinary bills, the remainder being funded by GDSBT Rescue, which has meant Reuben has had a second chance.

Reuben's operation, which took three hours, was carried out earlier this month and we are pleased to report he hasn't lost his eye as was previously feared. He is on painkillers and antibiotics and it will take a while before he is well enough to leave the care of GDSBT Rescue. The good news is that it looks like he has the offer of a new home with a loving family on a farm, once he is completely recovered.



In April last year, a nervous stray, rushed through a lady's front door in Farnborough, straight into her bathroom and promptly gave birth to 3 kittens, one of which, sadly died at birth. The startled lady, immediately contacted us, and one of our ACOs collected the mum and kittens and delivered them to this branch to be placed in foster care, where they were to stay until they were ready to be re-homed. Our fosterers named them Sooty (mum) Sweep and Sue!

Sweep was re-homed at 12 weeks, with Sue being adopted by her fosterers because they had fallen in love with her! Sooty took a while to re-home because we were looking for the right quiet home for her but she is now very happy living with her new owner in Hartley Wintney. All three received the standard RSPCA veterinary treatment of vaccinations, microchipping and neutering as well as several courses of antibiotics for reoccurring conjunctivitis.



In late 2008, 18 month old, Lurcher-cross, Oliver broke his leg. His owners, accepting the treatment would be expensive signed him over to one of our Inspectors. Oliver needed an operation to save his leg and this branch contacted the RSPCA Putney Animal Hospital who gave us a competitive rate for the cost of the operation, which was funded by us.

Following his op, Oliver had his leg in a cast and needed bed rest for a period of several weeks to allow his leg to mend. He spent a period of three months with a fosterer, Jean, who with much dedication and care, nursed him back to full health.

In January 2009 Oliver was adopted by a family in Portsmouth and they are pleased to report he is happy and healthy and enjoys running around.



This pretty little cat was found collapsed on a lady's doorstep in Aldershot last year. Concerned for her welfare she rang the RSPCA National helpline number and reported the cat's poor state. An Inspector responded to the call and when he arrived he found a very sick cat, unable to even stand up and obviously close to death. He transported her immediately to the nearest vet, sure of the fact that she wouldn't survive. On examination, apart from being very thin and under-nourished, the vet found she had a horrendous flea infestation which had caused her to be chronically anaemic. This little cat, to the surprise of everyone, made a remarkable recovery, due partly to the fact that she was young – no more than a year old.

Within a week she was well enough to go into foster care where she continued to make a speedy recovery. Her fosterers named her Tootsie and said to begin with she was very clingy, always following them and seeking reassurance that she wasn't going to be left. With much love and affection from her carers, she made a full recovery and after several weeks, a young couple living in Berkshire adopted her.

## Welfare Assistance Scheme



As already mentioned in "Tails to Tell Cameos", one of the ways this branch spends the money it raises in its mission to provide for animal welfare, is through a welfare assistance scheme, aimed at members of the public living in our branch area, who meet our scheme's criteria.

This scheme is available to provide veterinary treatment for animals that may otherwise not receive it. These animals may be strays or abandonment cases, or for those owners who are struggling financially, a contribution to a vet bill can be provided from the scheme's funds, thus ensuring the animal's welfare. This can be anything from such routine procedures as neutering a cat to more rare cases of specialist veterinary treatment.

In the past two years alone this branch's spending on animal welfare assistance cases was £19,456 in 2007 and £22,052 in 2008. This includes the neutering of 61 dogs and 202 cats.

Unfortunately, the current economic downturn has made a huge impact on the number of welfare requests we have seen since the New Year. In January, we received 80 calls from members of the public for welfare assistance, whereas for the preceding January we received 49 calls.

If we are to meet the additional requests for welfare help, then your support in helping us raise these funds is even more important. You can help by donating your unwanted clothes and goods to one of our two charity shops or by supporting our fundraising activities or by making a monetary donation – no matter how small, every penny counts!

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## Microchipping – The Facts

A microchip is the size of a grain of rice and it is injected into the scruff of an animal's neck. Each chip has its own unique ID number which is stored with the owner's details on a database, such as Petlog. In the event of a lost pet being scanned, the ID will tie up with the owners details meaning the

animal can quickly be reunited with its owner. It is of course important for owners to keep their details on the database updated, especially with any changes of address or phone number.

The RSPCA is an advocator of pet microchipping and every cat and dog leaving the care of the RSPCA is fitted with a microchip if it hasn't already got one. There are estimated to be 7.2 million cats and 7.3 million dogs in the UK and yet a very high percentage of these animals are not microchipped. The latest statistics compiled by the RSPCA highlight the problem. These statistics show that the majority of cats and dogs that came into the care of the RSPCA over a four year period were without a microchip. In 2006 just 16% of cats and dogs were already microchipped and in 2007 this figure increased to 21% (there aren't any figures available yet for 2008). Although these figures are moving in the right direction, four out of five cats and dogs are still not microchipped when they come into the care of the RSPCA.

Dogs are more vulnerable than cats to getting lost, as most are unfamiliar with the territory away from their home in the event that they should become separated from their owner or manage to get out of their home. In 2007 only half of all dogs identified as strays by local authorities were returned to their owners.



This organisation believes that all cats and dogs should be microchipped and that the procedure should be encouraged as part of responsible pet ownership. Microchipping is most commonly used in dogs, cats and rabbits but ferrets and birds can also be chipped.

**It costs around £20 to have your pet microchipped by a qualified microchipper. So if your pet is not microchipped, please don't risk being one of the thousands of owners each year that loses their pet, never to be reunited with them. Get your pet microchipped now by contacting your vet.**

## Rooting for Pigs Campaign

In January the RSPCA launched its campaign "Rooting for Pigs", calling on supermarkets and other food retailers to join the RSPCA and the British pig industry to develop and then apply agreed definitions for the terms to be used when labelling pork products.

The ultimate aim of this campaign will be to call for a proper review of welfare issues within the EU and UK pig industry and lobbying for a legal requirement within the EU to ensure agreed definitions are complied with when using labelling terms such as free range or outdoor-bred or outdoor-reared. In a recent poll carried out by the RSPCA only 2% of those questioned understood the terms outdoor-bred and outdoor-reared, demonstrating the lack of knowledge UK shoppers have about the meat they are buying and the conditions in which the animals live.

Pigs are highly intelligent, inquisitive animals, often outdoing dogs in learning tests and rated as one the most intelligent animals after primates, dolphins and elephants. The living conditions of many pigs would be considered horrifying if applied to any of the more intelligent mammals.

No one can fail to recognize the impact the RSPCA, Jamie Oliver and Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall had last year on the welfare of chickens in the UK. Jamie has joined the RSPCA in its Rooting for Pigs campaign and hosted a TV programme "Jamie Saves our Bacon" recently broadcast as part of Channel 4's 'Great British Food Fortnight'. It is hoped that a similarly positive impact can be made on the lives of 160 million pigs reared each year for meat in the EU.

You can give your support to this campaign by signing a pig petition on our national website:  
[www.giveanimalsavoice.org.uk](http://www.giveanimalsavoice.org.uk)

