



RSPCA Guildford
and Epsom Branch
Registered Charity No. 203608

RSPCA GUILDFORD and EPSOM BRANCH ANNUAL REPORT 2023



This tortoise came into our care when she was found in the road at a very busy junction in Guildford. She was adopted by Donna who named her Myrtle.

SUCSESSES IN THE YEAR - recruiting new fosterers



This is gorgeous Zephyr, who came into us when his owner was too ill to take care of him. He was fortunate to be fostered by Jack, before being adopted in October.

Animal fostering is an important role. It helps play a vital part in the rehabilitation of animals and helps improve their chance of finding a new home.

Some animals that we take in have either suffered or are not used to the care and affection that they deserve, and others do not cope well in an animal centre environment. This is where we need fosterers to provide them with a real home, even if it is only on a temporary basis. Living with a foster family provides them with one-to-one care, allowing them to build up their confidence and get used to a normal lifestyle.

We were delighted to recruit several new rabbit fosterers in the year. Indoor rabbit fosterer Charlotte took her first bun for us early in the year. Debbie, who used to run her own rabbit rescue, and Humeera offered us some of their fabulous outdoor space and have been using that to help bond rabbits ready for adoption. We also welcomed Jason, Jack, Alex, Alison and Jolene to our cat fostering team. This additional, really valuable resource, helped us rehome 10 more cats compared with the previous year.

Pretty Jenny, who was Humeera's first foster for us.
She was adopted just a few months later.



You can read more about the animals we helped in section 5 of the Trustees' Report.

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INTRODUCTION

The RSPCA is the world's oldest and largest animal welfare charity, with much of its direct animal welfare work being carried out through its branches.

We are the RSPCA Guildford and Epsom Branch; a self-funding branch of the RSPCA. We raise money locally to fund our animal welfare work to prevent cruelty, promote kindness and rescue, rehabilitate and rehome animals in need in our branch area. All of our work, including managing the branch, is carried out by volunteers. We rehabilitate and rehome animals in our care (the majority of which are cats and rabbits) through fosterers and private boarding establishments. In 2023 we financially assisted 384 companion animals with welfare treatment. This included a horse, tortoises and mice. We also contributed towards 279 neuters and the microchipping of 114 pets. In addition to this we paid for any necessary treatments for the 78 animals we took into branch care and paid for specialist veterinary aid for 25 rescued wild animals.

OUR VISION

We support the vision of the national Society which is to live in a world where all animals are respected and treated with kindness and compassion. We believe that:

- all animals deserve a good life
- animals' lives are important in themselves
- animals have emotions, feelings and needs
- animals enrich and improve our lives
- all of us can and should help to make animals' lives better

USEFUL CONTACT DETAILS

COMPLAINTS AND ADVICE

Anyone suspecting cruelty or mistreatment to animals should report the incident to the RSPCA by contacting the Cruelty Line via www.rspca.org.uk/reportcruelty or telephoning 0300 1234 999. All calls are dealt with in the strictest confidence.

BRANCH CONTACT DETAILS

Telephone 07906 924002
Email info@rspcaguildfordepsom.org.uk

However, if your enquiry is related to volunteering please contact:

volunteer@rspcaguildfordepsom.org.uk

If you are looking to adopt from us please contact:

rehoming@rspcaguildfordepsom.org.uk

Facebook www.facebook.com/rspcaguildfordepsom
Website www.rspcaguildfordepsom.org.uk

LOCAL ANIMAL CENTRE

RSPCA Millbrook Animal Centre
Guildford Road
Chobham, Surrey
GU24 8EH
Tel: 0300 123 0740
Email millbrook@rspca.org.uk

Animal viewings and introductions by appointment only.

CHIEF INSPECTOR

Chief Inspector Rob Jackson
RSPCA Millbrook Animal Centre
Guildford Road, Chobham, Surrey
GU24 8EH

BRANCH PARTNERSHIP MANAGER

Victoria Robson
Email supportercare@rspca.org.uk

POSTCODES COVERED BY THE BRANCH

GU1 1, GU1 2, GU1 3, GU1 4, GU2 4, GU2 5, GU2 6, GU2 7, GU2 8, GU2 9, GU3 1, GU4 7, GU4 8, GU5 0, GU5 9, GU6 7, GU6 8, GU7 1, GU7 2, GU7 3, GU8 4, GU8 5

KT4 9, KT9 1, KT9 2, KT9 9, KT17 1, KT17 2, KT17 3, KT17 4, KT17 6, KT17 9, KT18 5, KT18 6, KT18 7, KT19 0, KT19 7, KT19 8, KT19 9, KT20 5, KT20 6, KT20 7, KT20 9, KT21 1, KT21 2, KT22 0, KT22 2, KT22 7, KT22 8, KT22 9, KT23 3, KT23 4, KT24 5, KT24 6, KT24 7

SM7 1, SM7 2, SM7 3

TRUSTEES' REPORT

1. Reference and administration details

Charity Name	The Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, Guildford and Epsom Branch
Other names charity is known by	RSPCA Guildford and Epsom Branch
Registered charity number	203608
Charity's principal addresses	The Branch does not have an address for members of the public to visit but can be contacted via email or telephone.
Charity's principal bankers	Lloyds Bank plc
Independent examiner	Jim Halliday FCA – Chartered Accountant

Names of the trustees who manage the charity

Trustee name	Office (if any)	Dates acted if not for whole year
Alessandra Cappai		Appointed 29 January 2024
Steven Hooke	Hon. Treasurer	
Abbi Moore*		
Cat Pilbeam		
Lucy Pollard	Hon. Chair	
Katrina Tully	Hon. Secretary	
Rebecca Verne		Appointed 22 August 2023
Sarah White		
Ann Winter		

*Abbi is employed by the RSPCA national Society. We obtained its approval before co-opting her as a trustee, as required by branch rule 7.4.

Other support provided by

Judith Crowhurst	Membership Secretary
Trasna Palmer	President
Victoria Robson	Branch Partnership Manager

2. Introduction by the Chair

Welcome to our review of 2023. As the Chair of RSPCA Guildford and Epsom branch, I take immense pride in being part of an organisation that has made significant contributions to improve the lives of local animals. Throughout the past year, the trustee team and our fantastic volunteers have delivered some great results for animal welfare, which are detailed in section 5 of this Trustee Report. Our commitment to animal well-being remains unwavering, and we continue to work toward our vision: "to live in a world where all animals are respected and treated with kindness and compassion".

All of the work the branch does, including the governance and running of the charity, is performed by volunteers. The scope and scale of our activities is therefore driven by the skills and availability of volunteer resources, so we were delighted to recruit two new trustees in the year. Becky brings a wealth of practical animal welfare experience as she works at a fellow animal charity, and Alex is a skilled cat and kitten carer, with a passion for social media engagement. As detailed on the inside front cover we also had great success in recruiting new rabbit and cat fosterers; all of whom have already played an important part in transforming animals' lives from stray or unwanted to loved and adopted.

The number of events we were able to organise in 2023 was back to pre-pandemic levels. It was great to be out meeting the local community at 13 events including an educational talk. In addition, we volunteered at a local foodbank and continued to support The Hive foodbank in Guildford by supplying pet food to them to distribute.

At the time of writing, the national RSPCA is celebrating its 200th anniversary (our branch is only slightly younger at 147 years old). We have launched a new brand and a new purpose, but this isn't about a new logo, it's all about raising the profile of animal welfare and helping everyone understand that we can *all* play a part in improving animals' lives. The new brand will help us reach more people, people who may not have considered us, or their role in animal welfare, before. We hope that this leads to more engagement between the local community and the branch, whether that be new volunteers, new adopters or new supporters. In addition, we hope through education and advocacy that we will prevent suffering and reduce unplanned litters and unwanted animals. We want to build a movement for animals and the more people we can inspire to get involved, the more impact we can have for animals, now and for many years to come.



Thank you for your support, which enables us to create a more positive future for animals. Whether through one-off gifts, regular donations, or gifts in wills, your contributions make a real difference. Or if you gave us your precious time, thank you for making a measurable impact on our public-facing and animal rehoming work. Together, we can continue to champion animal welfare and ensure a brighter tomorrow for our furry and feathered friends.

Lucy Pollard, Chair

3. Structure, governance, and management

How the charity is constituted	We are a separately registered charity, constituted as an unincorporated association, working within the Rules, Policies and Guidelines of the national RSPCA. Our governing document is the RSPCA Society's Branch Rules. The charity operates as an autonomous branch, responsible for our own fundraising and for managing local animal welfare work.
Trustee selection methods	The committee consists of a maximum of 17 individuals, being: (1) at least 5 and not more than 14 elected committee members, all of whom must be eligible branch members, elected at the AGM and (2) up to 3 co-opted committee members, who may also be branch members.
How trustees are recruited and appointed	Elected from branch members at every AGM to carry on the Branch work for the forthcoming year. Potential trustees are recruited via various methods including volunteer agencies, RSPCA websites and Head Office enquiries, advertising and appeals to members. Potential new trustees are vetted in accordance with Charity Commission guidelines and sign the recommended declarations upon appointment.
Policies and procedures adopted for the induction and training of trustees	All trustees are briefed on their responsibilities prior to their acceptance of the role. New trustees receive appropriate training in RSPCA and Branch Policies and Procedures, in line with Information Commissioner's Office and Charity Commission guidance. They also receive support from other trustees, guidance from Head Office and Branch Partnership Managers and handover from retiring officers if applicable.
The charity's organisational structure and any wider network with which the charity works	Some services such as those of the inspectorate are carried out by the national Society whereas others are carried out by a network of branches which are independently registered charities operating in defined local areas. Our branch is the Guildford and Epsom branch, which is a member of the South East Regional Board area. All the work of the Branch is carried out by volunteers, so we have no paid staff. Decisions are made by the trustees at committee meetings, usually held every 4 to 6 weeks. The Branch works with Head Office staff, the Inspectorate, RSPCA Millbrook Animal Centre and other branches and animal centres in its day-to-day work.
Trustees' consideration of major risks and the system and procedures to manage them	The main risks facing the Branch are: People. We continue to have difficulties in finding volunteers willing to act as trustees and carry out welfare and fundraising work. We use volunteer recruitment bureaux and other methods as described above to publicise our requirements. Financial. Income generation is vital for us to continue our work. Despite pressing need, we must evaluate what we can afford to fund. Insufficient income levels mean that we will have to reduce or cease welfare activity to remain a viable branch. New demands and requests for funding are a key discussion item at every committee meeting. Spending is controlled through delegated limits and required approvals.

	<p>Levels of pet ownership grew during the pandemic, and whilst owning a pet is a great boost to both mental and physical health it also comes with a substantial financial responsibility, which places additional pressure on charities when owners are unable to meet the costs of pet ownership.</p> <p>The vets we work with continue to struggle with significant shortages in staff, set against a huge demand for appointments. This impacts our ability to negotiate on price and may mean that non urgent procedures such as neuters are delayed. This has led to more unwanted litters and conditions that require emergency treatment such as tumours that are hormone related.</p> <p>Public opinion. The RSPCA is a well-known and respected “brand”, and we must ensure that we do not tarnish it. Mitigating activities include screening/induction of volunteers, together with appropriate training. For trustees there is ongoing learning and instruction (specifically on their responsibilities as branch officials), and potential conflicts of interest are discussed at every meeting.</p> <p>Health and Safety. We have a duty to take reasonable care of our volunteers’ health and safety and that of others who may be affected by our actions. Safeguarding matters are reviewed at every meeting. All volunteers are covered by the RSPCA’s liability and personal accident insurance and are provided with appropriate information on our health and safety policies and guidelines.</p> <p>The committee has identified and evaluated risks affecting the Branch and has set in place policies and procedures based on guidelines issued by RSPCA Head Office and the Charity Commission to mitigate the risks where possible. The operation and relevance of these policies and procedures is reviewed regularly.</p> <p>The Branch complies with the Branch Rules as issued by the national Society and has a number of related financial transactions with this organisation. Abbi Moore is also a paid employee of the RSPCA (national Society).</p>
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SUCSESSES IN THE YEAR - some of the animals we helped in 2023



Kiri came into our care when her elderly owner became unable to cope with her liveliness. She was a typical young cat - fun and playful and a delight to spend time with. After just one day in foster care she was making friends, coming for fusses and eating well.

This chatty girl had been brought up as an indoor cat, so although we rehomed her to an outdoor home, it had to be with an adopter who could accept that she will need a litter tray for the rest of her life. She also needed to be the sole resident puss, as she may be little but she can be fierce with other cats!

4. Objectives and activities

Summary of the objectives of the charity set out in its governing document	<p>To promote the work and objectives of the national Society; Royal Society for The Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (registered charity number 219099), with particular reference to the area of the Branch, in accordance with the policies of the society.</p> <p>The objectives of the Branch remain unchanged from previous years.</p>
Charity's aim	The RSPCA as a charity will, by all lawful means, prevent cruelty, promote kindness to and alleviate suffering of all animals.
Summary of the main activities in relation to these objects	<p>The Branch promotes animal welfare in the local area primarily through veterinary assistance, neutering and rehoming.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We offer discretionary support to people in need to help pay veterinary bills. • We respond to enquiries from the public about animals and offer free animal care advice by phone, social media, via leaflets and at our events, which promotes responsible pet ownership. • Where funds permit, the Branch takes in abandoned animals, including pets whose owners suffer ill health or financial difficulties, or pass away. We also support the national RSPCA by caring for animals taken in by the Inspectorate if there is no space at the national animal centres. • We support the Inspectorate as a priority. • We undertake educational presentations and workshops with local groups and schools. <p>More detail on our activities can be found in section 5 below.</p>

5. Achievements And Performance

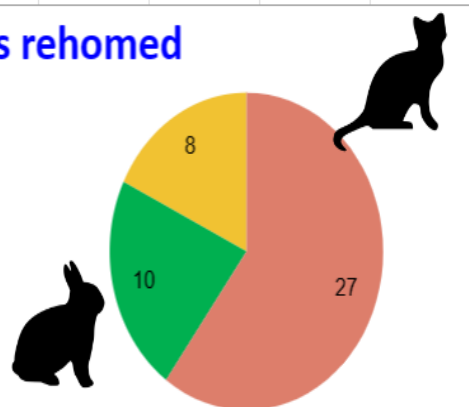
A. Animal Welfare

Rehoming, adoption support and fostering

One of the main roles of the RSPCA is rehoming animals to people who can meet the needs of a companion animal in an appropriate environment.

45 animals rehomed

- Cat
- Rabbit
- Misc



Most rehoming in the local area is done by Millbrook Animal Centre, which is the nearest RSPCA animal centre to the Branch. The Branch also has space in foster homes and private boarding establishments for cats and rabbits who have been found abandoned or stray or have been taken in via the RSPCA Inspectorate when there is no room for them in an animal centre. They are cared for and rehabilitated, while we search for loving new homes. There are few dogs mentioned in our reports because stray dogs are the responsibility of the local council, and we do not have the facilities or

expertise to take dogs into our direct care so we use other RSPCA branches and animal centres or other rescue organisations wherever possible. Animals in our care receive veterinary treatment, vaccinations, neutering and microchipping. Flea and other parasite treatments are kept up to date. This helps to control the incidence and spread of disease and suffering.

In 2023 the Branch **rehomed 45 animals** that came into our care. In addition to this, we took on responsibility for a number of other animals before finding them places in RSPCA animal centres. We advertise animals for rehoming on our branch website and Facebook page, as well as the national Society's main website, allowing us to reach a larger audience of prospective adopters. Unfortunately, more and more often all our facilities are full, yet it is very important that we can take in animals in need and give them a chance of a loving home.

Our animals can be loud, quiet, big, small, or three-legged - they all come with a personality and a past that's unique to them and it's our mission to find the perfect adopter to match them with. We support rehoming activity by recruiting and providing volunteers who undertake home suitability assessments as part of adoption support. Their role is to understand each animal's need (for space, stimulation, safety etc.) and ensure that what potential adopters can provide matches these needs. They then follow up with the adopter later to ensure that the adoption has been a success.

In 2023 we **carried out 44 adoption visits** (compared with 43 in 2022 and 22 in 2021).

We have cat fosterers who give the special care and attention that is often much easier to provide in a foster home than in a cattery. If we have spaces in this preferred home environment, we can socialise and nurture cats meaning that they are more quickly restored to good health and are able to be rehomed earlier.

Our outdoor rabbit fosterers have provided a great resource for the branch, the Inspectorate, and the wider RSPCA needs, by taking in rabbits to full capacity. Our indoor rabbit fosterers obviously have more limited capacity but provide an essential environment to those rabbits that cannot be housed outdoors - especially in the colder months. All of our fosterers have been invaluable in their work to rehabilitate rabbits in their care and progress them to rehoming with wonderful new forever homes.

We are always looking to recruit more potential fosterers, including kitten fosterers, who will have support from our co-ordinator. This enables us to take more animals into branch care and reduces the costs of boarding overall.

Welfare assistance

We provide support to people in need to help pay their vet bills. The service is offered in certain circumstances to assist with difficulties experienced by pet owners faced with veterinary costs which they will struggle to meet. This helps to promote responsible pet ownership, prevent suffering, and reduce the numbers of unwanted cats, dogs, and rabbits.

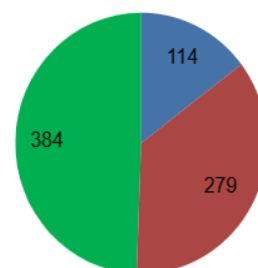
In 2023 we **gave financial help for 384 animal welfare treatments** (compared with 268 in 2022).

We also helped with the **neutering of 279 animals** (compared to 192 in 2022 and 147 in the prior year). 235 of these were cats, where we offered subsidised neutering to owners under our World Spay Day initiative.

We had **78 animals in our care** during 2023 and we paid for all their necessary treatments. Our thanks go to the veterinary community for their help and support throughout the year.

Financial help given to owners (number of animals treated)

- Microchipping
- Neutering
- Welfare assistance



We also **paid for the care of 25 wild animals** at Wildlife Aid in Leatherhead, including hedgehogs, foxes, pigeons, and an owl (92 animals in the previous year). These cases originated in our branch area and were taken to this specialist centre by the Inspectorate.

Supporting the Inspectorate

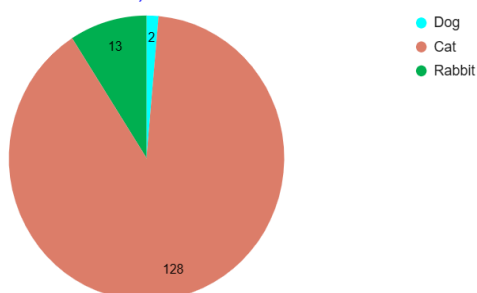
The Branch continued to support the Inspectorate in their vital and sometimes distressing work. We do this through fostering or boarding and paying for veterinary treatment for animals signed over to the RSPCA. We also provide welfare assistance for veterinary treatment and neutering where the Inspectors find owners in need. We paid for flea and worm treatment supplies to be held in their vans (helping owners improve care and keep their pets). The Inspectorate report is in a later section of the Annual Report.

Other welfare activities

We take in, free of charge, lost animals and take steps to reunite them with owners. This work benefits our local community (including local authorities) by preventing animals from straying and posing a risk to themselves and to people through road accidents. We respond to enquiries from the public about animals in the Branch area. The public benefits by knowing that we can and will intervene to assist animals in need.

We advertised a number of lost and found pets through the year but microchipping is our best resource to help return missing animals to their relieved and delighted owners. Microchipped pets where contact details are kept up to date are easily reunited with their families, avoiding heartache for the owners and costs for the RSPCA. Unfortunately, the care of unidentifiable, stray animals adds significantly to our work.

Number of animals microchipped
(including branch animals)



For many years it has been the law that you must have your dog microchipped and your details kept up to date. We welcome the new legal requirement (in force from June 2024) for cat owners to microchip their cats before 20 weeks old and to ensure their contact details are kept up to date in a pet microchipping database. This new law means that more lost cats can be easily identified and reunited with their owners, rather than being handed to rehoming charities like ourselves that are struggling with overflowing waiting lists.

We believe all cats, dogs and rabbits should be chipped to ensure that a pet can be reunited with their owner, and to aid this we will pay for chipping where required. We **microchipped 143 animals** in 2023 (compared to 105 animals in 2022 and 82 in 2021). This was made up of 29 branch animals and 114 pets.

B. Education

Education events

Our education events look at the work of the RSPCA, the welfare needs of animals and the action young people can take to help them; at home, at school and in the local community. They are tailored to the audience following consultation with their teachers/youth leaders. Although we did not secure any school talks in 2023, we have already delivered three in 2024 and hope to have another in the diary.

In November 2023 we were delighted to be invited to speak to the members of a local Rotary Club, who treated us to dinner beforehand.

We want everyone to understand that – whatever their age or circumstances – they have the power to change animal welfare for the better. By understanding the causes of neglect or cruelty, we can prevent them from happening in the first place. We are looking at new ways to engage with schools to secure more invitations in future.

We also engage children in educational activities at our fundraising events; for example we take a “spin the wheel” game for an animal welfare quiz.

RSPCA Head Office have online educational facilities which we have promoted on our social media sites. Our welfare line operated throughout the year and provided advice to the general public to help with pets, wildlife, and farm animals.

Social media

Our social media content can be found at www.facebook.com/rspcaguildfordepsom and www.rspcaguildfordepsom.org.uk. You can see more about the Branch trustees and our work, find out about our welfare services, and learn about forthcoming campaigns and events. You can also obtain useful help and advice and contact us via these links.

Other educational activities

We continued to heavily publicise and support World Spay Day and Early Neutering Awareness by running a social media campaign to offer low-cost cat neutering and free microchipping for both male and female cats in the Branch area.

We continue to support Rabbit Awareness Week (RAW) promotions. In 2023 we carried on the previous initiative focussed on getting rabbits vaccinated against the deadly RHD2 disease. The virus causes internal bleeding and is highly contagious. There is no specific treatment, which makes vaccination essential. Alongside the education campaign we offered subsidised vaccines in the branch area.

C. Fundraising

Fundraising events and activities

Our events were partially impacted by Covid and its aftermath in 2022, but 2023 saw us return to our traditional fundraising activities and we **attended 13 events**. As at the time of writing we have a full calendar of events planned for 2024, and are looking forward to chatting to the public about our work, and the animals we have available for rehoming.

Event type	2023	2022
Town centre collections	£312	Nil
Store collections	£373	Nil
Fetes and local fairs	£1,058	£601
Car boot sales	£143	£161
Educational	£75	Nil
E-cards and online events	£425	£284*

* Included within Other Donations instead of Branch Fundraising Events.

We are incredibly grateful that in addition to the events run by the branch, two individual supporters continued to pursue their own fundraising activities which raised over £1,300; a fantastic achievement

by both Lorna and Trasna. As in the prior year, several members of the committee sold second-hand items and home grown plants through social media or at vintage fairs/car boot/table top sales to bring in extra funds.

The money raised by these activities is disclosed in the accounts against the following categories: "Branch Fundraising Events" and "Other Donations". However, "Other Donations" includes monies raised online as well as at events. Examples of our online receipts are being part of the Guildford Community Lottery and fundraising platforms such as Easyfundraising and Paypal, as well as donations made via our website.

Further details of how we use our income to help local animals can be found in section 5A.

Collection boxes

We would like to have more boxes out in the local area and continue to look for people to manage these boxes; recruits do not need to be branch members although we would encourage them to join our membership. In particular we would like to increase the number of collection boxes in Epsom and the surrounding areas. We would welcome suggestions for new locations and for people to manage collection boxes in the enlarged branch area.

D. Public benefit

Our objectives and activities are outlined in section 4 of this report. Performance against those objectives is detailed above. Our current short term and long-term aims can be found in section 7 of this report.

The trustees have reviewed the outcomes and achievements of our objectives and activities for the year to ensure they remain focussed on our charitable aims and continue to deliver benefits to the public. We have complied with the duty under the Charities Act 2006 to have due regard to public benefit guidance published by the Charity Commission.

6. Financial Review

Overview

Overall expenditure in 2023 increased by £27,055 to £98,462 compared to £71,407 in 2022. The increase in expenditure reflects increased animal welfare activities and the impact of inflation on the Branch's costs, especially the increased cost of veterinary treatments.

The percentage of total expenditure spent in the branch area on animal welfare has increased from 88% in 2022 to 95% in 2023. This reflects the lower levels of donations outside of the branch area in the current year.

Income was £142,002 in 2023, an increase of £81,215 compared to the £60,787 in the prior year. The increase is mainly due to a substantial legacy of £64,946 that was received in February 2023. The Branch also received £4,061 in contributions from the South East Regional Board (2022 £nil) towards neutering and emergency boarding costs incurred. Investment income increased by £6,662 compared to the prior year, due to higher average investment balances of the Branch and the significant increase in interest rates during 2023. The share of direct debit donations raised by the RSPCA HQ door to door fundraising campaign, which amounted to £46,188 in 2023 makes up 33% of the income in the current year (2022: £46,436 and 76%).

Overall, there was a net surplus for the year of £43,540 compared to a deficit of £10,620 in 2022. The Branch continues to hold significant reserves but aims to reduce these in line with the policy as described below.

The full accounts are provided later within the Annual Report.

Brief statement of the charity's policy on reserves

Reserves are those funds which are freely available for general purposes and have not been designated for specific projects or activities.

The reserves policy of the branch is to hold general reserves to a level that, should all income cease, there would be sufficient funds in hand to run the Branch for approximately 24 months. Based on this measure the Branch currently has excess reserves. The Trustees aim to reduce reserves over time by targeting increased levels of annual expenditure on activities or donations that further the animal welfare aims of the Branch.

The Branch invests surplus funds in capital-safe bank and deposit-based savings accounts where the deposits are covered by the Financial Services Compensation Scheme (FSCS).

7. Plans for the future

<p>Aims and objectives for the future</p>	<p>Our overriding aim is to continue to provide and promote animal welfare for the local area by providing financial assistance for those on low incomes, continuing with our fostering and rehoming work to ensure a healthy and happy lifestyle for adopted animals, and to support the national Society.</p> <p>In January 2021 the committee agreed our short and medium-term priorities and we aligned our goals with the new RSPCA strategy.</p> <p>Our main area of focus is to increase animal welfare across the Region by continuing and extending collaboration with other branches and organisations and supporting more people with animals in need. This is dependent upon and supported by 4 additional pillars:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● People ● Revenue Generation ● Strong Governance ● Public Engagement <p>The Plan is reviewed regularly and adapted to reflect changing circumstances and priorities.</p>
<p>Activities planned to achieve the objectives</p> <p>1. People</p> <p>2. Revenue Generation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Expand and effectively manage, utilise, and retain our volunteer network and membership ● Define clear roles and responsibility for trustee and volunteer roles with a focus on succession planning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Set up a fundraising working group to provide a dedicated focus on revenue generation ideas

3. Strong Governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a compelling fundraising plan (including an emphasis on digital) to rely less on door-to-door income • Empower and engage members and volunteers to spread our messages and support fundraising efforts • Diversify income generation by exploring and evaluating alternative revenue streams
4. Public Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue our robust approach to managing and refreshing policies, procedures, and processes • Foster stronger connectivity, sharing, and leverage of best practices across the Branch Network

Declaration

The trustees declare that they have approved the trustees' report above.
Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees



Lucy Pollard
Hon. Chair
28 May 2024

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES OF RSPCA GUILDFORD AND EPSOM BRANCH

I report on the accounts of the Charity (Registered Charity number 203608) for the year ended 31 December 2023, which are set out on the following pages.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The charity's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act), and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to

- examine the accounts under section 145 of the 2011 Act;
- to follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act; and
- to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of independent examiner's statement

My examination was carried out in accordance with the general Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair view' and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

Independent examiner's statement

In connection with my examination, no material matters have come to my attention which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the 2011 Act; or
- the accounts did not accord with the accounting records; or
- the accounts did not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair' view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

I have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

JIM HALLIDAY, FCA
Chartered Accountant
74 Holly Hill, Southampton, SO16 7EY

28 May 2024

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

RSPCA GUILDFORD AND EPSOM BRANCH

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

	NOTE	Total funds 2023 £	Total funds 2022 £
INCOMING RESOURCES			
Collecting Boxes		344	-
Branch Fundraising Events		2,386	762
Branch Adoption Fees		3,435	3,215
Donations via HQ Door to Door Fundraising		46,188	46,436
Contributions From Regional Board		4,061	-
Other Donations		4,948	3,038
Legacies		69,796	3,137
Membership Subscriptions		361	378
Investment Income	3	10,483	3,821
		<u>142,002</u>	<u>60,787</u>
RESOURCES EXPENDED			
Charitable Activities			
Veterinary Treatment on Branch Voucher Scheme		40,524	33,133
Neutering on Branch Voucher Scheme		21,460	9,969
Voucher Scheme and Charitable Expenses		647	260
Veterinary Treatment and Neutering of Unowned Animals		18,429	7,731
Boarding and Food		6,642	4,606
Wildlife		5,350	7,461
Donations		211	3,501
Branch Contribution to RSPCA Headquarters and Region		3,308	3,308
		<u>96,751</u>	<u>69,969</u>
Cost of Generating Funds	4	<u>91</u>	<u>20</u>
Governance Costs and Depreciation			
AGM/Annual Reports		259	214
Administrative Expenses		755	510
Depreciation		60	117
Insurance		726	577
		<u>1,800</u>	<u>1,418</u>
TOTAL EXPENDITURE		<u>98,462</u>	<u>71,407</u>
NET MOVEMENT IN FUNDS FOR THE YEAR		<u>43,540</u>	<u>(10,620)</u>
TOTAL FUNDS Balance Brought Forward		266,774	277,394
TOTAL FUNDS Balance Carried Forward		<u>310,314</u>	<u>266,774</u>

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

RSPCA GUILDFORD AND EPSOM BRANCH


BALANCE SHEET AT 31 DECEMBER 2023

	NOTE	2023 £	2022 £
FIXED ASSETS			
Tangible fixed assets	6	-	60
Investment Bank Accounts		<u>135,000</u>	<u>-</u>
		<u>135,000</u>	<u>60</u>
CURRENT ASSETS			
Debtors	7	10,217	3,476
Investment Bank Accounts		170,001	255,000
Cash at bank - Current Account		<u>5,682</u>	<u>15,732</u>
		<u>185,900</u>	<u>274,208</u>
CREDITORS (falling due within 1 year)			
Creditors		(10,586)	(7,494)
NET CURRENT ASSETS		<u>175,314</u>	<u>266,714</u>
NET ASSETS		<u>310,314</u>	<u>266,774</u>
UNRESTRICTED FUNDS		<u>310,314</u>	<u>266,774</u>

Approved by the Trustees on 28 May 2024 and signed on their behalf by:



Hon. Chairman



Hon. Treasurer

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

RSPCA GUILDFORD AND EPSOM BRANCH

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES

A General

The accounts have been prepared under the historical cost convention and in accordance with applicable accounting standards and the Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting by Charities.

The accounts have been prepared on an accruals basis.

B Income

All income is recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities once the charity has entitlement to the funds, it is probable that the income will be received, and the amount can be measured reliably.

Donations are recognised when the Charity has been notified in writing of both the amount and settlement date. In the event that a donation is subject to conditions that require a level of performance before the charity is entitled to the funds, the income is deferred and not recognised until either those conditions are fully met, or the fulfilment of those conditions is wholly within the control of the charity and it is probable that those conditions will be fulfilled in the reporting period.

Legacies are recognised on the earlier of either (a) the date that probate is granted, the estate has been finalised and notification has been made by the executor(s) to the Charity that a distribution will be made, or (b) when a distribution is received from the estate. Where legacies have been notified to the charity, or the charity is aware of the granting of probate, and the criteria for income recognition has not been met, then the legacy is disclosed in the notes to the accounts. Legacies received via the Branch legacy scheme are grossed up for the administration charges deducted, with the associated charges shown as expenditure in the year the legacy is credited.

Investment income is recognised on an accruals basis.

C Expenditure

Liabilities are recognised as expenditure as soon as there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the charity to that expenditure, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required in settlement and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably.

Expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and has been classified under headings that aggregate all costs related to the category. Where costs cannot be directly attributed to particular headings, they have been allocated to activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources.

D Tangible fixed assets

Depreciation is provided on equipment at a rate of 25% per annum to write off the assets over an estimated useful life of 4 years.

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

RSPCA GUILDFORD AND EPSOM BRANCH

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

E Investment bank accounts

The branch invests surplus funds in investment bank accounts including instant access accounts, notice accounts and fixed rate bonds. Where the maturity date of the investment bank account is greater than one year from the balance sheet date, these investments are included within fixed asset investments. Where the maturity date is less than one year from the balance sheet date, the investments are included within current assets.

F Fund accounting

Unrestricted funds can be used in accordance with the charitable objectives at the discretion of the trustees.

Designated funds represent those unrestricted funds which have been ring-fenced by the trustees for a specific purpose.

Restricted funds can only be used for particular restricted purposes, within the objectives of the charity. Restrictions arise when specified by the donor or when funds are raised for particular restricted purposes.

2. STATEMENT OF BRANCH COMMITTEE'S RESPONSIBILITIES

Charity law requires the branch committee, as trustees, to prepare financial statements for each year which give a true and fair view of the charity's financial activities during the year, and the financial position at the end of the year. In preparing these financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- select suitable Accounting Policies and apply them consistently
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent
- prepare financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in business

3. INVESTMENT INCOME

	2023	2022
Interest on Investment Bank Accounts:-	£	£
Fixed assets	3,972	-
Current assets	6,511	3,821
	<u>10,483</u>	<u>3,821</u>

4. COST OF GENERATING FUNDS

	2023	2022
	£	£
Pitch fees and licences	<u>91</u>	<u>20</u>

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

RSPCA GUILDFORD AND EPSOM BRANCH

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

5. COMMITTEE MEMBERS' EXPENSES AND REMUNERATION

No committee member received any remuneration, and the branch has no paid staff. Five committee members were reimbursed a total of £2,943.65 for costs incurred.

6. TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

EQUIPMENT	2023	2022
	£	£
COST		
At 1 January	469	469
At 31 December	469	469
DEPRECIATION		
At 1 January	409	292
Charge for year	60	117
At 31 December	469	409
NET BOOK VALUE		
At 31 December	-	60

7. DEBTORS

	2023	2022
	£	£
Prepayments and accrued income	6,654	2,563
Other debtors	3,563	913
	10,217	3,476

8. POST BALANCE SHEET EVENTS

There were no post balance sheet events.

RSPCA Surrey Inspectorate Team - Annual Report 2023

The Surrey team was delighted to welcome Inspector Lauren Evans back from her maternity leave in August. Having spent many, no doubt, exhausting months looking after her new twins (Emilia and Kobe), returning to work was probably something of a rest for Lauren! On a similar note, Inspector Nat Kitchin spent 2023 on maternity leave following the birth of baby Sofia back in January. We all look forward to welcoming Nat back into the team in 2024.

Congratulations to Deputy Chief Inspector Sandy Barlow who successfully completed her Team Leader / Supervisor apprenticeship in 2023 - well done Sandy, there was a great deal of work and effort involved in achieving that qualification.

We have continued to increase the number of Animal Rescue Volunteers in the team and we now have 10 active ARVs. The work that ARVs can take on is increasing all the time. ARVs deal with some of the less 'complex' collections / rescues e.g. collecting injured small wildlife such as birds and hedgehogs, or attending cats stuck up trees with the Fire & Rescue Service. They also assist with the movement of domestic animals (e.g. assisting officers with transporting domestic animals to vets). Some of our ARVs have also helped with essential kit movements (such as transporting our issued life jackets for annual testing).

A couple of particularly good examples of ARV involvement this year were:

- Several ARVs assisted Inspectorate officers with a large police operation involving the removal of multiple animals from a houseboat in Shepperton (including dogs, cats and birds of prey). The animals were living in squalid conditions and the Police conducted the ongoing investigation.
- A couple of our ARVs also assisted ARO Louis Horton with the collection and removal of multiple fish from a leaking garden pond where the water levels were dropping dangerously low.

All of this work frees up our Inspectorate officers to focus on their core work of knocking on doors and dealing with complaints of neglect and cruelty. On behalf of the team, I would like to thank our ARVs for all of the hard work they have put in in 2023.

On a very sad note, we were all extremely upset to hear the news that former Surrey Chief Inspector Dave Fox had died towards the end of the year. Dave was the Surrey Chief for many years and the news of his death was a great shock to all of us and we continue to extend our sincere condolences to all of Dave's family. Dave was a unique character and personality, and he will be very sadly missed by all of his RSPCA colleagues.

Case & significant complaint work in 2023

Surrey Inspectors submitted 13 case files to our Prosecution team in 2023 for their consideration. Some of those case files were dealt with by way of a Caution, others were heard in the courts. Here is a selection of just some of those files which have been concluded:



In November 2023 Insp Lauren Evans investigated the neglect of an emaciated saluki dog 'Albert' being kept in the Guildford area. A veterinary surgeon confirmed that Albert had not had his needs met in terms of being provided with a suitable diet, and the owner was interviewed. The owner agreed to sign Albert over to the RSPCA and also agreed to accept a Caution. Albert, who was found to also have significant liver issues, was subsequently cared for at RSPCA Millbrook Animal Centre. Happily, he has now fully recovered and is ready to be rehomed once a suitable new owner can be found.

Insp Liz Wheeler investigated the neglect of a Lhasa Apso dog 'Betty' which was found to be underweight and to have skin issues. It was clear that the owner could not look after this little dog, but the owner did not accept this and refused to sign Betty over into our care. Happily the Magistrates agreed that Betty's owner was unable to care for her properly, and Betty was removed from the owner and handed over to the care of the RSPCA. Betty has since been rehomed.



In late 2022, Insp Natalie Kitchen dealt with a case concerning an emaciated dog in Mitcham with an untreated mammary tumour. In March 2023, the owner pleaded guilty to causing unnecessary suffering. The owner was given a community order for a 12 month period, with 100 hours of unpaid work. The owner was also disqualified from owning / keeping all animals for a period of 5 years and instructed to pay costs of £500. Very sadly the dog had to be euthanased.

In February 2023, Insp Sandy Barlow secured a Caution for a couple from Feltham re their four German Shepherd dogs (two adults and two puppies). All four dogs were significantly underweight, and the couple accepted that they had failed to provide a suitable diet and also had failed to protect the dogs from pain, injury and disease. The dogs were signed over and were put up for rehoming.

There are several other ongoing cases which are currently awaiting court hearings and which I therefore cannot detail here currently. I will report further on those in the next Annual Report.

Several of my officers have investigated 'Non-Accidental Injury' cases, i.e. causing deliberate harm and injury to animals. Some of those investigations are also ongoing. Sadly, there has been a significant increase in these types of investigation, which is very concerning. These incidents can be distressing for my officers, and I would like to thank all of them for their professionalism and resilience when dealing with these.

Not all serious investigations turn into prosecution cases. For various reasons, there are some that we are unable to pursue further and some where we work with the owners to improve the situation.



A team effort was needed to secure a brighter future for 14 adult cats and 12 kittens which had all been living in one room in a flat in Epsom. This incident was attended by Inspector Liz Wheeler and ARO Chloe Wilson. Whilst the situation was clearly far from ideal, the owner agreed to sign over all of the cats and, with the help of the Guildford & Epsom branch, the Hants & Surrey Border branch and the Sussex North & Brighton branch all of the cats went on to find new homes. A great example of 'partnership' working.

A 2-year old Cane Corso dog was found dumped in Godalming in a very poor body condition. ARO Chloe Wilson attended and took the dog straight to the vet. The vet gave the poor dog a 'body score' of just 1 out of 9 (meaning emaciated). The dog was microchipped, but unfortunately the chip was still registered to the breeder and not the new owner. All attempts at tracking the owner down proved fruitless and this dog, named Shilou, was subsequently rehomed.



Collections & Rescues in 2023

Surrey officers have continued to deal with all manner of animal rescues. Here are some of the more unusual or complicated ones:



Animal Rescue Officers Chloe Wilson and Sam Matthews went to the aid of this sheep in Brighton which had the misfortune to fall into a hole from which it could not get out. A passing rambler had discovered the stricken ewe. Once successfully removed, Sam and Chloe managed to track down the farmer who came and collected her to take back to the farm for observation. She recovered well and was able to rejoin her flock.



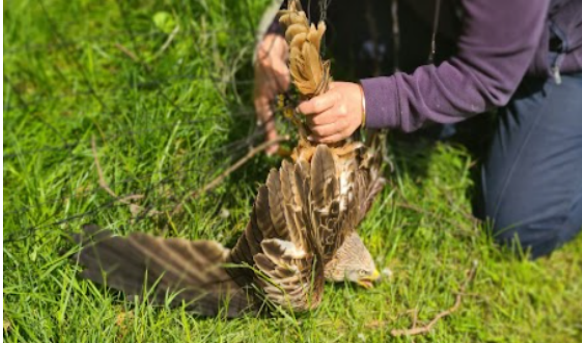
AROs Chloe Horton and Louis Horton rescued a large fallow Buck completely entangled in wire fencing in the Horsham area. Happily the deer was able to be released. Animals tangled in fencing / netting is not unusual, but not all of them are so well and truly stuck as this particular deer found itself.



This poor fox got himself stuck inside a spare wheel in the New Malden area. ARO Sam Matthews was unable to release the fox in situ, and so took both fox and wheel to Wildlife Aid, Leatherhead. The fox was sedated and later released. Another good example of 'partnership' working.

A further example of a wild animal's ability to get themselves trapped. This badger fell down a manhole at a school in the Farnham area and could not get out. ARO Ben Fitzcosta attended and managed to extricate the poor animal. After a quick check-up at another of our partner wildlife centres, HART Wildlife in Alton, Ben was able to release the badger back at the location none the worse for wear.





It's not just our four-footed friends who have the capacity to get themselves into predicaments. This red kite was discovered tangled in football netting in the Wokingham area. Insp Jo Bowling attended and was able to cut the bird free and release it.

A good reminder to ensure all loose netting / fencing is secured to protect our wildlife.

A final example, which also highlights the ingenuity officers sometimes have to display when dealing with incidents. This deer had got himself wedged between a tree and a fence in the Bisley area. Unable to release him by hand, Inspectors Leanna Hone and Jo Bowling employed the use of their vehicle car jack to push the fence slightly outwards and to therefore create enough space for the deer to be freed unharmed.



Thank you's

As always, I would like to thank all of our 'partner' organisations who have continued to assist us in working for animals. This includes local Police, Fire & Rescue, vets, local authorities and other animal charities / wildlife rescues. It is amazing and encouraging that so many different agencies work together for the same cause.

I would also like to express my particular gratitude, on behalf of the whole Surrey team, to all of our local Branches for their help and support during 2023. It really is a team effort and we have continued to work closely with all of them throughout the year. Whether it be assisting with veterinary invoices, funding wildlife treatment, arranging boarding or taking on and rehoming animals, we could not have done all of the things we have done this year to alleviate animal suffering and improve welfare without the assistance of all of the Branches we work alongside.

Thank you to all,

Rob Jackson

Chief Inspector, Surrey

SUCCESES IN THE YEAR - some of the animals we helped in 2023



Ivy (the grey and white rabbit in the picture to the left) came to us from an overcrowding situation. She was originally with another rabbit who was thought to be a girl but turned out to be a boy! She was only discovered to be pregnant during her spay. In a special moment for experienced volunteer Jackie, Ivy gave birth whilst she was in her foster care. She had two babies; Dora (the white rabbit in the picture) being one and another who sadly had a leg abnormality whereby the vet recommended euthanasia.

It is not so common to have a bond of 2 female rabbits, but this mother and daughter pair are very happy together. Bonding rabbits can be a risky business and it is best to wait until after the hormonal changes of a neuter have had time to settle. However December 2023 saw a Christmas Rabbit Romance at fosterer Humeera's when her two separate foster buns got together by accident and decided they wanted to stay together! The happy couple, Smudge and Winnie (pictured right), are now looking for their forever home.



We took in 5 mice from a nationwide appeal to help with hundreds of mice signed over to RSPCA officers from Wales. We named the pretty females Freya, Anna, Astrid, Frida and Agnatha. They were very shy, timid and not well handled to begin with, but in fosterer Alison's caring hands, they were soon won over and became quite tame and happy to be picked up.

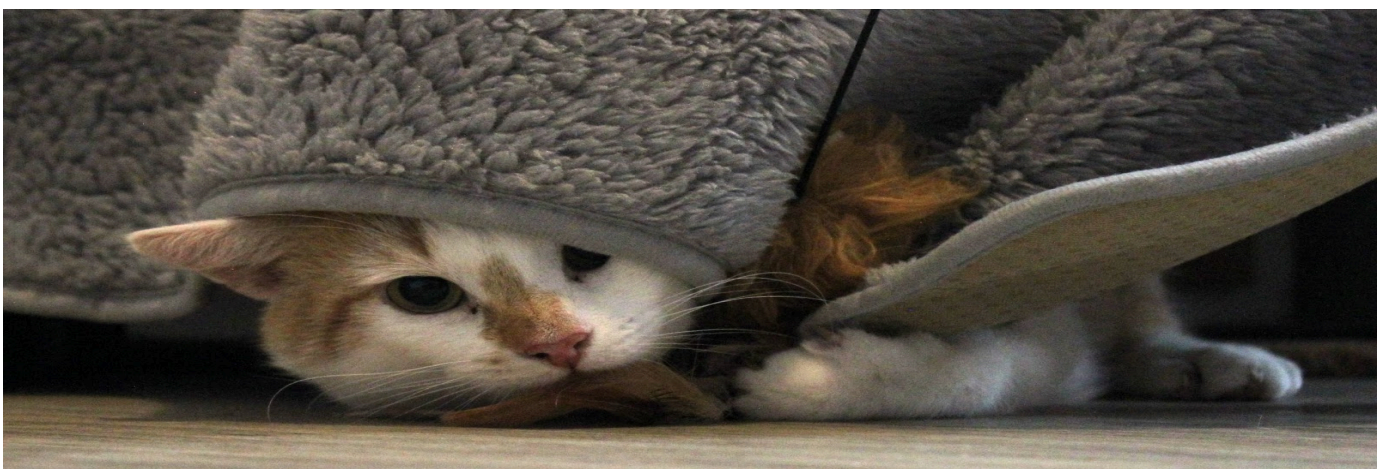
All of them were successfully adopted.

SUCCESES IN THE YEAR - some of the animals we helped in 2023

Mini Rex rabbit Hazel came to us from a neglected and overpopulated home. She was very timid and scared at first, probably because she had not been regularly handled and socialised. We are delighted that since then she has been successfully adopted.



Freya came into RSPCA care after being found as a stray in a garden; skinny, scared and flea ridden. She was taken to a local vet where they treated her flea and worm burden and advised she'd possibly had kittens recently so checked her for mastitis. Alex and Tim took her into foster care in September and provided the perfect space for her to gain her confidence. She was adopted in November, renamed "Willow" and after a lot of love, care and patience, has emerged from her shyness to meet Rambo, the adopters large black and white cat. They are now playing together, chasing one another around her new home, loving chin scratches and eating treats galore!



Pumpkin (hiding). This handsome lad was an injured stray who was understandably nervous, and with terrible toileting habits to begin with, but soon settled down with experienced fosterer Lisa. He has since found his forever home.