

Animal Matters



May 2010

Hants & Surrey Border Branch

Registered charity no. 201291

www.rspca-hantsandsurrey.org.uk • Email: info@rspcahantsandsurreyborder.org.uk

Tails to Tell



Last year, we featured a "Tails to Tell Cameos" and one of the stories was about Reuben, a seven month old Staffie, who came into this branch's care via one of our Inspectors. He had a benign tumour above this left eye that required a specialist orthopedic, life saving operation and many weeks of aftercare, which was provided by Guildford & District Staffordshire Bull Terrier Rescue.

He was subsequently rehomed to a lady living in Chichester. Four months after Reuben's start of a new life, Deb, his adopter, wrote to the fosterer who cared for him for his many weeks of rehabilitation to let her know of his progress and adaptation to his new life.

Now called, Harley Reuben, Deb is besotted with her new found companion. She writes, "*Harley is in exceptionally fine fettle, all glossy and gleaming with health and vitality. I just can't imagine life without him now as he 'helps' me in everything I do - cleaning the floors, making the fire, etc. He is always there sticking his nose in! He's a stickler for routine, for example I have to get up at 7.30am otherwise he mouse pounces all over me, eager for his morning wee, then rattles his dinner bowl in the kitchen demanding breakfast.*

We walk for miles on fine days and he's in heaven chasing dozens of species of birds into the air - this appeals to his sense of humour. And when it comes to being clever, he's not just clever but intuitive. For example, I sometimes pick

my handbag up as I need to get something from it, he doesn't move a muscle. But when I pick my handbag up because we're going to town, he belts out of the door and sits by the car.

Great friends with the cat now too, they curl up together on the sofa and groom each other. Very good also with Charlie - Charlie's toys would be a temptation to steal and chew but he doesn't touch them. If bits of toast/baby's finger food drop on the floor then Harley scoffs them but he has never taken anything out of the baby's hands. He's an absolute pleasure to take around Petersfield - knows the routine, bank, pet shop, etc but doesn't like me to sit too long with friends outside the pub - he gets bored and wants me to get on to the next thing. Very sociable and inquisitive though and loves attention. All in all we're perfect for each other and he seems blissfully happy and content. Thank you SO much for your tremendous input, effort, patience and hard work for him. We both reckon you're a true angel."

RSPCA Staffie Rehoming Campaign

Animal lovers helped the RSPCA find new homes for more than 507 Staffordshire bull terriers and Staffie crosses in 2009 - the highest number of new homes found for any breed of dog. The RSPCA is calling for more owners to come forward as there are still many Staffies in desperate need of loving, suitable new homes.

Sadly, as a result of bad publicity, fuelled by Staffies being fashionable with irresponsible owners, a misconception has developed that Staffies don't make good pets. However when in the right hands, well cared for and properly trained, they can make brilliant companions.

If you're thinking of adopting a dog, you can visit an RSPCA animal centre to get to know one of the many of animals in our care.



Staff can help you decide if you can provide a good home for a dog and, if so, whether a Staffie could be the right dog for you.

You can also visit our new website www.gettoknowadog.co.uk and find out more about Staffies.

Every 3.5 minutes the RSPCA takes an animal into its care. Every year the RSPCA rehomes around 70,000 animals.

.....All are unwanted pets that have been dumped, are victims of cruelty or neglect, or have been handed over to the Society by those whose circumstances have changed. At any one time, the RSPCA has hundreds of animals looking for loving new homes.

Although the RSPCA operates just like an emergency service, we rely entirely on public support for our funding.

The pressures on the Society, both at branch and national level, are huge. In the past two years, not only have we been further stretched since the Animal Welfare Act came into force with an upsurge of 12% in cases to be investigated but there has been the added impact of the recession.

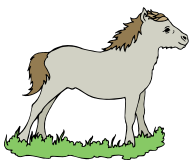
In the last year the number of animals we have seen abandoned across the country has soared by 57%. The consequence is that many of our animal centres are bursting at the seams with pets that are innocent casualties of the recession and the irresponsible attitudes of owners.

A day in the life of an Animal Welfare Officer

Animal Welfare Officers (AWO) have been a new addition to the Inspectorate teams within the last year. Their role is to deal with routine complaints and animal collections and rescues.

AWO, Pete Yarde, working in and around the Hants & Surrey Border Branch's area reports on a typical day....

My day starts with the switch on of MICE (hand held computer) which alerts me to a mix of collections and complaints. First job is to prioritise my work. When organised, the first postcode is punched into the sat nav and off I go. I arrive in Normandy following a report of a tethered pony wearing a muddy rug. This is my fourth visit and she noses up to me in greeting as we've become friends. As always she has fresh water and hay so there is no welfare issue to deal with. I call the lady who reported it to alleviate her concerns. This is sometimes the hardest part of the job, as not everyone understands we have to work within the law and we can't just take an animal because a member of the public thinks we should.



Off to my next job which is an injured fox in a garden. Fox has severe mange but runs off as soon as I approach. I ask the home owner if the fox is a regular visitor and if they are prepared to feed him so we can arrange mange treatment. Owner is happy to help so hopefully, with the addition of medicine in the food, his discomfort will soon be alleviated, provided he eats the food of course!

Off again to Ash regarding a complaint about a dog. I have been before but no one was in. This time the door is opened and the first task is to talk my way in to see the dog. Dog is apparently locked in a shed 24/7 according to the report received. The owner shows me the area which is nicely fenced with a shed inside. As we approach the spaniel comes out of the shed himself; there is a bed in shed and fresh water and the whole area is clean, and although I prefer my dogs inside there are no welfare issues.



Back to van and time to update the MICE system. Radio comes to life – there is a sick cat in Aldershot. I accept the case and details are downloaded to MICE.



Off I go to the rescue of a tabby cat with an injured leg. Once collected it's a trip to a local vets for treatment and to see if he is microchipped. As is often the case, there is no microchip present so no way of reuniting him with his owner quickly. Now is the time to call around for an available space for him, either with the local branch – Hants & Surrey Border Branch or Millbrook Animal Centre at Chobham. Fortunately, the Branch are able to help so I am able to leave him temporarily at the vets until the Branch are able to arrange to pick him up and place him with one of their fosterers.

My next call is a sudden change of plans due to my current location. This one is to investigate a complaint of cats in a dirty flat in locale.... An elderly gentleman opens the door and the smell of ammonia is evident. Two adult cats and two kittens are happily running around. The litter trays are over-flowing and I have to explain this is unacceptable and that they must be cleaned daily. I issue a welfare assessment form for the conditions. The adult cats are not neutered so I issue two vouchers that will enable him to have his cats neutered at the RSPCA's expense. I try my hardest to get the kittens signed over to us but to no avail. I make a note to try again when I revisit in 7 days.

A few more routine calls of complaints and collections completes my day and I return home reflecting on the variety of the job – each day being different with a different set of challenges and different animals to help towards a better life. It is an immensely fulfilling job and I always look forward to each new day.

A Third Branch Charity Shop in Farnham



It is six months since our third charity shop opened in The Woolmead, Farnham.

Whilst it is still early days, this branch is delighted to report that the shop has got off to a great start and the positive comments and support of local residents has been especially encouraging. It is very much hoped that this new shop will make a significant additional contribution to the income of the branch in the next few years, as well as help to raise our profile in the area.

Donations to the shop are very much welcome with easy access to the rear of the shop by car for unloading.

For further details please telephone 01252 712050. Opening times: 9.30 am to 4.30 pm, Monday to Saturday.

Pets Corner
"Homes Wanted"



Minou – approx 2 - 3 yr old tabby male. Very anxious due to trauma, but will be friendly. Needs a quiet and patient new owner to take the time and let him settle.

Please contact Geraldine on 07880 547502 if you are interested in giving him, or one of our other cats or kittens a new home.