

Newsletter

ROCHDALE ANIMAL CENTRE



We are now ON THE INTERNET
ANIMALS IN THE FRAME
ART EXHIBITION



FERRETS
SPECIAL FEATURE

One of our many rescued ferrets



ROCHDALE ANIMAL CENTRE

Rochdale trustee on TV

Channel 4 : Hugh's Chicken Run : Jamie's Fowl Dinners

Andrew Nicholson, one of the trustees of the Rochdale Branch found himself on TV during January. Andrew is Senior Technical Manager with the Co-op and is heavily involved in the supermarkets efforts to improve animal welfare.

Does better animal welfare for chickens inevitably mean higher prices on the shelf and therefore less chicken sold? Not an attractive proposition for most retailers, but Andrew and his team are finding ways to solve this problem. For the past two years Andrew has been visiting farmers, taking part in forums and helping to formulate policies which will benefit all sides. It has been a long hard battle but, as from March this year, all fresh chickens, chicken portions and all eggs sold by the Co-op, are only from UK producers adhering to the higher welfare standards drafted by Andrew and his colleagues.

Although Andrew's work means he is away from home a great deal, both in this country and overseas, he still finds time to attend our Branch meetings and is a hard working member and committed trustee. He's promised us that TV stardom won't go to his head (we believe him). In fact he says he produced over three hours of programme with Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall but the editors only showed a few minutes. Still, the programmes that went out that week, including the one with Jamie Oliver were considered a great success in bringing this subject to the attention of the public.

As for the future, Andrew says "We are now able to offer fresh chickens, reared to higher welfare standards, for the same price as a

standard bird. It has taken some doing but it shows it's possible. My work continues with the many other animal welfare issues which need attention"

The Rochdale branch is fortunate to have Andrew amongst its supporters. In addition to the work above, Andrew represents the Co-op on numerous working groups including; the Marine Stewardship Council, the AFS Joint Pig Industry and the European Technology Platform on Global Animal Health. He has also been appointed for a second three year term to be the consumer issues expert on the Farm Animal Welfare Council and is the animal welfare advisor to the Co-op Bank.

Following national discussions, and highlighted by the Rochdale Observer, we are delighted to say that Rochdale Council has now demonstrated their concern for animal welfare by supporting the free range eggs policy. We know all our supporters thank them for this and thanks also to Councillor Taylor for his strong support on this issue.

Have you any unwanted items?

FURNITURE

BRIC-A-BRAC

BOOKS

GOOD QUALITY CLOTHING

OLD TOWELS AND BLANKETS

We will arrange collection

PLEASE TELEPHONE THE CENTRE 01706 861 897

We are always there when they need us

We are often amazed at the sheer number of animals from the Rochdale area for whom we are their last and only hope. In the week before publication of this newsletter we had, amongst many others, a cat found with broken bones, a stray rabbit found with chronic ear mites and eleven guinea pigs, discovered crammed together in a tiny cage, all covered in urine burns, scabs and sores. In all these cases we have been able to nurse the animals back to full health. They are safe and happy now and in the Centre awaiting adoption.

All of you who support the Rochdale Branch do a great job in keeping the Centre running. Everyone can help. All the little things you can do make a great deal of difference to us - please call in to our shops for example - you might be very surprised by what you can find. Also, look out for our pet food collecting bins in Morrisons supermarkets in both Heywood and Rochdale.



Oscar, our biggest ever rabbit - in both size and character, has been rehomed. We have featured Oscar before in out newsletters because he is such a star. A gentle giant, Oscar looked after one of our most badly treated little rabbits, Bella, giving her the love, protection and security she had never experienced before. Sadly, Bella died and Oscar has, understandably, been a bit lonely. Great news then, that he has found an owner who can give him some love and attention. We all wish him well.



WE ARE NOW ON THE INTERNET You can find us at www.rspca-rochdale.org.uk

Thanks to our sponsors Zen Internet, we now have a superb website up and running. Parts of it are still under development but you can already make donations on line and learn more about the Branch. We are working to complete it as soon as we can.

Having a presence on the internet is a great step forward for us and we are sure it will become a popular place to visit. As we get time to develop it more, we plan to include as much information as we can, so you can have access to answers you need 24 hours a day. For the moment, we have just included main activities. Please have a look and tell us what you think. We are open to suggestions to make it as useful as possible and look forward to hearing your views.

Why do people mis-treat animals?



The RSPCA seems perfectly normal to us now, but back in 1824 the idea of forming a society to help protect animals was thought to be totally bizarre.

Back in those days things were seen differently. Animals were there for our sole use - mainly so we could work them to death but also for us to shoot, torture, bet on, cage, eat, kick or otherwise dominate. Almost all animals in the wild are frightened of us and even ones that could harm us very badly indeed like snakes or bears usually prefer to run away. Yet, there are still people who feel the need to hurt animals if they think they can get away with it. The RSPCA is on the front line when this happens and work closely with the Police. The sad incident of the horses at Spindles Farm, in

Buckinghamshire, and the story below of rabbits in Rochdale, reveal that cruelty continues and illustrates the vital role of the RSPCA.

BURNED TO DEATH IN ROCHDALE

Rochdale, like many other northern towns has more than its fair share of animal cruelty incidents to deal with. Many of you will have read in the local paper of the incident which happened to Mr Taswir Hussain's family rabbits. In a sickening attack, a gang broke in to the hutch, wrapped a clothes line around one of the pets neck soaked in white spirit, and set it alight. The poor little thing was then allowed to run away burning, dying a slow horrible death. The other rabbit in the hutch survived and is now safely with us at the Centre. *(latest: we have just rehomed this rabbit - ed)*

The police look to the RSPCA for help in these situations. We are the only organisation able to deal with this type of crisis and many other sickening, horrifying incidents. Although the RSPCA has many highly skilled inspectors and other staff, most of us who are volunteers in the Rochdale branch (and elsewhere) are just ordinary people, going about our ordinary jobs. There is an urgent need to represent animals who can't speak and can't defend themselves. The evidence of that need is all around us. In 2006 the number of calls the RSPCA responded to from our National Control Centre was a staggering 1,169,229.

If you feel the way we do about animals please consider joining in - ring us at the Centre for more information, if you prefer to help financially you can join the Friends Scheme and make monthly contributions. (If our phone plays a pre-recorded message just leave your details at the end of the message).

Latest sponsor

We are pleased to welcome our latest sponsor, Main Ltd of Shawclough Road, Rochdale, manufacturers of steel fabrications.

Owner and managing Director, Wendy Owen, said " We wanted to help the local RSPCA as much as we could and we are delighted to be Corporate Sponsors".

Main Ltd, who specialise in the manufacture of bowzers, are going from strength to strength with new contracts being gained all the time. Having outgrown their current premises they are planning to move later in the year. Wendy is keen to keep the business in Rochdale and to support the local community. The skilled workforce at Main continue to do smaller jobs for people in the area too - bespoke gates and balconies being very popular items at the moment. Ring 01706 655131 to discuss your requirements. For more details of Main Ltd go to www.mainltd.co.uk

Not only are we pleased to welcome Main Ltd as Corporate Sponsors, but we are delighted to discover that Wendy is also a big ferret fan, and like us, she has found them very cute, funny and lovable animals - see our ferret feature overleaf with some special tips for ferret happiness from Wendy.

Wendy Owen, Managing Director of Main Ltd receives a membership plaque from Chantal Taylor, Rochdale Animal Centre Deputy Manager.
Also pictured: Wendy's husband Gary, holding Alfie (a firm favourite) and David Canavan, Chairman of the Board of Trustees.



Mel is kitten struck



Just before Christmas we had a surprise visit from Coronation star Emma Edmondson. Emma, who plays Mel in the series, wanted to adopt a cat and her first thoughts were to offer a home to one of the many cats at the Centre who are waiting for a loving owner . Mel was delighted with so many ideal cats to choose from but 'Socks' a delightful black kitten caught her eye right from the start and was her final choice. Mel said " I'm really pleased to be getting a cat from the RSPCA, all the cats look well and healthy". Mel will be at our Jumble Sale all day on March 1st, so come along and you can have a chat and get some bargains too! Open 11.30am - 3.30pm.

Legacies

For peace of mind when you are thinking about writing your will, or wondering what will happen to your pets when you are no longer there, the RSPCA has this advice:

Your will is the key to making sure your wishes are carried out in a totally correct manner so precise wording is very important. If you would like your local branch, and the animals in your area to benefit, simply make sure that the words 'Rochdale Branch' are added to 'RSPCA'. That way funds can only be used by this branch.

If you are worried about what will happen to your pets you can safeguard their future with the RSPCA's 'Home for Life' service. This means that we will be there to look after your animal companions - pets, who we know, have given you so much and will need loving care in your absence.

All it takes is a simple clause in your will instructing that care of your pets is handed over to the RSPCA after your death. Knowing how much they mean to you, we'll do our best to look after your beloved pets, and do everything we can to find them new loving homes.

No other animal charity finds more homes for more pets than us - last year we rehomed over 70,000 throughout the UK.

Please write to the Centre or ring and ask for more details. We can supply you with suggested wording to make sure everything is correct and tell you more about Home for Life.

AGM 17 April

Last year we managed to make the AGM an interesting and enjoyable event (no mean task, and it really was a great success), and armed with that experience we are planning to make this years meeting even better. We want you all to come - it is only by talking to you that we can improve the services of the Branch. The plan is to keep the dry bits as brief as possible and have a sociable evening. We are now back on track, holding the AGM in spring, and this year it's on 17 April. 8.00pm. Everyone is very welcome, we promise a very enjoyable evening.

Zen Internet wins another award



Since we featured one of our sponsors - Zen Internet, in our last newsletter, the company has won another award. In November, the annual PC Pro Awards were held in London's Science Museum, where the winners of the IT industry's most prestigious gongs took a bow. For the fourth year in a row Zen Internet won the PC Pro Broadband ISP award. "Near-flawless customer service and reliability keep Zen at the top", said PC Pro.

We need your old phone

We receive £3 for every mobile phone recycled through us. They don't need to be working. Please hand yours in to the Animal Centre on Redcross Street or one of the following RSPCA Charity shops:

Rochdale: 97 Yorkshire Street

Heywood: 36 Market Street

Littleborough: 23 Harehill Road

Middleton: 1 Middleton Gardens



www.foneaid.org.uk

Art Exhibition – ANIMALS IN THE FRAME



The Aviemore Trophy by Lesley Howarth

When artists decide to include animals in their works, the results are very often truly inspired. An exhibition of such pictures is to be shown at the Littleborough Gallery and readers of this newsletter are invited to the exhibition Preview.

All works are by respected local artists and promise to create a wonderful exhibition. Included is the work of well known animal artist Lesley Howarth, herself the owner of three Siberian Huskies. Lesley has generously agreed to donate 10% of any animal portraits ordered during the exhibition to the RSPCA.

Littleborough Gallery is owned by Liz White, who is an artist herself and she suggested the theme of the exhibition. Liz wanted the local RSPCA to benefit and 10% of all sales at the Preview will be donated to the Rochdale and District branch. In addition, a raffle is being held, proceeds of which will go to the RSPCA and first, second and fourth prizes have been donated by the gallery. We

must say a big thank you for this very generous offer. We hope it will help the Animal Centre's finances at what is a very difficult time of the year.

Littleborough Gallery is the area's only gallery specialising in the sale of original contemporary work and the gallery has a collection of silver, dichroic glass and ceramics as well as pictorial art. Liz runs this busy gallery with the help of Alison Ralph and we are delighted that this exhibition is to feature the animals we so dearly love.

Invitation

Please accept our invitation to come to the Preview
Wednesday 12 March 2008 6.30pm – 8.30pm.

Refreshments and nibbles will be available and all works will be on sale (at very affordable prices).

You will also be able to browse the other items in the gallery, all of which make perfect gifts.

It is also a terrific opportunity for you to commission a
portrait of your pet
(10% of which will be donated to the RSPCA).

The Littleborough Gallery, 88 Church Street, Littleborough, OL15 8AU
(on the main A58 Rochdale to Halifax road). Tel. 01706 377395
Free parking outside the gallery after 6.00pm.

For those who can't make it, don't worry - the exhibition runs until the 10 April. Opening times are Wed, Thur, Fri, Sat 10am to 4pm.

For more information www.littleboroughgallery.co.uk
YOU DO NOT NEED TO BRING THIS INVITATION WITH YOU

Ferrets – the right pets for you?

Ferrets are lively, playful and easily tamed, but they need a lot of space, they can also bite and emit a musky smell. Before getting ferrets you should think very hard about whether you can provide everything they need such as:

- Companionship – other ferrets and to have human company.
- A diet of complete dried food supplemented with raw or cooked meat if desired. Meat should not be fed solely as it does not contain all their nutritional requirements.
- A constant supply of fresh, clean drinking water in a drip feed bottle with a metal spout.
- A large home that is kept up off the ground, in an open shed or indoor area out of direct sunlight and strong winds.
- Separate areas inside their home.
- A deep, clean layer of wood shavings on the floor and plenty of fresh meadow hay or old clothing for bedding.
- Toys to play with, like cardboard tubes and wooden cotton reels.
- Their home to be tidied every day and thoroughly cleaned every week.
- A very large, secure area to play in.
- Injections to prevent certain serious diseases.
- To be looked after when you are away on holiday.

Behaviour

Ferrets need to be with other ferrets and it is unkind to keep one ferret on its own. Either male or female ferrets from the same litter can live happily together.

Handling

Pick up a ferret gently but firmly using both hands, one around its hindquarters and the other around the shoulders. Hold it close to your body. It is important to handle ferrets regularly to keep them tame.

Happiness

If you look after your ferret well and handle it regularly it will give you a great deal of enjoyment. It's own happiness will be evident in the way it holds its head and looks at you. Wendy Owen, Managing Director of Main Ltd has become an expert in ferret happiness – she needs to be, she had 17 ferrets at the last count and with a recent move to a bigger house – more could be on the way.

Wendy really has a soft spot for ferrets and her 'family' include many who have been rescued from dire circumstances. All her ferrets are superbly looked after and, you can tell by their faces – they know they are on to a good thing. With lots of space, and toys to play with, they are always bright and alert. Wendy has her own special feeding regime to keep them happy which includes a chicken dinner every two weeks! "Don't give them much though" she says, "the smaller the portion, the better". She also passes on a tip to help handle a 'difficult' ferret – "just put a drop of FerreTone on its tummy and it will be in seventh heaven licking it off". Perfect when you want to trim its claws but it doesn't want you to!



To report an animal in distress: contact 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



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