

Newsletter

ROCHDALE ANIMAL CENTRE

ALLEY (Cat) and her babies

WE LOVE RABBITS

More people are choosing
FREEDOM FOOD



ROCHDALE ANIMAL CENTRE

Welcome

August has been a very busy month for us. We opened after the all clear from the calici virus on 28th July and since then we have rehomed 52 animals.

We have been inundated with phone calls and requests to take in animals. It came to a climax in the middle of August when we took in 11 adult cats, 30 kittens, 2 guinea pigs, 1 hamster, 2 rabbits and a rat, all in the space of seven days – all these were in desperate need of attention by both staff and vets. In addition we took in 9 cats from Bolton RSPCA, had 2 cats dumped outside the door in boxes, and a cat from the vets involved in a road accident with a broken pelvis.

Over the month we have taken in 28 adult cats and 32 kittens, 1 rat, 4 rabbits, 3 guinea pigs, 7 ferrets, 1 hamster, 1 budgie and a cockatiel. While writing this I have had to turn away 7 cats from the inspectors because we just don't have the room. It's very stressful when we find ourselves unable to help an animal in

distress. We hope that with the support of the people of Rochdale we will be able to expand our facilities.

I have to congratulate all my staff and volunteers for their continual commitment and support to these animals. I feel positive that with your support this work will continue.

Jean Spencer
Animal Centre Manager



Rabbit...

We love pet rabbits here at the Rochdale Animal Centre. We can't help it – little ones, big ones, they're all great. However, we think they are maybe the most misunderstood of all pets. Some of you will already have pet rabbits and be doing a great job caring for them, but for everyone else – here is the low-down on rabbit matters.



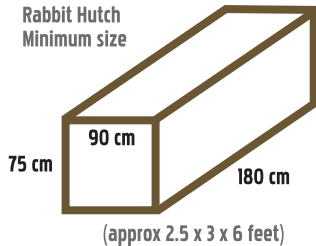
Spend some time

Spending time with your rabbits is the essence of creating rabbit happiness. This is because they are highly social animals and will suffer terribly if left all alone. In any case you should never just have one, make sure they are neutered and then you can have a mixture of males and females living together. They are entirely dependant on their owner for correct accommodation, food and health care and each day they need their home

rabbit... rabbit

cleaned and their coat groomed. This can take a lot of time but, if you can spare it, you are sure to get lots and lots of pleasure and satisfaction from your rabbits.

One thing which often takes new owners by surprise is the amount of room rabbits require. The majority of hutches for sale in pet shops are just far too small. The latest RSPCA recommendation is shown in the diagram below. These are minimum sizes and you will need an exercise area as well. Notice that the hutch needs to be quite high. This is so the rabbit can stand upright and groom its ears. If it can't do this it may become frustrated, irritable or depressed.



The Hutch needs to be kept off the ground, at about table height, away from cold drafts, rising damp and other animals. Doing this then makes it an easy task to clean out as a bucket can be held just below.

The dimensions in the diagram are minimum sizes. Many owners have

found that buying a small garden shed and making a few simple modifications for ventilation etc., is a cost effective alternative.

Like all other animals rabbits need exercise. A safely caged area in your garden is ideal but they can also be house trained to use a litter tray, so they can make great house pets - just be sure to block all exits and remove electrical cables in case they chew them (they will chew them.)

We are happy to provide advice on diet, handling, healthcare and accommodation to give your rabbits a really happy life. A well cared for rabbit can live to a good age - eight years or more so it's important to get the basics sorted out at the start.

You can get rabbits from reputable breeders, or from us at the Rochdale Animal Centre. Rehoming one of our rabbits can be a very rewarding experience - telephone the Centre for an appointment and we will show you all of our current bunnies.



Some very tiny bunnies- abandoned and totally dependant on us! The picture above shows just how small they were when they first arrived in early August and, on the right, one week later with their first taste of real food.



Note: As we go to press their ears have more than trebled in length!

A little pudding

A delightful little dog came in to us the other day - but his owner was not quite so delightful. When she found she couldn't off-load her pet with us while she went on holiday she began a torrent of verbal abuse! We gave her some helpful contact numbers for boarding kennels but she suddenly quietened down, turned to go, then pushed the dog back through the door, spat out a few more choice words and ran away.

We looked at the dog - he looked at us! We said 'what do they call you then...little pudding? We don't yet have facilities for dogs so we had a problem.

Unable to contact his owner, we are fostering 'Pudding' for 28 days, after which he legally becomes a stray. Halifax Branch, who are licenced for dogs and are always very supportive to us, have agreed to help to rehome him.

WANTED Volunteers (hours - completely up to you) for:

RETAIL - Internet sales administration: a very interesting activity for those with some computer knowledge.

ELECTRICAL - Checking electrical items coming in to our shops (PAT testing) would suit someone with a qualification in electrics.

FUNDRAISING activities in the community - various, interesting.

Please ring 07702 620 585 between 9.00-500pm.

Mayor visits the Centre



At this year's AGM we were pleased to welcome the Mayor, Councillor Peter Evans and mayoress Helen Evans. The event was planned as a social event, AGM formalities were kept to a minimum and there were opportunities to look around the Centre and see some of the animals.

It was also the ideal venue to express publicly, the thanks of the trustees for all the hard work done by staff and volunteers to help make the Centre such a success. Certificates were presented to **Julia Bache** Shop Employee of the Year, **Clare Hughes** Volunteer of the Year, (Rochdale Animal Centre), **Richard Leech** Volunteer of the Year (Heywood shop), **Neil Kay** Volunteer of the Year (Middleton shop), **Margaret Darling** Volunteer of the Year (Rochdale shop) and, for Team of the Year, Rochdale Animal Centre Staff: **Jean Spencer**, **Chantal Taylor**, **Linda King**, **Neil Outram**, **Hannah Hunter** and **Lyndsey Wroe**. **Diane Leach** of The Rochdale Observer was also voted Supporter of the Year.

Dumped – the mystery of two superb animals

Despite wide publicity to find the owners of these two dead dogs they remain a baffling mystery.

The dogs, an adult male light brindle-coloured Staffordshire Bull Terrier cross breed and an adult female dark brindle Staffordshire Bull Terrier cross breed, were found on Sunday 8 July by a member of the public in a Rochdale car park. Since then we have not been able to find any more information.

The male dog, which was discovered wrapped in two black bin liners, showed no obvious outward signs of injury. The female dog, which had been dumped in a separate bin bag, was bleeding from her nose ears and mouth. Neither dog wore a collar and neither had been microchipped.

RSPCA Inspector Alison Wilkinson, who attended the incident, was at a loss to explain what happened. She said: "This is a strange and unusual incident. Both dogs were a good, healthy weight which suggests they will have belonged to someone."

Someone in our area must know who these animals were. If you think you may be able to help with information please contact the RSPCA cruelty and advice line on 0870 55 55 999. Calls are of course, in strict confidence.



Please
help us to
find the
owners

Pictures: RSPCA



FREEDOM FOOD labelled EGGS - now available from:



- ASDA
- BOOTH'S
- BUDGENS
- CO-OP
- COSTCUTTER
- ICELAND
- MORRISONS
- SOMERFIELD

and
websites at:
**Stourhead
Farm Shop**
and
National Trust

The RSPCA is encouraging farmers to adopt minimum welfare standards. It is a major challenge for the RSPCA to help farm animals. Many suffer dreadfully. We hope the Freedom Foods scheme is making a positive difference to the welfare conditions of all animals farmed under the scheme.



The scheme is gaining momentum rapidly, MORRISONS being the latest to announce another Freedom Food line: Scottish Organic Salmon Fillet - shortly going in to 164 stores nationwide.

The CO-OP recently scooped a clutch of awards at the prestigious SuperMeat & Fish Awards 2007, including one for their Freedom Food labelled bacon.



“We are extremely proud of the awards, and hope to build on our success next year”

Paul Reid, The CO-OP.

Snowflake

Rabbits come in to the Animal Centre for many reasons. Not all have been the victim of cruelty or neglect but the ones that have had a hard time get plenty of attention to put them back on their feet as quickly as possible.



The rabbit above came to us in a very distressed state having being kept with 19 others in a cramped hutch that was meant for a guinea pig. We christened her Snowflake right from the start, even though her matted coat was a grimey mess. Now, just two weeks later just look at her - a real fluffy pure white snowflake. Rabbits are naturally inquisitive but many who find themselves at the Centre through abuse are too frightened to explore their surroundings. It has been very rewarding for us to nurture Snowflake back to full health and confidence and it's good to know she will soon have a new home and a loving owner. If you are thinking of keeping rabbits for the first time and would like to adopt Snowflake, remember that they need the company of at least one other rabbit, as explained in our article above.

Kitten crazy

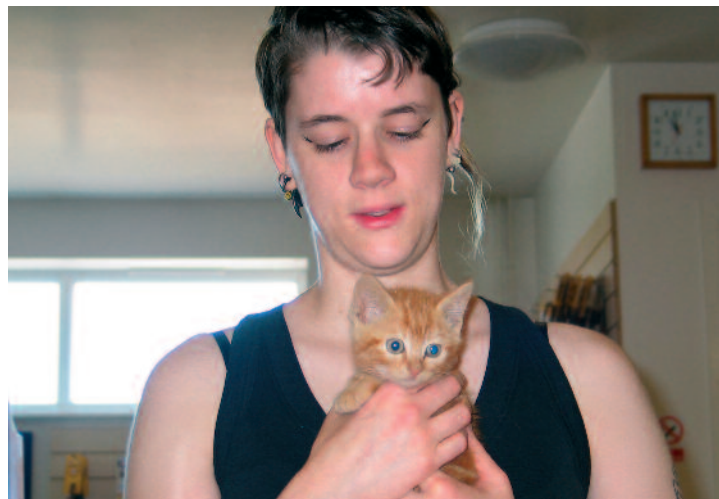
Our front cover features one of the many tiny lovable kittens who are often brought to the Centre by members of the public or by an RSPCA Collection Officer. Alley, below, was a stray with just one kitten but she helpfully fostered three other tiny ones who had lost their own mother (one of who is on our cover). All have done really well and have been successfully rehomed. Alley herself did have problems but we finally narrowed it down to food and put her on a sensitive food diet. She was clearly a lot happier with that and she too has now got a new owner.



This summer has seen us with more kittens than usual, the lucky ones will be with mum and you can tell the difference with their faces and with their coats - look at this little one on the right. Some have no mum and we will have to feed them by hand every three hours day and night.



The ones in our bottom picture are part of a family of eight and are proving a real handful. These four pushing their way to the front will come through fine but the others are struggling to hold on. We will give them as much help as we can.



Enjoy working with animals? Become a volunteer

Have you thought about it? How it would make you feel? We think you would find it totally engrossing! Your time would be appreciated by every animal you come in to contact with. This is what one volunteer had to say:

“There is always plenty to do at the Animal Centre. Lots of animals are coming and going and it’s great when you see them respond to the care we give them”

Heather: volunteer

You will find it a richly rewarding experience and even if you think you can only spare a small amount of time, please ring us to discuss it further.
Ring Jean Spencer 01706 861897 between 9.00–5.00pm.



OPENING TIMES	
Mon	11.30 - 3.30
Tue	11.30 - 3.30
Wed	Closed
Thur	11.30 - 3.30
Fri	11.30 - 3.30
Sat	11.30 - 3.30
Sun	11.30 - 3.30

Centre back to normal

As most of you know we had to close the Animal Centre to all animals recently because of a cat virus. Thankfully that's all behind us now and we opened again on the 28 July. Since then our rehoming service has been working non-stop - we placed 31 cats within the first three weeks! Our opening hours are: 11.30am to 3.30pm each day, including Sunday: the only day we are closed is WEDNESDAY

AUTUMN / CHRISTMAS FAIR 17 November 2007

BRING THE CHILDREN. LOTS TO SEE AND DO

See the Fire Brigade and a fire engine

LOOK ROUND THE CENTRE AND SEE THE ANIMALS

Chat to RSPCA staff, the Police and Fire Service
Tombola. Raffle. Lots of stalls, including toys and
a delicious home-made cake stall.

Buy your pets their Christmas presents.

SPECIAL OFFER: Our fantastic *'The Worlds Best Cat Litter'*
at reduced prices (today only)

11.00pm to 3.00pm. Refreshments available

Let's make sure our Centre stays open

The re-equipped Rochdale Animal Centre has now been open for 18 months. In this short time it has been a lifeline for many hundreds of animals all from the Rochdale area.

Please Join

Just **£3** a month

We feel strongly that animals in this area have access to the facilities we provide when they need it and we have tried hard to make the Centre one of the very best in the North.

The Centre provides such a vital service to our community it's hard to believe that it gets no financial help from anywhere other than from yourselves. Although part of the RSPCA the Centre must pay its own way if it is to continue.

Please look at the enclosed leaflet and become a Friend of the Centre. A small regular amount donated to the Centre makes a big difference and gives us the confidence and ability to plan for the future.

Thank you in advance and thanks to all of you who are already Friends.



To report an animal in distress: contact 0870 55 55 999 or, from 17 Sept - 0300 1234 999

CALLS TO OUR CRUELTY AND ADVICE LINE ON THE NEW 0300 NUMBER WILL COST JUST THE SAME AS A NATIONAL NUMBER

The views expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily those of the editor or the RSPCA

